

Developmental Disabilities Council of Contra Costa County
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
November 20, 2024

Board and Liaison Members Present: Alicia Jackson; Caroline Ortiz; Christine Rottger; Christy Lam-Julian; Estela Nunez; Pam Perls; Ramsay Mashy; Ria Mercado; Seth Hendricks; Troy Russell; Will Sanford

Staff: Vi Ibarra

Board and Liaison Members Excused: Karen Lingenfelter; Katherine Kreft; Laura Corbett; Nickole Bouslog

Guests: Aimee Vitug-Hom, VistAbility; Lisa Kleinbub, RCEB; Geneva Carlos-Valentino, Toolworks; Hannah Michaelson, Care Parent Network and parent; Elvia Osorio-Rodriguez, RCEB; Jennifer Noah, parent; Lisa Ribitch, Kevin Costte, Jakob Smith, Kevin Mayo, Nicole Strobel and Mateo Ibarra, all with Full Circle of Choices; Suzanne Anthony, parent; Angie Large, MDUSD Workability

Welcome, Establish Quorum, and Introductions:

Will welcomed everyone to the meeting at 10:03 a.m. It was a hybrid meeting, with Council members and guests attending either in-person at 1025 Escobar in Martinez or on Zoom. Nancy, the Spanish interpreter gave instructions on how to choose between Spanish and English interpretation. Guests were invited to introduce themselves and Zoom guests were asked to enter their names and affiliations in Chat for attendance purposes.

Vi took a roll call of board members and established a quorum.

The meeting minutes for October 23, 2024 was approved with one correction – to add Alicia Jackson who was present at the meeting (M/ Caroline, S/ Troy). The Health Equity and Transportation workgroups and also Geneva's report on the RCEB Executive Director search were added to today's agenda.

UPDATES:

RCEB – Lisa Kleinbub

- Work is being done on the rate implementation, including changes to how service codes will be used. As details become clearer, RCEB will make sure that services are reflected in Individual Program Plans (IPPs). The rate changes are significant - they may not fully meet all expectations, but they will have a meaningful impact on providers. Also, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is working through some issues with the

Provider Directory and providers should keep track of their attempts to complete this process.

- In January, RCEB will share the updated IPP format with the community, and the Council has scheduled a presentation on this in March.
- DDS and the Regional Centers will be keeping an eye on federal changes to make sure they do not negatively impact the overall system. In California, undocumented individuals are entitled to services, but there may be concerns about being reported. Regional Centers do not look at documentation status.
- Lastly, Alameda County recently held a listening session on the Master Plan, where community input was both honest and based on real-life experiences. This session raised concerns about the challenges individuals face when dealing with multiple systems of care.
- A comment was made that the changes to service codes are not about changing the services themselves but about realigning the codes, especially for day services. This realignment will need to be reflected in the IPP.

E.D. Search – Geneva Carlos-Valentino

As of last week, the Lawrence Advisory reviewed 227 candidates, conducted 33 initial screenings, and held 13 second interviews. They have recommended 5 candidates and moved 3 candidates forward for in-person presentation interviews, which are expected to take place in December. The team is still accepting letters of interest. The selection bar has been set, and if candidates have not met this standard, they are unlikely to be considered further. The committee feels they are on track to make recommendations to the Board by December or early January. The onboarding process could take up to a year, and the committee is considering how to structure it, along with developing performance metrics. The team meets weekly on Mondays at 8:00 a.m.

Questions/Comments:

- Is bilingual ability being considered? Geneva added that it would be seen as a plus but is not a requirement.
- Has notification to candidates not being considered been sent? Some candidates are on hold for various reasons. Once a decision is made not to move forward with a candidate, notifications will be sent.

SCDD Bay Area Office – Gabriela Solval

Vi provided a report on behalf of Gabriela in her absence. Several dates and links shared.

- Here is the upcoming [statewide trainings calendar](#)
- [SCDD Council and Committee Meeting](#) schedule
- Bay Area Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) will be on 12/04 from 5:30-8 p.m. Join [on Zoom](#), or in-person at RCEB 1320 Willow Pass Rd. #300, 4th floor – John Rodriguez Conference Room, Concord, CA.

- A reminder was given about the State Council's year-round sponsorship opportunity, with awards of up to \$2,500. State Council's Year-round Sponsorship Opportunity: <https://scdd.ca.gov/sponsorships/>
- Dr. Rebecca Letch won the "There Should Be a Law" contest with her suggestion to designate individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) as an Exceptional Medically Underserved Population (EMUP). This would help expand medical and dental training, prioritize research on people with IDD, and include individuals with IDD in clinical trials.

Council Chairperson – Will Sanford: No report.

Executive Assistant to the Council – Vi Ibarra

- **Summer Schedule Planning:** Before the pandemic, the June awards meeting also served as a board meeting to approve executive positions. When meetings moved to Zoom, this event was no longer used to do this Council business. The board typically takes a break in June and July, using August for summer planning, and resumes regular meetings in September. With school years starting earlier, the schedule may need to be reconsidered. The suggestion is to hold annual planning in June, and take July and August off. This will be discussed further and decided on a future meeting.
- **DDC Website Update:** Vi previously asked for folks to assist with updating the DDC website, and Troy, Seth, Christy, and Nikola volunteered to help. Vi will be collaborating with them in the coming months.
- **Alameda County DD Council** has [posted a recruitment](#) for their Council Coordinator. They also shared this [job description](#).
- **Leadership Contra Costa:** Leadership Contra Costa trains a cohort over the course of a year on various aspects of living in Contra Costa County, not specifically disability-related, but topics discussed are a variety of aspects of living and working in this county, with a focus on civic engagement. Vi invited a few community members and Board members to help present at the November training, which was on Health and Aging. Board members Caroline and Laura participated in a panel presentation, along with two other community members. The presentation was well received by attendees and Laura and Caroline were thanked for their participation.
- Vi recently attended a board essentials training. The training provided valuable insights into the expectations of board members. One key takeaway was that there has not been a formal process for the Board to evaluate staff (Vi!), which may be something for the Board to consider in the future. Creating this process would be important, especially with staff turnover over time.
- Contra Costa Council and community members are invited to attend the November 13th DDS listening session taking place during the Alameda DD Council Board meeting. See [event flyer](#) for details.

Membership – Troy Russell

Troy reported they are still recruiting – there are six spots to fill!

Community Liaison Reports:

Emergency Planning and Engagement – Aimee Vitug-Hom: The local Red Cross is giving away 4000 cots - if you are interested email Natalie Mainer at natalie.manier@redcross.org or text at (925) 303-8572. There are two types of cots available: [standard green military cots](#) or the [bariatric medical cots](#) which are much heavier and sturdier than military cots, and allow for the torso to be propped up for medical patients.

Paratransit Coordinating Council - Vi Ibarra: Nickole B attended the most recent meeting and described the challenges with communicating information verbally. She made a great suggestion to coordinate rides through text. In their January 27th meeting, all transit providers will be asked to present on how they support people with scheduling rides and communication. It was a fire under their seats – very actionable outcome from Nickole’s comment!

East Bay Legislative Coalition (EBLC) – Will Sanford: The group meets on the first Wednesday of each month and is currently planning for the upcoming legislative townhall meeting. They are still deciding whether the meeting will be virtual or in person. The virtual format has been done for the past few years that has allowed for greater community participation. In mid-January, there will be a budget review meeting. The Governor typically releases the state budget around that time, and the group will review it and present the information to the DDC.

- The next EBLC meeting is on December 4th, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and it will be held virtually.
- The Legislative Townhall meeting is scheduled for January 31, 2025, from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
- A budget discussion group will meet in mid-January, following the release of the Governor's Budget on January 10, 2025.

Let Vi know if you would like to attend any of the upcoming meetings.

Workgroup Updates:

Transportation – Alicia Jackson: They had their second committee meeting where they introduced the *Way to Go Contra Costa Resource Book*. It is a quick reference tool that the Specialty Health Ambassadors (SHA) are helping to promote. Alicia distributed handouts with information about the City of San Pablo’s \$5 transportation service, which is available for medical appointments and requires qualification. The committee is working on identifying additional resources. The Life Program was also discussed—this is a free paratransit service that provides up to 10 free rides per month. Individuals need to qualify for the service. Also, County Connection offers travel training for seniors and people with disabilities in Central County on how to read maps, plan trips, and apply for a Clipper Card. The committee is focused on

ensuring that people have the resources to travel not only for medical appointments but also for other activities like things they do for fun.

Comments:

- It was suggested that the SHAs share information about travel training during their events.
- A comment was made about the need to expand travel training resources to West County, East County, and South County.
- It was noted that using the phone for communication requests is not always the best way. This issue affects not only people with different communication needs but also people with different generational preferences or communication needs.

Health Equity – Ria Mercado: Ria shared [presentation slides](#).

- The workgroup started meeting on October 15th after reviewing their survey. They had another meeting on November 7th. They talked about feedback from committee members and the survey results, which provided valuable insights. The survey's preliminary results highlighted several key areas of need including: finding the right healthcare providers, addressing sensory needs, and increasing medical providers' understanding of the IDD community. Barriers were also identified – such as access to healthcare regardless of immigration status, as well as isolation, transportation, and food security.
- The committee's top priority is making sure that everyone with IDD can access and succeed in using healthcare services.
- The next meeting will take place after the Thanksgiving holiday. They will begin working on the focus areas identified in the survey and also securing meetings with key community partners.

Questions/Comments:

- Someone acknowledged the survey - noting that it provides information the Master Plan does not address.
- A concern was brought up about mental health, asking if RCEB has been contacted to have a representative join the committee. An experience was shared where a hospital's understanding of the Regional Center's role in a crisis situation was inaccurate, resulting in someone with IDD being dismissed without an evaluation. Having an RCEB representative could help assist with understanding the progress that needs to be made in those areas.
- Elvia shared that both RCEB offices regularly meet with Behavioral Health agencies in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties to identify service gaps. The counties also provide information on new programs.

~~~~ A brief break was taken at 11:17 a.m. ~~~~

\*\*\*\*\* Presentation \*\*\*\*\*

**Career Pathway Navigator Program with**

**Craig Rose, VistAbility, and Will Sanford, Sanford Creative & Consulting Services**

See Will and Craig's [slide deck](#) for their full presentation. Following are some notes:

A new service called Coordinator Career Pathways (CCP, service code 956) was launched in April 2024. Coordinated Career Pathways is designed to help young adults within 2 years of graduating high school, and up to 2 years after. The service is also available to people who participated in a Work Activity Program (WAP) in the last 5 years, or in group supported employment where they used subminimum wage.

A new support staff position, called a Career Pathway Navigator (CPN), is introduced with this service. The CPN works with individuals from a person-centered approach, similar to services offered by the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR). CPNs must have significant experience including a Bachelor's degree, at least 3 years of relevant experience, and certification in employment training. Key services provided by CPN include helping individuals develop a career plan, identify necessary supports (like transportation and accommodations), and find available generic resources.

There is currently a shortage of providers for this service, and there are waitlists. There are only one or two CCP vendors within RCEB, and the vendorization process takes time.

Questions and Comments:

- A comment was made there should have been a CPN all along. Will clarified that some agencies have done similar work without funding. However, CPN has specific requirements for delivery.
- Another comment was made about the eligibility window seeming narrow when so many could benefit. Providers are already helping individuals who don't meet the criteria without compensation.
- Will clarified that a CCP can directly assist individuals with applying for jobs in the community as compared to a Tailored Day Specialists helping folks to apply through DOR.

**Public Comment and Announcements:** There will not be a meeting in December.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

**The next meeting will be held on January 22, 2025**

Respectfully submitted by,  
*Aimee Vitug-Hom*  
VistAbility