

Board of Directors' Meeting

June 27, 2005

Presiding: Dick Long

Board Members

Present: Nyron Battles
Bill Dycus
Sister Marygrace
Anne Struthers
Steve Whitgob
Rose Coleman
Chi Lee
Claudia Sladen
Mike Treppa

Board Members

Excused: Tom Florin
Theresa Woo
Carmen Quinones

Staff Present:

Jim Burton
Susan Driggs
Sheryl Kuhn
Jennifer Theal
Francine Davis
Nancy Kubota
Gabriel Rogin

Guests Present:

Nikhil Bhatla
Barbara Garcia
Diana Jorgensen
Todd Struthers
Stephen Dale
Sharon Hagerty
Rebecca Loya
Emily Whitgob

CALL TO ORDER

President, Dick Long, called to order the regularly scheduled business meeting of the Regional Center of the East Bay at 7:05 PM. Self-introductions were made.

CONSENT AGENDA

M/S/C "The Board moves to approve the agenda for June 27, 2005 as presented." (Treppa/Sladen) Unanimous.

M/S/C “The Board moves to approve the minutes of the meeting of May 23, 2005 as presented.” (Treppa/Whitgob) Unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at this time.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Dick Long

Mr. Long noted that much of the information reviewed in the Executive Committee meeting would be discussed in Mr. Burton’s report this evening. Mr. Long reported that committee members had discussed a proposed change to the by-laws of the corporation and asked that the Board consider approval of the change in language. Mr. Burton explained that the Agnews closure plan approaches service provision on a regional level. Concerns have been raised by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) legal staff that because our by-laws state that we serve consumers in the Counties of Alameda and Contra Costa, this might impact our ability to provide services outside our region. Eliminating the last sentence of section 3.1 of the by-laws will address this concern and ensure that we can work with the other bay area regional centers to appropriately serve the consumers leaving Agnews Developmental Center.

M/S/C “The Board moves to approve the by-law change as presented.” (Struthers/Sladen) Unanimous.

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE: Steve Whitgob

Dr. Whitgob distributed and reviewed the Financial Status Report for May 2005. Dr. Whitgob reported the Operations budget will be balanced at year-end as has been projected. There is no significant change in the Purchase of Service budget and we will end the year with a mid-range surplus of \$2.9 million. This figure continues to reflect the impact of rate freezes and the freeze on start-up funding.

Dr. Whitgob reminded members that we have been discussing the need to establish a line of credit to be used if the State budget is not approved on time. Members of the Budget and Finance Committee recommend that the Board approve a line of credit with Union Bank that will be used on an as-needed basis until the State budget is approved. Dr. Whitgob reminded everyone that there will be an interest expense on the loan that will not be reimbursed by the State.

M/S/C “The Board moves to authorize Regional Center of the East Bay to establish a line of credit with Union Bank of California for

\$31,195,000 to be used in the event the State budget is not passed on time.” (Whitgob/Struthers) Unanimous.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: Mike Treppa

Mr. Treppa reported that we have several applications pending and will be conducting interviews prior to the next meeting of the Board.

PROVIDER/VENDOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Sister Marygrace

Sister Marygrace reported that her committee met on June 10th and had a special presentation and tribute to Diana Jorgensen for the many years that she has journeyed with us. PVAC members voiced their concern that there is a critical need for Contra Costa County to maintain the position being vacated by Diana.

PVAC members also shared in an open discussion of the impact of the continued rate freezes. Funding options were discussed and it was agreed that there is a growing need to approach DDS for assistance as programs continue to struggle with inadequate funding. Sister Marygrace also reported that her group discussed quality and what it looks like in our programs. We must continue to hold the bar high to keep the excellence in services but the need to address the rates issue is now critical to maintaining services.

CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Rose Coleman

Ms. Coleman reported that Mr. Burton had updated her committee on the State budget. Members discussed the impact of BART and AC Transit increases on our community. Some CAC members attended the annual People First Self Advocacy Conference in Sacramento and shared their experiences from this important annual event.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Jim Burton

Mr. Burton noted that this is the 19th year in a row that California has failed to pass a budget on time. At this point we have no real idea when the budget will be signed. Mr. Burton reported that the Conference Committee has finished their work on the budget and things remain much the same for our system. Freezes on rates will continue for another year and we can expect to face serious problems this year as a result of the continued freeze on rates. We continue to struggle to keep existing programs operational and hope to find a way to survive for one more year because many of these services are irreplaceable. We will also see the continuation of the freeze on start-up funding and without new programs we cannot serve new people. Mr. Burton reminded the group that it takes 18 to 24 months to get a new program started. We have more and more families and consumers who are not able to find appropriate services and we can expect this situation to get worse in the coming year. This is happening while we

are faced with the explosion in autism and we need to recognize that this group has a huge scarcity of services with no relief in sight. It will be important to continue to educate people on what it will take to move this system forward again.

The Conference Committee restored \$9.2 million of the \$40 million in cuts that have been made to regional center system operations. RCEB should receive \$.5 million and this money will be used to help meet federal programs compliance. We are pleased to have this money for the coming year and it should keep us from some of the difficult actions that were necessary last year.

Another budget action that could have significant impact on the people we serve is the IHSS wage cut proposed by the Administration. To date, the legislature has firmly rejected the proposal to cut IHSS wages. The legislature has also compromised and agreed to freeze the COLA for the SSI/SSP program for 2006/07. If approved, this would have very serious implications for the people we serve.

Mr. Burton reported that the Agnews closure plan would move forward and includes an innovative housing model that will separate ownership of homes from the provision of services.

The Self Directed Services proposal is also moving forward and will allow families and consumers to have more choice and control of services. There is concern being expressed since this has been introduced as a cost saving proposal and will provide 10% less funding for services to participating individuals. This has now been approved in the budget act and is included in trailer bill language and in SB 481 (Chesbro). SB 481 has been turned into a two-year bill and will not be acted on immediately so we will be allowed time to study the issue more carefully.

The Miller Center transition is proceeding. Mr. Burton acknowledged we are pleased that Contra Costa County has agreed to continue to provide services through the completion of the transition process. CCARC has been working to provide a smooth transition but has not reached final agreement with the County. Mr. Burton reported that we anticipate receiving Board of Supervisor approval tomorrow and that the plan will now be completed.

The Medi-Cal Long Term Care Integration pilot will test a new process for delivering Medi-Cal services. Mr. Burton noted that Contra Costa County will be one of the pilot areas and we will need to carefully monitor to see how services are provided.

Mr. Burton reported that CADDIS is being reviewed by an independent contractor to determine if the proposed new system is viable. Their report is expected to be

released by August 15th and if they conclude that the project should move forward, they will make recommendations on how that should happen.

Mr. Burton reminded the Board that Rick Rollens spoke at our All Staff meeting on June 23rd. His presentation provided an outstanding opportunity for staff to hear how autism impacts families and was well received by staff.

Mr. Burton also announced that Nyron Battles has been recognized by ARCA for his outstanding work and leadership of the ARCA Consumer Advisory Committee.

Finally, Mr. Burton acknowledged that Contra Costa County, this regional center and the consumers and families we serve will suffer a tremendous loss when Diana Jorgensen retires at the end of this month. Mr. Long noted that Ms. Jorgensen was a remarkably caring and committed person and he has been impressed with all that she has done. Throughout her career she has seen needs and worked toward solutions. With incredible patience and sensitivity, she has brought together diverse communities to solve extraordinary problems. Ms. Jorgensen's vision allowed her to see the developmental disabilities community as one that needed to advocate for itself and with her outstanding leadership, she taught them how. Mr. Long presented Ms. Jorgensen with a painting from NIAD artist, Vida Moretti, in honor of her remarkable vision and extraordinary commitment to persons with developmental disabilities.

Ms. Jorgensen thanked the Board and said that a close working relationship with the community is the true strength of the organization.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at this time.

ARCA REPORT: Anne Struthers

Ms. Struthers reported that ARCA had met in Sacramento and Kimberly Belshé had provided a brief presentation on the state budget. Mr. Allenby hopes the freezes will be lifted in 2006/07 but we need to continue looking for innovative strategies to continue funding programs. The consistent message is that this administration sees no new taxes so the budget crisis will continue.

Ms. Struthers reported that ARCA is encouraging all regional centers to participate in Grass Roots Day this year. It will be important for our legislators to see us in Sacramento and critical for us to continue to educate them to the needs of our consumers and families.

Ms. Struthers also reported that ARCA members had reviewed pending legislation, discussed the CMS audit, CADDIS and the Agnews closure plan.

Members were reminded that ARCA meetings are open to the public and encouraged to attend these informative sessions.

ADJOURNMENT

Following a closed session to discuss personnel issues, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Coleman
Secretary
RCEB Board of Directors