

**DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL OF CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
April 24, 2013**

Board and Liaison Members Present: Suzanne Anthony, Chair (presiding), Stephanie Chapralis, Craig Rose, Ella Liggins, Jim Burton, Erin Rogers, Heidi Spaulding, Josh Sullivan, Ken Talken, Carl Tolentino, Heather Hackett, Dan Denis, Peggy Black, Kimberly Williams, Pam Perls, Joanne Nakamura, Ange Burnett, Caroline Ortiz, Will Sanford, John Rodriguez, Staff.

Board Members Excused: Karen Lingenfelter, Vi Ibarra, Krista Loomis, Elree Langford, Barbara Maizie, Nickole Bouslog, Stephanie Meakin, Penny Musante, Barbara Sheehy, Denis Craig, Diana Thomas, and Elizabeth Wilson-Palmer.

Guests: Carol Anne McCrary, Contra Costa ARC; Danon Jenkins, ALIVE/Futures Explored/CAC; Kiara Heglin, ALIVE/Futures Explored/CAC; Michael Conti, RCEB; Jessica McCracken, CCHS, Public Health; Melanie Fowler, Las Trampas, Inc.; Pam Thomas, RCEB; Francine Davis, RCEB; Tracee Marizette, RCEB; Louise Schneiders, CARE Parent Network, Ron Usac, AREA Board 5; Angie Lee, Futures-Explored/ALIVE, Ramsey Mashy, California Autism Foundation.

Welcome and Introductions-Suzanne Anthony, Chair

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. and introductions were made around the room.

- The March 2013 meeting minutes were unanimously approved (M/Erin Rogers; S/Craig Rose), with no corrections.
- No additions to today's agenda.

Presentation: RCEB's Needs Assessment and Resource Development

Speaker: Francine Davis, Director of Community Services, RCEB

Francine distributed a handout with current data on RCEB's service demographics (where people live, ages, primary diagnosis, ethnicities) and results of 2011 and 2012 performance goals, compared to State averages. She explained the impact of various age groups, and the services needed. For examples: for ages 0-2 years, ABA, Speech and Occupational therapies are usually needed; for ages 6-21 years, transitional services and living options are usually needed; for ages over 22, transportation services are usually needed.

In addition, her handout outlined the process for identifying service needs for our community, resource development activities and current barriers to resource development and service expansion.

Identifying Service Needs

Francine indicated that the primary resource to identify service needs is the IPP. She receives info from Case Managers about unmet service needs through the IPP process. In addition, Regional Center staff (supervisors, case managers, resource specialists) attends various RCEB and community meetings to gather more information on service needs and forecasting of needs in our community. These committees include:

- Autism Resource Team at RCEB;
- Aging Committee;
- ILS Committee;

- East County Providers meeting (sub-committee of the DD Council)
- Transition Task Force;
- DD Council.

RCEB encourages vendors to share new ideas for resource development and to report on current vacancies.

Resource Development Activities

The only entity that can access start-up funds for developing new resources is the Community Placement Plan (CPP), which is either for preventing people from entering the Developmental Centers or re-locating people currently residing in Developmental Centers to the community.

Francine gave examples of new resources that are being developed through the Community Placement Plan, with start-up funding for a:

- Residence for teens with Autism (will open in 18-24 months);
- Residence for people with developmental disabilities and a mental health diagnosis. Redwood Place in Alameda County was required to downsize, so this home will accommodate those no longer served there;
- Residence for people in the criminal justice system coming from Porterville Developmental Center or jail. A day program is also being developed for these individuals, with an employment focus;
- Residence for adults with significant behavioral challenges----this home will provide single bedrooms (not shared) for the residents.

Francine also gave a nod to Will Sanford and Futures-Explored for their development of the new Film Workshop in Livermore and their development of employment services through Project Search (without start-up funds from RCEB).

Regional Center puts out Requests for Proposals (RFP) periodically. Currently there is an active RFP for the development of Family Home Agencies in Contra Costa County that is due in early June. In addition, RCEB collaborates with licensing agencies, vendors and other regional centers for sharing information and new ideas. Pam Thomas indicated that there are times when they don't receive any responses to RFP's.

Barriers

Loss of funding is a major barrier to resource development in our community. No start-up program development funds have been available for several years, which have created waiting lists for services. Payment rates have been frozen (10 years) and rate cuts have been in place since 2009. The economic downturn as resulted in home foreclosures and down-sized services. These influences have had devastating results for your community.

In addition, there is a lack of clinical resources, and generic resources, and the median payment rates for new services were set in 2008 with no cost of living adjustments. Also, some services are now prohibited by law, such as Social-Recreational services.

Pam Thomas added that the recent level of open caseloads in case management has also resulted in a barrier to resource development. Jim Burton stated that their hiring freeze is now over and in the last 60 days they have 27 new hires: case managers and nurses.

All of these barriers combined make it difficult to develop new and needed resources in our community.

Comments/Concerns from the Audience

- Will Sanford stated that there is a group meeting on employment held regularly that RCEB should be involved with. He also wondered that as advocates, are we getting to the right people?
- Jim Burton commented that the Director of DDS has recently acknowledged that the lack of start-up funds and poor payment rates are serious issues. He feels this acknowledgement is a good thing. He also stated that with the high turnover of legislators, we are way behind in keeping them informed of our concerns.
- Stephanie Chapralis commented on the recent letter received by the DD Council regarding the high waiting lists at Contra Costa ARC. While she knew there were waiting lists, she didn't know they were that high. She is also aware of the number of children not receiving services due to recent changes in eligibility. Stephanie inquired about RCEB's data collection processes.
- Francine commented that she had a lot of data, with reports to the State on early intervention services annually.
- Jim Burton stated that tracking waiting lists is like "pinning jello to the wall." The RCEB data system was developed in 1984 and was put into place in 1985-----the State requires them to use it. Jim feels the solution is to advocate for legislative change both at the State and Federal levels.
- Caroline Ortiz stated that parents are worried that when their children leave school in the next 5 years, there won't be any services available to them. She is very frustrated that program development needs are not being met and that many parents feel that committee meetings are "secret". Caroline volunteered to participate in committee meetings and she would like other parents to be represented, as well.
- Jim stated that he would like to work with Caroline directly, as he feels we must involve families in the resource development process.
- A question was asked about any consumer-led committees in resource development. Francine stated that most of the committees are staff-led. Jim added that there is a consumer advisory committee at RCEB. Pam Thomas commented that consumers are on the RFP review committee, as well.
- John Rodriquez referenced the recent letter regarding waiting lists for Contra Costa ARC services from their Board Advisory Committee. He stated that the DD Council would like to collaborate and assist in getting accurate waiting list info to RCEB for resource planning purposes. He also noted that there will be confidentiality concerns to deal with. He asked for volunteers to serve on an ad hoc committee and several people volunteered, including: Pam Perls, Erin Rogers, Caroline Ortiz, Peggy Black, Kim Williams and Carol Anne McCrary.
- Kimberly Williams stated that she felt direct consumer participation was needed.
- Josh Sullivan commented that there are many free data systems available for tracking purposes.
- Francine stated that she would like to broaden that ways to get input into resource development planning. John volunteered to put together a list of community groups for Francine's consideration.
- Heather Hackett commented that transportation continues to be a barrier for services, as well.
- Ramsey Mashy commented that we should look at the needs of upcoming graduates in addition to what we are challenged with now.
- Ken Talken (WCCUSD) stated that he had info on upcoming grads over the next 5 years.

Francine was thanked for her presentation today.

Report from Jim Burton, Executive Director of RCEB:

Congratulations to Jim, as he is a new grandfather! Thus, he did not attend the hearing. Will Sanford attend both hearings and stated that no action was taken, but there was a lot of discussion about the Developmental Centers.

It is expected that the 1.25% rate cut will be restored July 1st. There is still much debate over the complex issues regarding co-payments, deductibles and co-insurance. Jim felt there was a growing sentiment to restore cuts to early start programs. Everyone is anxious to see the Governor's revised budget, coming out around May 15th.

Jim is spending time at Sonoma State Developmental Center every other week. He believes there are no immediate health and safety issues outstanding. However, they are 83% staffed and trying to hire.

There continues to be under allocations to RCEB from the State to the tune of about \$19 Million. 20 out of 21 regional centers have deficiencies. RCEB is struggling with a cash flow problem, which may result in borrowing (interest payments are not reimbursed) or using a line of credit. They are counting on receiving federal funds (1915i waiver) to fill the gap and should know more about that soon.

Committee Reports:

Legislative Committee: There are numerous bills in the works at this time. The committee will include an action plan with their next report. There are several bills regarding employment, quality assurance, residential services and much more.

The CAC hosted a successful rally in Sacramento on April 11th. "About 300 people joined them in protesting the treatment of people residing in Developmental Centers and calling for their closure. A comment was made that CAC President, Kim Williams, "...rocked it like a house on fire!" They received a lot of press coverage with at least 4 bay area outlets reporting. Job well done!

Transition Committee: The Transition Task Force meets the 3rd Thursday of each month in the RCEB conference room and hosts interesting speakers.

The West County Transition and Special Education Resource Fair will be held April 27th at the Vista Hills Education Center (2625 Barnard Street in Richmond). There will be free entertainment, many vendors and free door prizes-----fun for the whole family!

Nominating Committee: The Committee is accepting nominations for the *Excellence In Service* awards, with a deadline of April 30th. Please send your nominations to John Rodriquez.

Joint Annual Dinner Meeting Reminder: Our annual dinner is planned for June 4th at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Walnut Creek, along with the Alameda County DD Council. Dan Denis and Karen Lingenfelter volunteered to assist John in picking award winners. Get your reservations in now. Joey Travolta (John Travolta's brother) is the keynote speaker. He will be premiering a new video.

Future Meetings:

- May 22nd: Mental Health Services (at El Cerrito City Hall);
- June 4th: Joint Annual Dinner Meeting (at Embassy Suites in Walnut Creek).

Announcements:

- John thanked Jessica McCracken (who was in attendance) for her on-going support to the DD Council.
- Stephanie announced Contra Costa ARC's "Go for the Gold" raffle with the top prize of \$1000. She had a stack of tickets to sell. 10 or more prize winners are selected each Friday in May.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

**Our next meeting will be May 22, 2013 at:
El Cerrito City Hall
10890 San Pablo, CA 94530
Topic: Mental Health Services**

Respectfully submitted electronically by,

Carol Anne McCrary
Contra Costa ARC