

**DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL OF CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
4/26/17**

Board and Liaison Members Present: Suzanne Anthony, Chairperson; Pam Perls, Craig Rose, Douglas Quinn, Marcelle Indelicato, Heather Hackett, Maria Marquez, Dan Denis, David Monahan, Nickole Bouslog, Bill Trinh, Elvia Osorio-Rodriguez, Peggy Black, Ken Talken, Karen Lingenfelter-Carmen, Paula Senigar and Vi Ibarra.

Josh Sullivan, Staff.

Board and Liaison Members Excused: Will Sanford, Krista Loomis, Caroline Ortiz, Nina Vincent, and Carl Tolentino.

Guests: Carol Anne McCrary, Contra Costa ARC; Ronke Sodipo, Regional Center of the East Bay; Jackie Johnston, CCS; Donna Feingold, Adaptive Learning Center; Murri Banis, Commercial Support Services-Richmond; Ramsay Mashy, California Autism Foundation; Beth DeWitt, Regional Center of the East Bay; Leslie Werosh, Ability Now Bay Area; Jeanine Janson, Full Circle; Noel Huante, Anka Behavioral Health; Miriam Gomez, La Familia Counseling; Rosa Valledor, Care Parent Network; Herb Hastings, Regional Center of the East Bay; Marnie Raymond, AS/UD, Parent; Santi J. Rogers, Interim ED of Regional Center of the East Bay.

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 a.m. by Suzanne Anthony, Chairperson, and everyone was welcomed. Introductions were made.

- The March 22, 2017 meeting minutes were approved (M/Craig Rose; S/Dan Denis)
- There were no additions to today's agenda.

RCEB Update by Santi Rogers, Interim Executive Director:

- Santi Rogers introduced himself and discussed his 47 years in this industry. He had met Frank Lanterman and described him as a very affluent and influential man.
- The Lanterman Act is always being challenged and Santi said that the relationships we forge with policy-makers are of utmost importance---especially so with current term limits.
 - Use every opportunity to educate legislators;
 - Do 5 times more advocacy, due to term limits;
 - Ask them: where are people going to find safe and affordable places to live?

State Council on Developmental Disabilities Bay Area Office:

No Report. They are meeting tonight at 7:00 p.m. at Golden Gate Regional Center in SF.

Committee Reports:

- Executive Committee: No report.
- Strategic Planning Committee: No additional report.
- Legislative Committee: Nickole reported that the committee met on April 5th and will meet again on May 3rd. She stated that at their last meeting, they took a long time to discuss SB283 which extends eligibility for services for people with Traumatic Brain Injury from age 18 to age 22. Nickole's position was to extend everyone's eligibility to age 22.

Josh reported that they are waiting to see the Governor's May revision of the State Budget proposal. **In addition, Nickole will be testifying on May 4th at a public hearing in Sacramento on the Adult Changing Table bill.**

Josh also wanted to promote a Voting Accessibility Advisory committee (VAAC). This group will be assessing voting sites for accessibility. Also of concern is training people to use the Auto-Mark voting machine, as well as the Braille cards.

Please note, that by opening polls for additional days, the turnout was increased by 300%!!!

Paratransit Coordinating Council: Bill reported that there was no meeting this month. A Measure J (funding) Task Force will meet next week to talk about funding allocations.

- Nominating Committee: Craig reported that several members will be terming out in June. He has a few nominations that he will either present at the next meeting or at the Annual Dinner.
- Transition Committee: The Transition Task Force met last Thursday (3rd Thursday of the month). They discussed implementing a speaker series in January, February and March 2018 (3 speakers). One topic may include the advantages and disadvantages of the diploma track in high schools. They talked about changing the venue, as well.

Last Saturday was the West County Special Education Resource and Transition Fair. There were competing events (Special Olympics, Autism Walk, and Earth Day) which resulted in a smaller turnout. Josh commented on Ken's role as a carnival barker and juggler. Josh and Vi manned the DD Council table and assisted several families to navigate services for transitioning kids. Ken will coordinate with Special Olympics next year.

- Health & Emergency Services Engagement Committee (HESEC): Nikole had no new items to present this month.

Marcelle discussed the needs of the 250 households impacted by a mudslide in unincorporated Contra Costa County taking out Morgan Territory Road. Carol was activated as the Access and Functional Needs and Disabilities Coordinator and was able to work with Mobility Matters to get a volunteer to deliver groceries to a home-bound senior and Meals on Wheels Care Management to assess the needs of 8 households with people with disabilities for various reasons. Fortunately, neighbors have been helping each other out.

There will be a paper presented at an annual conference for Emergency Services about what was learned from this event, which is still going on.

Marcelle thanked Dan Denis for his "priceless" participation in an exercise design team in Brentwood. Marcelle stated that we need more participation like his in the other planning exercises.

Josh has invited Zach of the Emergency Operations Center to speak to the Council next month about an upcoming exercise in Mass Care and Sheltering due to a (pretend) wildfire in Lafayette.

Also, a group from the DD Council will be training Public Health nurses in the coming weeks.

- Subcommittee on Employment: Dave attended a meeting on 3/23/17, with 30 people attending. They received an update on grants. Futures Explored has 6 interns at the Double Tree Hotel in Livermore. They are currently hiring for Supported Employment staff. They also are planning a Supported Employment Fair/Training for Case Managers about the process.

Josh and Marcelle are looking for volunteers on May 17th and 18th in East County to help high school juniors practice job interviewing. Let Josh or Marcelle know if you are interested....they will send a flyer out about it.

- **A short break for networking was taken.**

Presentation: An Overview of the ABLE Act and Where it Stands Today

Speaker: Stephen Dale, Attorney, Dale Law Firm.

Steve passed out a flyer and power point presentation on the complexities of the ABLE Act. He has a free video series on YouTube that you can access by:

www.youtube.com/c/achievingindpendence and look for the playlist called 'ABLE'.

The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act of 2014 has very specific applications and it is important to know when it is the right tool, when a Special Needs Trust is the right tool, or when other options are appropriate. States have an option to start an ABLE program, and California's is not yet in place. However, you can open an account in Ohio. Only cash can be put in an ABLE account, up to \$100,000. Keeping below that amount does not impact SSI or Medi-Cal. However, going above that limit will suspend SSI, but not impact Medi-Cal.

This was created for sustainable funding for individuals with disabilities before the age of 26. The ABLE Act enhances a Special Needs Trust. It is managed by the Dept. of Treasury and there is a very low chance of being audited.

An ABLE account can only be used for specific purposes to remain tax free. If the funds are used for other purposes, then those funds are subject to income tax, plus a 10% penalty. These include:

- Education
- Housing
- Transportation
- Employment Training and Support
- Assistive Technology and Personal Support Services
- Health, Prevention, and Wellness
- Financial Management and Administrative Services
- Legal Fees
- Expenses for Oversight and Monitoring
- Funeral and Burial Expenses

These uses do not harm benefits and compliments a Special Needs Trust. There are some complexities, such as situations in which liens are put on the account to pay back Medi-Cal or other situations with tax consequences.

Steve recommends that you view his educational videos (free) for more detailed information. This is one tool to shelter assets and still remain qualified for SSI and Medicaid. However, more education is needed on the complexities.

Announcements:

- Donna announced that the **Autism Walk** was very successful with 125 walkers. Also, on May 10th, from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., Loma Vista is hosting the TOPS Art Expo, with lots of art and entertainment. Everyone is welcome.
- Elvia announced that Congreso Familiar in Oakley will be held on April 29, 2017 from 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. at O'Hara Park Middle School. For more information, go to congresofamiliar.org.
- Marcelle distributed the updated Office of Emergency Services activity sheet.
- Herb Hastings, the Client's Rights Advocate at Regional Center of the East Bay for 17 years, indicated that he would like to be involved in our DD Council. He is currently advocating for people he knows that are losing their Section 8 housing with no safe alternatives. He asked this Council to write a letter of support to HUD for more city programs and in support of Section 8 housing in our area.

Upcoming Meetings:

May 24, 2017

June 6, 2017: (Annual Dinner @ Zio Fraedo's in Pleasant Hill)

The meeting was adjourned at 12:11 p.m.

**Our next meeting is May 24, 2017, 10:00 a.m. at
RCEB-Concord's NEW LOCATION:
1320 Willow Pass Road, Suite 300
Concord, CA 94520**

Respectfully submitted electronically by,

Carol Anne McCrary

Contra Costa ARC