

**Developmental Disabilities Council of Contra Costa County**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING (ZOOM)**  
**May 25, 2022**

**Board and Liaison Members Present:** Caroline Ortiz; Christine Rottger; Donna Feingold; Karen Lingenfelter; Kimberli Buckley; **Leslie Werosh Visbal, Vice Chairperson;** Marcelle Indelicato; Marianne Iversen; Nickole Bouslog; Pam Perls; Ria Mercado; **Rosa Valledor, Chairperson;** Stephen Dale; Suzanne Anthony; Troy Russell; Will Sanford

**Staff:** Vi Ibarra

**Board and Liaison Members Excused:** Audrua Sysum, Craig Rose, Rebecca Corbett

**Guests:** Bill Pelter, Ability Now Bay Area; Carol Anne McCrary, VistAbility; Lisa Kleinbub, RCEB; Mirna Leal, RCEB; Aimee Vitug-Hom, VistAbility; Judie Hockel, parent; Sofé Mekuria, Contra Costa Health Services; Ian Bremner, RES Success; Selene Gonzalez, The Arc of CA; Anthony Rowe, Adaptive Learning Center; Dan Hogue, Las Trampas; Stephan Betz; Kim Lewis, Workability Mt. Diablo Unified School District; Ken Talken, West Contra Costa Unified School District; Pat Engle, Mt. Diablo Unified School District, WorkAbility; Gabriela Solval, State Council of Developmental Disabilities; Patricia Albeno, The Arc of CA; Louise McClellan, Open House Center; Teresa Hernandez, parent; Christa Guinto, California Children's Services; Angela Gattis, Care Parent Network; Suzanne Castano, Dept of Rehabilitation; Cris Vasquez, Mt. Diablo Unified School District WorkAbility; Michelle Mankewich, Employment & Human Services Department, Community Services Bureau; Geneva Ziaoure, Manos Home Care; Hannah Michaelsen, Care Parent Network; Ramsay Mashy, California Autism Foundation; Maria Cortes Lamas; Krista Peterson, California Children's Services Program Administrator; Ruth Hernandez; Elvia Osorio-Rodriguez, RCEB; Maria Teresa; Isela Benavides; Rosario Contreras, Care Parent Network; Laura Hernandez; Mary Pacheco

**Welcome and Introductions:** Rosa welcomed everyone and the meeting started at 10:04 a.m. With respect to the tragic incident in Uvalde, Texas, Rosa said that now is not a time for silence but to speak up. Sadly, there were 19 students and two teachers killed, including a special education teacher. The time is now to contact your local representatives and demand change regardless of where you see yourself on this issue.

Today's presentation was in Spanish. Guests were asked to make a selection on Zoom to hear it in Spanish or have it translated to English.

Vi took board attendance and it was determined a quorum was established. The meeting minutes of April 27, 2022 were approved as presented with Marianne and Will abstaining (M/Troy Russell, S/Nickole Bouslog). There were no additions to today's agenda.

**UPDATES:**

### **Contra Costa Health Services by Dr. Sofé Mekuria, CCHS Deputy Health Officer:**

Dr. Sofé shared a brief PowerPoint presentation on Covid-19. See attached slides for her complete report.

Currently, in Contra Costa County:

- We are seeing an increase in Covid positive cases and a slight increase in hospitalizations. The numbers are stable but County public health is still watching closely.
- 82.6% of residents are fully vaccinated and, of those, 59% who are eligible for the booster are boosted.
- There are less people who live in long term care facilities dying from Covid-19, due to infection prevention and mitigation.
- Boosters have been approved for 5 to 11 years old.

There are lots of tools available to prevent and treat Covid-19: vaccines, masks, tests, and treatments including anti-viral pills. Paxlovid, an oral pill, is recommended for anyone who has symptoms but works best if given within 5 days of the start of symptoms. It is available free of charge. And, there are other treatments if someone cannot take Paxlovid.

The County has launched a new initiative called the “Path to Zero” linking people to treatment regardless of vaccination status. Testing is widely available – through County clinics located in places with higher rates of infection, healthcare providers, and a new round of free antigen tests from the Federal government.

Additionally, the State has test-to-treat sites where a person who tests positive for Covid-19 can be linked to treatment and offered a prescription. Rosa asked if the test-to-treat sites are offered by Contra Costa County – currently this is not available at County testing sites.

### **RCEB Report by Lisa Kleinbub, Executive Director:**

Covid-19 cases within RCEB continue to be up, the same as other populations.

On a Statewide level, the 2022-2023 May revision to the Governor’s budget proposes to:

- reinstate family fees for kids under 18 applying to respite and camping services as of January 2023. This has been suspended for over 2 years due to Covid-19 and would apply to families whose income is 600% over the poverty line (vs. the previous 400% requirement). The Regional Center wants to see these fees eliminated as it prevents people from utilizing services and some families are not comfortable providing income information; and
- expand Early Start by reducing eligibility criteria. For example, a child would be deemed eligible if found to have a 25% delay in one area vs. a 33% delay. Also, speech delays would be divided into expressive and language, as well as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) being added due to the high risk for I/DD; and

- provide two \$500 stipends for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), tied to completing certain educational activities; and
- in the Self Determination Program (SDP), moving the cost of Financial Management Services out of the individual's budget and instead having it be a separate item that is paid for in a different way. This is good news!

Christine Rottger commented on family fees possibly being reinstated. Early Intervention fully supports that it be off the table.

The revised Budget does NOT contain any proposal to move rate implementation up. It is still an important advocacy effort of the community!

Today at 3:00 p.m., RCEB will hold a meeting to talk about current case load ratios. This meeting is required to get feedback from the community about the new positions that will be coming into the Regional Centers and how the 2022-2023 funding should be allocated, separate from the Early Start discussions. There has been some feedback that it should go towards SDP caseloads.

RCEB has received \$1.4M dollars to develop language access and cultural competency plan – in other words, to translate materials that should be made accessible to everyone. The funds can be used to translate and interpret public meetings as well, and will not be limited to one year but ongoing. During the first year, RCEB will assess and work with community to identify needs. As an example, 1% of the RCEB population is Native American and outreach efforts can be stronger. Once developed, the plan will be posted on the RCEB website.

Bill Pelter mentioned a recent article: "[For Californians with special needs, getting to see a dentist can take years](#)" and asked if anything is on the horizon to shorten that time frame. Lisa acknowledged that the problem with dental is that it is separated from general medical care. And, access has become even worse during the pandemic. There is one bill that would fund equipment in the operating room and Contra Costa County's Health Services has been working on authorizing treatment in the operating room.

Caroline was curious to know if the State has brought up the compression issue with unanticipated increase in minimum wage. Lisa replied the State has not. It's one of the biggest problems we have in terms of how rates have been established. Advocacy is needed to push for the rate implementation to be moved up. These links can be used to advocate for the acceleration:

- Lanterman Coalition Action Alert: <http://TheFutureIncludesUs.org>
- Ability Path- Action Portal- Send Messages to Governor Newsom and your Local Elected Officials! <https://p2a.co/yztgIk0>
- This link has the petition in Spanish - <https://p2a.co/mqzffb0>

**State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) Bay Area Office Report by Sheraden Nicholau:**

Sheraden did not attend today's meeting and Gabriela Solval reported on her behalf. The June calendar includes the Employment First committee meeting on June 6<sup>th</sup> and the Statewide Committee meetings that will be held on June 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. Go to this link to find all events and meetings: <https://scdd.ca.gov/councilcalendar/>.

The Fair Housing Rights for People with Disabilities Part 2 will be held on May 26<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00-11:30 a.m. Registration is required. To register, go to: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_a92JkJtSREuIV5p5zwvcwb](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_a92JkJtSREuIV5p5zwvcwb)

Department of Rehabilitation and Cal HR will have a virtual job fair on June 1<sup>st</sup>. For information and to register, go to this link <https://www.acsedonline.org/leap/>.

They still have PPE. If you have a need, email Sheraden.

### **Council Chairperson Report by Rosa Valledor:**

It's not too late to register for the Annual Awards Dinner coming up on June 9<sup>th</sup>!

The Board typically meets in August for annual planning but we do not hold a full, regular meeting. This is still a public meeting where all are welcome. This year, the meeting will be on August 24<sup>th</sup> and we are trying to decide whether it should be in-person or virtual. Las Trampas has offered the use of a very large room at their beautiful new site in Lafayette. We are putting it on the radar now and can make a decision in June on if the board is comfortable planning for an in-person meeting or would prefer to meet virtually.

In today's packet, you will find the:

- 2022-2023 Proposed Board Roster
- 2022-2023 Proposed Meeting Schedule – 4<sup>th</sup> Wed of the month except for November because of Thanksgiving, and no meetings in July or December.

Thank you to Angela Gattis for helping to promote today's presentation.

### **Executive Assistant to the Council Report by Vi Ibarra:**

Vi explained how to select the language of choice – Spanish or English – by clicking on the interpretation icon on Zoom. Zoom doesn't tell us how many people listen in Spanish or English. She asked everyone to enter a note in Chat so that she can gauge on how many people use Spanish interpretation.

As a follow-up to last month's presentation on the Specialty Health Ambassador program, Vi said there are no official job postings yet. But stay tuned! As soon as the jobs are posted and application instructions are available, she will blast out communication far and wide. In the meantime, don't hesitate to contact Vi with any questions.

**Board Membership Report by Audrua Sysum:** In Audrua's absence, Rosa reported that the Board currently has two openings. There will be four open seats when we start the new year. See the Proposed Board Roster for 2022-23.

## **Committee Liaison Reports:**

CCTA Paratransit Coordinating Council (Vi Ibarra): Vi was on vacation during the May meeting and did not have anything to report. The next meeting will be in July.

### East Bay Legislative Coalition (EBLC) (Will Sanford):

Will reported that we are currently in the Budget season. Overall, the Governor's May revision shows a \$1.6B increase for us, noting:

- There was a lot agreed to like the implementation of the rate study and looking at the case manager ratios.
- Something that is interesting is how it proposes to promote workforce stability with stipends for DSPs and managers with funding of \$185M. It's not clear how this will help to attract and retain staff.
- Funding for FMS service in Self-Determination will no longer need to come out of a person's individual budget, it will instead be paid outside of the budget.
- It extends Alternative Service Delivery through December 31, 2022.
- It eliminates half-day billing, which is huge!

In other policy news is the expansion of Tailored Day Services (TDS) allowing people to access both TDS and traditional services (like day programs, employment services) at the same time.

Another interesting item is the Workforce Data Survey that all vendors were invited to complete. If completed and submitted, a vendor may receive an incentive payment of at least \$8K. Deadline for submission is June 30<sup>th</sup>.

ELBC is tracking a number of bills that are about to hit deadlines. If you want to address support for any action that is out there, contact Assembly Subcommittee 1 and/or Senate Subcommittee 3.

### Emergency Planning Engagement (Carol McCrary):

The Don't Be Scared Be Prepared tool (DBSBP) is now available in Russian, Bulgarian, and Farsi in addition to Cantonese, Spanish and English. We hope that RCEB can post it as a resource on their website.

The Emergency Operations Center canceled the earthquake exercise that was planned for this month due to rising Covid-19 cases and an outbreak at the Office Emergency Services.

It's drought season and there are wildfires starting in Napa, Vacaville. Be careful and stay safe!

Committee on Aging (Marianne Iversen): Marianne did not have any updates. There was not a meeting in May. The next one is scheduled for June 14<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

HireAble (Donna Feingold):

Donna reported on the May 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting when they had a panel presentation on staff recruitment, which is a huge issue for everyone right now. There are not enough job coaches or job developers to support people. They discussed strategies with partner and staffing agencies. One panelist commented that it has been the worst she has ever seen as far as recruiting. The number one issue is salary and many wanting flexibility in schedules.

The next meeting will be on June 27<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. They will have a speaker present on Cal-Able, which allows people to have resources over \$2K without affecting their Social Security benefits. All are welcome!

Transition Task Force (Becky Wieringa): Becky did not attend today's meeting and there was not a report.

Mental Health Commission (Pam Perls):

Vi is going to speak to Commission about their services – there are a lot of discussions on working together. The challenge is getting the Board of Supervisors and behavioral services to review contracts. The Quality of Care Committee is gathering mental health data from elementary schools. There is no central database on what MH supports the schools offer, so they are basically starting from scratch with this effort.

**\*Una descripción general de los sistemas de servicio: comprensión de  
"¿Quién hace qué?" \*  
An Overview of Service Systems: Understanding "Who Does What?"  
Presented by Celeste Palmer, Disability Rights California**

Today's presentation was in Spanish with English interpretation. Celeste provided a lot of valuable information and a summary of it is below. See attached slides for the complete presentation.

The Office of Clients Rights Advocacy (OCRA) has been serving all 21 Regional Centers since 1999 and is a defender of clients for each Regional Center. The OCRA can represent you on anything related to your rights as a disabled person such as special education, Social Security, IHSS, Department of Rehabilitation, etc. You must be a client of a Regional Center in order to access services through OCRA. All services are free.

Every person that is served out of Regional Center has a service coordinator assigned to them. If someone doesn't like their service coordinator (or case manager), they have a legal right to change. You have to contact the case manager's supervisor and communicate what you want. If you need to find out who the RCEB supervisor is, you can call the RCEB office in San Leandro at 510-618-6100 and ask the receptionist.

A good practice is to make any requests in writing. For example, if you want to make changes to your IPP (the contract between a client and the Regional Center), you will have to meet with the RCEB case manager. Make the request in writing and RCEB then has 30 days to respond after you make your request.

If RCEB denies a request for service or support, they have to give a decline in writing and also provide you with information about your rights and how to appeal. This is called a Notice of Action (NOA). You have 30 days to appeal once you receive a NOA. An important thing to know is that your service has to continue until the appeal process ends.

For more information about rights under the Lanterman Act go to RULA Derechos Conforme a la ley Lanterman (Disability Rights California: Rights Under the Lanterman Act): <https://rula.disabilityrightsca.org/es/>. Celeste recommended that everyone read it – know your rights!

Sometimes RCEB does not have enough case managers that speak Spanish. They have a contract with “La Familia” to provide case managers who speak Spanish. It is the same as having a case manager at RCEB.

For parents of school-aged children:

- School districts have to carry out an assessment of your student every 3 years. They cannot do it unless the parent agrees to it. If you request an assessment, the school district has 60 days to look into it and have an IEP meeting to discuss the results.
- The IEP is a legal document and it is very important to read it completely before signing it. Read all of it! IEPs don't expire - it stays enforced until the next one is signed. If the school district wants changes that you don't agree with, you can sign the new IEP making an exception for that change and keep the original service.
- If a school does not follow the IEP or the required time periods, you can file a complaint with the Department of Education (DOE).
- Family Resource Centers (FRCs) are staffed with parents of kids with I/DD. They provide training, resources and support to other parents, and each agency reflects the unique needs of its community. In Contra Costa County, the FRC is Care Parent Network. In Alameda County, it is Family Resource Navigators.

On Social Security benefits:

- You can be eligible for SSI or SSDI. Social Security will send you a packet that you have to fill out and return within 60 days of making the request for benefits. The date of your phone call to them will be taken as the date of the application or when your benefits begin.
- It is very important to appeal any decisions that say you do not qualify. They deny almost all applications. OCRA has a list of attorneys that can help you. If you win,

the attorney will be paid from the benefits you receive. If you lose, there is no cost to you.

- Anyone who gets SSI automatically gets Medi-Cal.

Teresa thanked Celeste for the great information and asked if there is a book for people not good with technology. Celeste said information is available on the Internet or you can make an appointment with OCRA to meet face-to-face. There is not a hard-copy resource right now.

Rosa announced that Congreso Familiar will have a workshop on this same information. It will be on June 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. and registration is required. Presentación sobre el seguro social el 6/4 a las 10am. Regístrese en la página web de Congreso Familiar: <http://www.congresofamiliar.org/>

Celeste shared an announcement of her own – she is retiring after 22 years! When you call her office after June 3<sup>rd</sup> you will be helped by someone else. At this time, she is the only one at her office who speaks Spanish.

#### **Public Comment and Announcements:**

Rosa commented that this was the first time for many of us to receive information through an interpreter. It is important to have a good interpreter – someone who speaks Spanish is not enough, and not anyone can do it. We were lucky to have Paul to help with the interpretation and our experience today!

Public comments and links shared in Chat:

- Article "[Undocumented Californians Will Soon Receive Access to Medi-Cal Coverage](#)"
- Changes for Medi-Cal - under AB 133 - goes into effect in July. The resource limit is about to be raised to \$130,000 and documentation for non-citizens is loosening up dramatically. For information on the resource limit go to <https://vimeo.com/691618912>

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 11:51 a.m.

**Next meeting will be held on June 22, 2022 at 10:00 am.  
Look for a Zoom invitation from Vi Ibarra.**

Respectfully submitted electronically by,

*Aimee Vitug-Hom*  
VistAbility