

MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
COASTAL DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES FOUNDATION
APRIL 10, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Joseph Allen
JoanElaine Anderson
Nilo Choudhry
Cammy DuPont
Zoe Giesberg
Myra Mezquita
Betty Pearson-Grimble
Todd Rubien
Alejandro Soschin
Russell Tanner
Sofia Vergara
David Wyles
Vanda Yung

MEMBERS ABSENT: Austin Dove, Elizabeth Espinosa, Phil Jackson

STAFF PRESENT: Carmine Manicone, Vanessa Arauza, Lisa Basiri, Linda Butler, Danny Franco, Cesar Garcia, Tom Kelly, Hillary Kessler, Rhiannon Maycumber, Megan Mendes, Anjanette Robinson, Aga Spatzier, Liz Spencer, Martha Thompson, Mary Lou Weise-Stusser

GUESTS: Greg Andres, Antonieta Azul, Ernest Bailey, Raymundo Blanco, Zakir Choudhry, Trisha Lurie Cozine, Mike Davis, Rayvone Douthard, Sylvia Fahimian, Danny Feingold, Felicia Ford, Josh Franklin, Steve Goclowski, Roger Gonzalez, Kahiir Hall, Rushan Herbert, Jenny Hernandez, Beverly Hutchinson, Linda Jackson, Marcia James, Esther Kelsey, Bassam Khulusi, Rosie Lasca, Adriana Madrigal, Victor Marquez, David Mezquita, Joanna Montes, Barbara McCants, Sacha Naschinski, Karina Aruna Ortiz, Samantha Persoff, Francisco Pineda, Sandy Rubenfeld, Robert Schwartz, Matthew Seymour, Mario Smith, Alexander Soto, Maria Soto, Heather Trice, Felisha Williams, Wesley Witherspoon, Ayode Woods

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Board President, Alejandro Soschin, at 6:17p.m.

ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM:

It was established that the members present represented a quorum necessary pursuant to Section 3.03 (g) of the bylaws of Westside Regional Center which states:

(g) Quorum

A quorum of the Board of Directors shall consist of nine (9) members of the corporation. Provided, however, that a quorum of the Board of Directors shall consist of a majority of the Directors then in office at any time when the number of Directors then in office is less than ten (10)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Alejandro Soschin, Board President, welcomed everyone to Westside Regional Center. Guests introduced themselves. Sofia Vergara, Board Member, read the WRC Mission Statement.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Anjanette Robinson, WRC Staff, invited the community to attend the next African American Parent Support Group. It meets the third Thursday of every month from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. This month, the speaker will be an Intern from the Achievable Clinic. Game Gen will make a presentation. Flyers are available. To a general question, a list of the WRC vendors is posted on the website.

Cammy DuPont, Board Treasurer, mentioned the spreading of misinformation by a staff member who inaccurately thought the board was trying to take away an important service that is provided onsite by a vendor. The much larger issue for her is trust, and the misinformation that is spread. It is important if the staff believe that there is a concern with the board they can come to the board and talk to them about it. The board is trying to be transparent on what they are doing. There are issues with a vendor that was brought to their attention. She stated that as a member of the board and parent with two children who are consumers, her motive is to see all WRC consumers get what they need and is not trying to take anything away on services people rely on. She hopes that if anyone has questions, please feel free to ask and talk directly to them.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Alejandro Soschin, Board President, reported they are here to communicate and provide clarity. We recognize the amazing accomplishments of the hard working people at WRC, appreciate the tremendous individuals we serve and their dedicated families, and also want to have the 10,000 consumers we serve have access to those things others take for granted. The large majority of the things that happen here are overwhelmingly positive. There was a letter sent by the mother of a consumer who recently passed away and it gives tremendous pride to be a part of WRC. When they ask difficult questions or try to inquire how something is working or how it can work better, it is coming from a spirit of recognizing the unique value this organization brings to so many people's lives and not wanting to be complacent about that. We can all communicate better. There is still a lot of work to be done. We want there to be partnership. If anyone sees a situation that does not seem okay, they need to communicate it with the board. This is an opportunity for everyone to learn. They will do their best to answer any questions, unless there is a legal reason they cannot answer it.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE MARCH 6, 2019 BOARD MEETING.

(ACTION*)

Todd Rubien, Board Co-Secretary (Motion) and Sofia Vergara, Board Member (Second) the approval of the March 6, 2019 Board Meeting Minutes.

RESOLUTION: APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE MARCH 6, 2019 BOARD MEETING.

No public comment. The motion Passed:

13 AYES

0 NO

0 ABSTENTIONS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Carmine Manicone thanked Alejandro as well as the other board members for their work and mentioned he works alongside a great group of people who really are striving for better. Carmine introduced Hillary Kessler, as the new Director of Adult Services. Carmine acknowledged the 'Rights exhibit' art work in the back of the room by Barbara Sultan's The Lotus Project, created by individuals served by Westside Regional Center. It depicts the rights of individuals with developmental disabilities. The Lotus Project works through art and therapies to help them communicate their feelings and develop strategies to break the cycle of abuse. Danny Franco was thanked for coming in on the weekend to put up the large artwork.

Carmine provided a summary of his report, and copies are in the back. Carmine acknowledged Zoe Giesberg, Joan Elaine Anderson, Maria Soto, Alexander Soto, Heather Trice, Greg and Charmiley Andres who attended this year's Grassroots Day. The family of Timothy Downes, an individual served by Westside Regional Center, sent a letter after he passed away. They praised Stephen Browning, the aging specialist at WRC as a great resource. He helped make Timothy's life more comfortable the last couple of years. It is a testament to what they do at WRC. Alejandro Soschin commended those individuals who attended Grassroots Day as well as those who attended the local rally. He noted that KTLA covered the local rally on the 10 PM news with news reporter and board member Elizabeth Espinosa.

BUSINESS ASSOCIATE REPORT - ACHIEVABLE

Alejandro Soschin explained that Achievable determined that they will no longer be reporting at Westside Regional Center's Board meetings. Achievable is an independent 501(c)(3) and is not a committee to the Board. They are always welcome to attend and be placed on the agenda for a Board meeting, but they have no statutory requirement to present at WRC Board Meetings.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE

Cammy DuPont reported they are required to have an outside accounting firm do an audit on the Regional Center and it was recently conducted. Normally, a partner of the accounting firm will come to the board meeting to answer any questions, but he was not

able to attend today. The Committee decided to table the file and receipt of the report until they can have the auditor be present. Alejandro Soschin added that the Finance Committee did meet with the auditor a couple of weeks ago and the committee was able to go through the audited report, have a session to ask questions, and then have a closed session after. Cammy added that the Finance report from Danny Franco is available in the packets and in the back. They also had Mary Lou Weise-Stusser as a special guest in their Finance meeting today. Cammy thanked Mary Lou for preparing a summary sheet with plain English. Mary Lou went over the summary on the two housing contracts the Board will need to vote on.

APPROVAL OF THE HOUSING CONTRACT 1 WITH ENHANCED BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS HOME FOR CHILDREN FOR \$800,000. (ACTION*)
David Wyles, Board Member (Motion) and Vanda Yung, Board Member (Second)
the approval of the housing contract 1 with Enhanced Behavioral Supports Home for children for \$800,000.

RESOLUTION: APPROVAL OF THE HOUSING CONTRACT 1 WITH ENHANCED BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS HOME FOR CHILDREN FOR \$800,000.

No public comment. The motion Passed:

11 AYES

0 NO

2 ABSTENTIONS

APPROVAL OF THE HOUSING CONTRACT 2 WITH FAMILY TEACHING HOME FOR \$750,000. (ACTION*)

David Wyles, Board Member (Motion) and Sofia Vergara, Board Member (Second)
the approval of the housing contract 2 with Family Teaching Home for \$750,000.

RESOLUTION: APPROVAL OF THE HOUSING CONTRACT 2 WITH FAMILY TEACHING HOME FOR \$750,000.

No public comment. The motion Passed:

11 AYES

0 NO

2 ABSTENTIONS

CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Todd Rubien acknowledged Barbara Sultan and Carmine for putting together the project displayed in the boardroom, and thanked Carmine for doing a special POS presentation for CAC. CAC continues on their ongoing campaign for the rights of the WRC clients. They attended a State Council meeting in Glendale with Chris Arroyo last month. They also did the rally in Van Nuys, as well as attended a breakfast with Karen Bass at USC.

POLITICAL ACTION & OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Zoe Giesberg thanked everyone who attended Grassroots Day and Alejandro Soschin for his support. The Committee met last night and does not have a written report. They created a phone bank and postcard writing event tentatively scheduled on April 22nd from 2:00pm to 6:00pm at WRC to rally people into calling State Assembly Members and

State Senators to advocate for the 8% increase. Everyone is invited to attend. Zoe is working on scripts. Megan Mendes announced that they are working on a flyer for this event and it will be translated into Spanish.

CLIENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

David Wyles, Chair, reported the committee met today. They are working on personal assistant and specialized supervision standards for adults and children. They should have something ready to present to the board in a month or two.

ARCA

Zoe Giesberg filed the report and copies are in the back. Zoe provided a helpful overview summary. Alejandro thanked Zoe for her dedicated ARCA involvement.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Alejandro Soschin mentioned they are working with Envision Consulting and are in the process of bringing someone on in an interim basis to help with critical HR functions. They then will collaborate for a supportive search to bring in a HR Director that will reflect the diversity of our community, and the importance of having an inclusive approach to hiring, training and development of staff. They are in the midst of the evaluation of the Executive Director. It is a transparent process. They do an assessment, get input from various stakeholders, a self-assessment from the Executive Director, they look at past evaluations and recommendations and feedback. They then meet with the Executive Director to go over that assessment and ask additional questions and hear additional feedback. They then take it to the entire Board, they have a discussion and make sure the entire board understands and then come up with the final determination. They are on track to complete it in the next couple of months.

SERVICE PROVIDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SPAC)

JoanElaine Anderson, SPAC Chair acknowledged Alex and Maria Soto, Heather Trice and Zoe for attending Grassroots Day. She thanked Mary Lou, Ricardo Pacheco for their support with the rate study. They did have a lot of public comment at Grassroots Day. May 2nd is when Senator Henry Stern's letter is being presented at the Budget Committee to the Governor. They are doing a telethon and letter writing with CAC on April 22nd. Mary Lou acknowledged JoanElaine for her advocacy involvement.

FAMILY RESOURCE AND EMPOWERMENT CENTER

Liz Spencer reported that WRC was awarded a grant from First 5 LA to organize a set of training events for parents of infants and toddlers in the Early Start Program as well as the professionals working with them. The goal is to improve the social emotional outcome of children under five with specific focus on communication. There are training flyers in the back. Liz recognized Aga Spatzier for her work and dedication on the grant. The 2018-19 Sibling Support Group continues with once a month Saturday sessions until June. They have 25 siblings registered. In September they began their twice monthly IEP clinics. These clinics are designed to support preschoolers exiting Early Start who will not be staying with the Regional Center at age three. They are able to provide support to the older than preschool students who do not qualify for regional center services but have IEP or 504

Plans through the school districts. They have participated in three community outreach events in March. Two of those were at local schools. On Friday, April 19th the FREC staff will be attending the Thompson Policy Institute Disability Summit at Chapman. Liz encouraged all to go on their website and pull the summary of the reports that have been posted. On May 23rd to 25th FREC will be closed as their staff will be attending 2019 Early Start Coordinator Symposium. On June 7th they will be hosting the Southern California Family Resource Center Network of California Early Start.

EQUITY COMMITTEE


Betty Pearson-Grimble reported that ongoing issues came up with ASLA and their PEP Parent Empowerment Grant not hiring and retaining African Americans working with the program. Dr. Tom Kelly reported that part of the discussion was about what money was awarded. There are three items: Enhanced Case Management, PEP, and also expanding and doing Social Media presence for WRC for advertising. They also looked at the disparity data. Felicia Ford and the African American Support Group joined the meeting. They talked about the issue of better black representation with the ASLA PEP group. They are looking at what are the obstacles as they have done outreach. The Committee will follow-up with ASLA PEP and ask what are some of the barriers, why are people not staying, what do they need to do to encourage retention.

The project was designed specifically to combat inequality. Felicia Ford stated she brought it up a year ago in February and again a year ago in May. The design was for black people to help black people. Rosie Lasca, Autism Society of Los Angeles PEP, mentioned they have hired African Americans. As recently as three weeks ago they had an African American mother who was working for PEP, but due to transportation and other issues, she was not able to continue with the project. They have 30% families that are African American and 70% of the referrals are Latino. They have to consider the demographics and they are working on reaching out to the African American community and attend the monthly African American Support Group. Rosie stated it is a difficult and taxing kind of employment due to the long hours. It is a lot of work to do case management that includes late hours and weekends. Alejandro questioned Rosie as she made an assertion that is concerning because she is implying that people of a certain demographic have not stayed because the hours are too long. Rosie said that parents of any demographics the hours are very long and taxing. Cammy commented that hearing there is 70% Latino and 30% Black there is already a failure there. She does not hear anything about Asians who also have difficulty accessing services. The implication that this work is hard and not everyone can do it is offensive. Does everyone that works for PEP work 8 or 12 hours a day? If you are trying to be inclusive and bring people on, you could be progressive and could have two people share a job. Dr. Kelly and Betty are taking the lead and getting stakeholders together. This is not a new issue and asking difficult questions will need to lead to concrete solutions. If they cannot find a way forward where everyone in the community feels that they are a part of this project, then a significant part of this project needs to be reexamined. This issue was tabled and an Equity Committee meeting will be scheduled as soon as possible to resolve this issue.

SELF DETERMINATION ADVISORY GROUP

X 

Todd Rubien
Board Co-Secretary

X 

Nilo Choudhry
Board Co-Secretary