



**STATE COUNCIL ON  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

# Boardsmanship 101: The Role of a Regional Center Board & How to Conduct Business

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# What is the Lanterman Act?

- Defines the right and responsibilities of people with developmental disabilities and their families
- Establishes a network of regional centers and identifies the role of regional centers
  - To provide community services for people with developmental disabilities
- Identifies the role of the Council

# Basic Principles of the Lanterman Act

- **Entitlement** to services
- Identifies the role of regional centers – service coordination, advocacy, interagency collaboration, specialists, etc.
- Services based on **individual** needs
- Services focused on helping people to be more independent and participate in their communities
- Services to help children remain with their families

# Role of the Board

- Strategic planning
- Supervision, hiring, and termination of the Executive Director
- Review financials and approve contracts over \$250k
- Review and/or set policies
- Performance contracts
- Engage with the public and public relations
- Ensure the quality of services WRC provides

# Role of the Board (cont.)

- Review and ensure WRC staff are providing linguistically and culturally appropriate services
- Self-governance
  - Operate transparently, recruitment, ethics
- Report conflicts of interest
- Recruit and train new board members
  - Submit to DDS that the composition of the board is in compliance with the law
- The bylaws are current and followed

# Board Vs. Staff Responsibilities

## Board

- Be inclusive
- Make and review policies
- Ensures the law and bylaws are being followed, agency properly managed
- Evaluates, hires, & fires ED
- Strategic planning
- Represents agency to public

## Staff

- Be inclusive
- Implements policies, provides info to the board to make & revise them
- Compiles info, regularly reports to the board, alerts board if illegal or unethical issues may occur
- Hires & evaluates all other personnel
- Helps and participates with strategic planning
- Represents agency to public

# Board Member Obligations

- Make sure the regional center is following all rules and laws
- Attend meetings
- Read your packets, get the information you need
  - Ask questions
- Share your ideas, opinions, and feelings
- Know the WRC Bylaws
  - <http://tinyurl.com/zwyjd88>

# Avoiding Conflicts

- Ethics
- Conflicts of Interest
- How to handle it
  - Disclose it
  - Recuse yourself
  - Leave the room
  - Do not vote
- What if you are unsure?



# Committees

- The job of committees
- Standing committees
- Advisory committees
- Executive committees
- Set goals and action plans
- How many committees?

# Complaints

- Fair hearings
  - DRC's Fair Hearing Packet:  
<http://tinyurl.com/h3ba6gu>
- §4731 Complaints
  - <http://tinyurl.com/zcyp68t>
- Whistleblower Complaints
  - <http://tinyurl.com/zepvbww>
- Grievances

# Officers

- **Board Chair**
  - Chairs the meetings, enforces bylaws, ensures board receives training, recognizes those who wish to speak
  - Works closely with the ED, works with the board to evaluate the ED
  - The face to the community
  - Appoints committee members, ensures they work effectively
- **Vice Chair**
  - Helps the Chair, serves as Chair in their absence
  - Succession planning
- **Secretary**
  - Maintains records, agenda, board attendance

# A Note on Working with Others

- Make expectations clear
- Start with self-advocates
- Be nice!
- Embrace respectful disagreement
  - Focus on the issues, don't personalize debate
- Be inclusive
- Summarize choices, actions, discussions
- Parliamentary procedure is supposed to serve the interest and work of the board

# A Note on Working with Others (cont.)

- Gain consensus
- Advocate for EVERYONE
- Onboarding
- When you speak, try to be:
  - Dignified
  - Logical
  - Accurate
  - Useful
  - Short
- Choose your tone carefully
- Clear and concise

# (Open) Meeting Requirements

- WIC §4660-4669
- All meetings must be open to the public
  - Except retreats [§4660(b)]
- Public must be given the opportunity to give input before any board action
  - Also, for any item **not** on the agenda during public input
- Keep a mailing list of those who want the agenda sent to them

# (Open) Meeting Requirements

- All materials distributed at or prior to the meeting are public documents and must be made available to the public
- Recording the meeting must be permitted
  - What if it's disruptive?
- Can do emergency meetings
  - Any activity which severely impairs public health, safety, or both as determined by a majority of the members of the regional center board
  - Must notify SCDD Los Angeles

# (Open) Meeting Requirements

- Closed sessions are permitted only for:
  - Real estate negotiations
  - The appointment, employment, evaluation of performance, or dismissal of a regional center employee
  - Employee salaries and benefits
  - Labor contract negotiations
  - Pending litigation
  - Any matter specifically dealing with a particular regional center client except when it is requested that the issue be discussed publicly by the client/client's conservator/parent if the client is a minor



# (Open) Meeting Requirements

- Closed session procedures
  - Must indicate before and after the closed session for what purpose was the closed session held
  - Must keep minutes, but they're not public

# Parliamentary Principles

- Order – there must be orderly procedure
- Equality – all members are equal before the rule or law
- Justice – that is, "justice for all"
- Right of the minority to be heard
- Right of the majority to rule the organization
  - Consensus, respect, & differing opinions

# Parliamentary Procedure

- Provides the right to know what will be discussed in advance
- Motions are used to make decisions and take formal action
- Nothing else can be done until the motion is considered

# Parliamentary Procedure

- Must be seconded before any action can be taken
  - Take public comment before voting on a motion
- Motion should include who, what, and when
- Should be precise
- Motions should always be in the affirmative

# Resources

- WRC Governance Page
  - <http://tinyurl.com/gs8yvtz>
- WRC Bylaws
  - <http://tinyurl.com/zwyjd88>
- WRC Staff!



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**THE END  
THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!**

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