

Minutes
ARCA Board of Directors
March 17, 2023
Westin Sacramento and via Webinar

Board of Directors Members Present:

Lori Banales, Kelly Pennington, ACRC
Ed Araim, Randy Tellalian, CVRC
Gloria Wong, ELARC
Melissa Gruhler, Dan Strauss, FNRC
Eric Zigman, Michael LoBue GGRC
Patrick Ruppe, Joe Czarske, HRC
Joshua Souder, IRC
Michi Gates, Tracey Mensch, KRC
Melinda Sullivan, Larry DeBoer, LRC
Gabriel Rogin, Rosemarie Perez, NBRC
Ruth Janka, Lety Garcia, NLACRC
Mike Sawyer, RCRC
Larry Landauer, Liza Krassner, RCOC
Lisa Kleinbub, Frank Paré, RCEB
Glendora Pitre, Javier Zaldivar, SARC
Jesse Weller, Gisele Ragusa, SG/PRC
Dexter Henderson, SCLARC
Omar Noorzad, Mark Wolfe, TCRC
Tony Anderson, Margaret Heinz, VMRC
Jane Borochoff, Vanda Yung, WRC

Board of Directors Members Absent:

Lavinia Johnson, IRC
Kim Smalley, RCRC
Jesus Murillo, SCLARC
Mark Klaus, Terri Colachis, SDRC

ARCA Advisory Representatives

Andreas Economopoulos, FNRC, Chair, ARCA Client Advisory Committee
Don Meza, IRC, Co-Chair, Directors of Client Services

Pamela Crabaugh, TCRC, Co-Chair, Directors of Client Services
Aaron Olson, CVRC, Co-Chair, Community Services Directors

Guests Present:

Nancy Bargmann, Brian Winfield, Carla Castañeda, Jim Knight, DDS
Edith Arias, GGRC
Ronke Sodipo, RCEB
Maureen Fitzgerald
Mani Gaur
Anh Nguyen
Scott Rice
Ami Sullivan
Tammy Torum

ARCA Staff Present:

Amy Westling, Darline Dupree, Sidney Jackson, Daniel Savino, Vivian Umenei, Sally Williams, Rick Rollens

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 AM by President Mark Wolfe.

Introductions

Full introductions were made around the room and the internet.

Approval of Agenda

The Board of Directors agenda was presented.

M/S/C: To approve the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the January 20, 2023 Board of Directors meeting were presented for approval.

M/S/C: To approve the minutes.

Public Comment

Mani Gaur, whose daughter is served by TCRC, presented on the possible merits of improved data tracking of authorized, versus utilized, services to better identify unmet or underserved needs.

The Brochure Project

Ronke Sodipo described a project RCEB has completed, providing a holistic overview of the services the center provides, as well as general types of services available (with particular reference to age group).

President's Report

Mark Wolfe is working on ideas to improve the efficiency of the ARCA meeting structure. More details will be provided in the near future.

DDS Report

Nancy Bargmann reports that, with today being the deadline for compliance with the federal Home and Community-Based Services Final Rule, out of all service providers statewide, only one has not submitted a compliance plan, and eight have documents still pending verification. She also described examples of various projects regional centers are doing that align with the Final Rule and broader goals in service delivery.

Brian Winfield reports that just under 2,500 people are currently enrolled in the Self-Determination Program as of the end of February. While monthly enrollments had trended towards ~90 people per month growth statewide, more recent data shows this growing to over 100. He also noted that enrollment trends by ethnicity do not match state population ratios. The Department is, separately, working on robust support for financial management services to enhance stability of this key component of SDP.

Mr. Winfield also updated the Board on various incentive programs. Implementation of the tuition reimbursement programs is ongoing; guidance is anticipated later this month. Direct support professional (DSP) trainings are being developed, which will be paired with a stipend upon completion. More information should be available later this month. This is different from, but related to, the "DSP University," which will have three tiers of training that tie to permanent ongoing wage increases. Separately, the Department is working on guidance for regional centers related to bilingual stipends for DSPs. Lastly, the technology services pilot project is being started with two regional centers for initial implementation.

Other points of note:

- Work continues on the development of performance measures and incentive payments that prioritize outcomes. Among other elements, employment will be a priority.
- The high-intensity needs workgroup is being reconvened.
- A Deaf Services steering committee will launch shortly, with the goal of more broadly examining the community's needs. Among other initiatives, a communications needs assessment tool is planned for development.
- DDS focus groups will start shortly to look at various family fees.

Treasurer's Report – Gloria Wong

While the fiscal year end remains just over three months away, current expenditures are above budgeted projections due to new and expanded meeting expenses.

M/S/C: To accept the financial statements for February 2022

ARCA Executive Director's Report – Amy Westling

Regional Center Performance Measures Overview and Update

Regional centers continue to work on improved measurement and tracking of data, with the goal of directly leading to better outcomes for people served. Service impact measurement is a fundamental part of this, making the ongoing work to develop and refine regional center performance measures particularly significant. The refinement of a lengthy list of specific measures (*e.g.*, staff linguistic diversity, Early Start time between referral and service planning, etc.) is ongoing. Current work is also ongoing to develop not only these data components, but a new data system to replace existing information technology infrastructure.

FY 2023-24 Budget Update

This year's January Budget includes additional funding for regional centers to hire service coordinators at reduced caseloads for children ages 0-5, correcting prior cost estimates. This significant positive change now forms the basis of ARCA's argument that the entire Core Staffing Formula's inherent challenges and underfunding can and should be resolved by applying Department-generated funding levels across regional centers' operations. Assemblymember Joaquin Arambula (CVRC catchment) has agreed to champion this request, asking for \$64.6M General Fund in immediate and ongoing funding, sufficient to fully resolve regional centers' long-running underfunding.

Separately, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is developing Trailer Bill Language that looks to create an automatic, minimum wage-related rate adjustment mechanism for service providers. DDS is also soliciting workgroup feedback on family fees.

The next Budget hearing will be on Thursday, March 23rd, in Senate Budget Subcommittee #3.

Little Hoover Commission Follow-Up

The Commission's report is anticipated in April, presumably before a special hearing in Assembly Budget Subcommittee #1, on both the report and a Georgetown University study on the effectiveness of the state's Service Access and Equity grants. Work is ongoing to complete four areas of operation improvements that regional centers proactively committed to, in service of better individual and family experiences. No immediate challenges have arisen in Data Transparency, Vendorization, and Intake. However, creating the Family Support Needs Assessment may require expert consulting work, given its significant nuance.

2023 In-Person ARCA Academy Sessions

Work to re-launch the in-person Academy continues. Two substantially identical events are slated for Saturday, April 29th (in Sacramento) and Saturday, May 6th (in Pomona). All regional center board members are encouraged to attend. A save-the-date flyer has been distributed, and additional information will be provided as appropriate.

Legislative Report – Eric Zigman

Bills for Consideration of a Formal Position

The full roster of bills with a recommended formal position was reviewed by the committee. Staff provided additional details on SB 88 (Skinner), AB 222 (Arambula), AB 761 (Friedman), and SB 525 (Durazo), as well as an informational update on AB 649 (Wilson), ARCA's sponsored bill for the year.

M/S/C To adopt the recommended positions

Other Bills (advisory)

Updates were provided on various bills that are being tracked by ARCA, including AB 1031 (Rubio), AB 1147 (Addis), SB 463 (Wahab), SB 483 (Cortese), and SB 686 (Durazo).

Legislative and Budget Updates

Of most significance is that the vast majority of California residents will be able to file their taxes by October 15th. This delay will significantly affect Budget forecasting.

Federal Updates

President Biden's proposed federal budget includes significant new funding for special education. While this is very much a messaging exercise, it may provide one area of commonality in ongoing negotiations over the annual budget.

Grassroots Day – March 29th

Work is ongoing, in the usual fashion, to schedule all meetings and develop the back-end supports needed for this Zoom-based events.

Capitol Briefing Day

This year's event was sponsored by Sen. Marie Alvarado-Gil and Asm. Corey Jackson, and featured speakers representing six major system categories: DDS, regional centers, people served, families, providers, and ARCA. Over fifty legislative staff attended.

Committee/Task Force Reports

Executive Committee – Mark Wolfe

All topics discussed were addressed today.

Board Delegates Group – Tracey Mensch

The Board Delegates met last night. They discussed how Assembly Bill 1147 would affect regional center boards. They also talked about how they can be advocates at the next Budget hearing, and what kind of advocacy they do individually, and as boards, locally.

Directors Group – Gabriel Rogin

The Group discussed the implementation of remote behavioral services, a proposal related to mental health and forensic needs, and regional center performance measures, specifically the definition of "service coordinator competency."

Finance Committee – Lisa Kleinbub

The Committee met with DDS yesterday. The first allocation for the next fiscal year should be expected on July 17th. Discussions are ongoing related to payments tied to performance incentive. The group also reviewed a recent survey on technology costs in a remote-work environment and overlap between those costs and rent offsets.

Client Advisory Committee – Andreas Economopoulos

The ARCA CAC met on Friday February 17th. During the meeting, the committee members shared reports on the recent activities of their regional center. The group also shared results of research conducted related to affordable housing opportunities for people served by the regional center. The next ARCA CAC meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2023.

Strategic Planning Committee – Melinda Sullivan & Omar Noorzad

The Committee has not met yet, but is gathering final feedback from regional center boards on the proposed plan. Once that has been compiled, the Committee will meet to review it.

Contract Negotiating Committee – Larry Landauer

The Committee has not met.

Nominating and Bylaws Committee – Ruth Janka

The Committee has developed a slate of officers for the 2023-24 Fiscal Year, which was briefly reviewed. It will be voted on at the June annual meeting.

Old Business

Andreas Economopoulos, having recently retired from the We Care A Lot Foundation, has now transitioned to teaching piano to students with developmental disabilities.

New Business

None

Information Sharing

None

Adjournment/Next Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 AM. The next meeting will be held on June 16, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. at the Embassy Suites in Sacramento.