

Kern Regional Center (KRC)

3200 N. Sillect Avenue ∞ Bakersfield, CA 93308 ∞ 661-327-8531

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

May 25, 2021, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Zoom Webinar

KRC BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Oscar Axume, Board Member
Jasmeet Bains, MD, President
Kevin Gosselin, Treasurer
Ryan Jones, Board Member
NickoleRenee Mensch, Vice President
Donald Tobias, Board Member
Mark Tolentino, Board Member
Martin Vasquez, Secretary
Simon Verdugo, Board Member
Ruth Watterson, Board Member
Shawn White, VAC

KRC BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

All Present

STAFF PRESENT:

Michi Gates, Executive Director
Kristine Khuu, Assistant Director of Client Services
Cherylle Mallinson, Director of Community Services
Celia Pinal, Director of Client Services
Tom Wolfgram, CFO

ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Cindy Cox, Advocate for Donald Tobias
John Noriega, Advocate for Simon Verdugo
Edwin Pineda, DDS
Please see Zoom Attendee Report (attached) for complete list of attendees

INTERPRETER:

Nidya Madrigal Navia

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Jasmeet Bains, President, called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

President Bains requested a motion to accept the agenda for the Board of Directors meeting dated May 25, 2021.

M/S/C (Gosselin, Axume)

Ayes = 11; Nays = 0; Abstained = 0

Motion Carried

REVIEW OF MINUTES (Attachment 1)

All Board Members have reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting. President Bains requested a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on April 27, 2021.

Mr. Tolentino noted that the staff report did not include reasons or justification discussed for the updates in the KRC Policy C-9 Policy and questions asked by Mr. Tolentino and Mr. Gosselin were also not noted in the minutes. Also, Dr. Bains' title of President was listed incorrectly as Vice President, so



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that needs to be corrected. The meeting minutes of April 27 will, therefore, be corrected and deferred to the next meeting for a second review.

PUBLIC INPUT

Public input was presented at this meeting. A transcript of the spoken public input and Zoom chat follows these minutes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Finalization of review and pending approval of KRC Board Policy C-9 (Attachment 2)

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

KRC BOARD OF DIRECTORS PRESIDENT REPORT

Dr. Jasmeet Bains, President

President Bains opened by saying that it has been an extraordinary year. Everyone has been overwhelmed, overworked and understaffed. She acknowledged all staff and the Board Members for their hard work. COVID-19 case numbers seem to be decreasing throughout California; however, as a physician, she is concerned that Kern County's vaccination rate remains at 20%. This is low in comparison to other counties. She recommends that everyone continue to wear a mask, adhere to guidelines, and avoid mass gatherings as much as possible. Considering the population we serve - those with developmental and intellectual disabilities - we need to do all we can to protect ourselves, be good stewards, and lead by example.

Also, President Bains voiced that she will be proposing a closed session meeting with the Board within the next couple of weeks to address the public input that was brought forward today. Every person on the Board has been very aware of all issues. We want to make sure that we are representing all KRC staff and clients fairly and properly.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Tom Wolfgram, Chief Financial Officer

Purchase of Services Report as of March 31, 2021 (Attachment 3)

Total spent on services to clients: \$143,438,214

Estimated Unbilled Services: \$2.1 Million

Total Estimated Money Spent: \$145 Million

Question from Mr. Gosselin: We have spent \$12 Million more than last year. Is this good?

Answer from Mr. Wolfgram: This is an increase of about \$12.7 Million spent for our consumers over this time last year which is a positive outcome. We are getting more services to the consumers.

Question from Mr. Tolentino: Purchase of Services does not overlap with Operations, correct?

Answer from Mr. Wolfgram: No. Purchase of Services and Operations are two separate allocations.

Question from President Bains: How much surplus exists in Purchase of Services and in what categories?



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Answer from Mr. Wolfgram: Purchase of Services has no surplus. The POS is reimbursed for what is spent, creating a zero balance between expenditures and reimbursements.

Operations Report as of March 31, 2021 (Attachment 4)

Proposed Expenditures: \$16,595,693

Total spent: \$12,765,918

Surplus: \$113,996

\$2.5M per year is paid to the pension plan and a payment was made in March, so March's expenditure is increased. We have 3 years to close out the accounts, so anything that we owe during this FY can be paid up to June 30, 2023. This is also true with Purchase of Services.

Question by Mr. Gosselin: Why do we have a surplus of \$113,000? Do we have vacant positions?

Answer from Mr. Wolfgram: We did have vacancies and hired employees from January - March. There are 218 employees as of March 31, 2021. If we continue at the current rate we will have an over-expenditure of \$113,000 for salaries, but in operating expenditures (rent, supplies, utilities) we will have an under-expenditure of \$227,000, so that gives us an under-expenditure of \$113,000 for the year.

Comment from Dr. Gates: There is no room for error when managing the Operations budget. We like to see a little bit of cushion because going over budget is not an option. \$113,000 is not a large cushion; it is cutting it pretty close.

Question from President Bains: What would happen if we ran short? Where would we get the extra funds?

Answer from Mr. Wolfgram: We sometimes have other allocations that we could possibly draw from, but if there are no funds to draw from there is a hiring freeze. We watch the Operations Budget daily to avoid issues of this type.

Comment by Dr. Gates: During a worst-case scenario, we would be forced to implement furlough days. I don't see us needing to do this right now. We look for every way to avoid these scenarios because they negatively impact clients as well as staff. It is considered a last resort.

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Tolentino noticed that there was a question presented in Zoom Chat. Dr. Bains permitted a limited number of questions on Zoom chat:

Question by Lindsay Stambolian from Zoom Chat: If there is money left in the operations budget at the end of the year, does the money go back to the State?

Answer from Dr. Gates: Usually the Regional Centers don't have enough money, so rather than losing that money, we look at needed equipment/technology or end of year needs where we can apply that money.

Comment by Mr. Wolfgram: We really don't give the money back because we never received it. We haven't received the entire allocation because we haven't spent the money.

Question by Denise Arreguin from Zoom Chat: DDS has rescued before and covered the outstanding balance. Also, we were on special contract that we have not met since 3 plus years.



Answer from Dr. Gates: DDS will not rescue again. The other regional centers funded the previous rescue. It was a last resort measure to keep KRC from losing its contract. Regarding the special contract, a huge amount of progress has been made on special contract language. We now have only 4 items left on the special contract language, only 2 which are of any substance. The other 2 items are of a more technical nature.

Comments by President Bains and Mr. Gosselin: Mr. Gosselin was part of the DDS meetings that took place when DDS rescued KRC, and he affirmed that taking funds from the other regional centers did create some negative feelings. Looking at other boards, Dr. Bains felt that the regional centers agreed to give the funds at that time, but that it will not happen again. Dr. Bains would like to invite DDS to a future meeting to respond to some of the concerns presented.

Dr. Gates was asked, via Zoom chat, about the 4 special contract language items and a link to the KRC website was posted in chat for the person asking the questions.

Question by Denise Arreguin: Why do employees have benefits taken away that have been earned to cover costs that KRC Admin has not been able to solve? Is that fair to keep the agency afloat?

Answer from Dr. Gates: The benefits are the heart of the issues of our fiscal problems at Kern, specifically, the Defined Pension Benefits.

Question from Dr. Bains: We don't propose the budget under benefits and salaries. They are given to us by DDS, is that correct?

Answer from Mr. Wolfram: Yes. We get an allocated amount of money. I prepare estimated expenditures based upon employee salaries and benefits, insurance, and then what we need for rent and supplies, but I must stay within the allocated amount that DDS gives us.

At this time Public Input via Zoom Chat was closed. The Executive Secretary's e-mail was provided for any further comments. Received comments will be forwarded to the Board of Directors.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Michi Gates

COVID-19

- Infection rate is low. There have been 491 diagnosed cases at KRC since March 2020. We are now only seeing a few new cases per week.
- New infections among our clients are still occurring, but mostly with those living with their families. This shows that vaccinations of staff and those in our Care Homes have been effective.
- We continue to contact our individuals, per DDS contract, to learn their vaccination status and we work with them to eliminate barriers to them receiving the vaccination. We have 65% of our individuals (16+) who fall in one of these 3 categories: 1) received 1 shot, 2) fully vaccinated, or 3) declined vaccination. Reporting numbers are increasing.

DDS Directives

- In-person monitoring visits per DDS Directive has begun in licensed care homes, supported living, FHA homes and foster care. PPE kits are being supplied to Service Coordinators and an educational video demonstrating donning and doffing of the PPE equipment has been viewed by Service Coordinators.



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Day Programs

- More Day Programs are resuming in-person services. We continue to receive material for review to re-open these programs. We are looking towards some type of normalcy while reenforcing proper guidelines. Our providers have been doing an excellent job and the data reflect that.

Budget and Legislative Updates

- Talks are in progress for the 2021-22 Budget. There is a lot of excitement due to a large surplus of funds for the State – the “May-Revise” projects about \$75 Billion surplus plus an additional \$25 Billion from Federal. Governor Newsom is calling it the \$100 Billion Dollar Come Back Plan. Our systems, and other social service agencies, often don't get the attention they deserve, but this year it is looking very positive:

“May-Revise” Proposals:

1. Elimination of the sunset on provider supplemental rate increases.
2. Elimination of the uniform holiday schedule.
3. Increase provider funding incentives for individuals regarding employment, internship programs and competitive integrated employment programs.
4. Pay differential for bilingual provider staff to address disparity in our systems and attract employees.
5. Training for direct support staff to provide opportunities to professionalize the workforce and improve the quality of services provided to our individuals.
6. Funding proposed for reduced regional center caseloads for individuals who have low or no POS funding. This should help address the disparity in our services.
7. Funding to increase Tribal engagement for Early Start Services.
8. Funding for 21 deaf services coordinator positions at regional centers.
9. Funding for 60 Self Determination Program transition coordinating staff.
10. Funding for 800 additional service coordinators statewide, effective 2022-23. One year is requested to prepare to address reducing caseloads at all RCs and allow time to work on performance incentives.

Next Steps:

1. Voting by subcommittees on all proposals.
2. Conference Committee will meet to reconcile differences between the Assembly and the Senate.
3. The governor and legislative leaders will negotiate on finalizing the budget.
4. A final floor vote will take place by the legislature by June 15.
5. The governor will sign the budget.

Technology

- We continue to work on our website. We view new mock-ups every day and also continue to move KRC staff to the Cloud. New laptops are being issued to staff, paid for by the CARES Act. Our new Technology Communications Officer is strengthening our social media presence (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) to have better connectivity and a more positive presence with the community.



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VENDOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Shawn White, Board Member

The VAC Committee met this morning.

- Celia Pinal began with a Case Management Report. She thanked the vendors for continuing to work with her to update the alternative services list. She notified us that abbreviated in-person quarterly meetings will begin, so vendors should prepare for that. Healthy conversation with the vendors took place about families coming to visit and keeping everything safe.
- Dr. Gates gave the Executive Directors Report reflecting the same information presented at this meeting.
- Cherylle Mallinson gave a Community Services update. She reviewed the Risk Mitigation Plan for all vendors that have not started the process, offering in facility services. Jamie Patino shared some information that would help the process of RCs supporting vendors as we begin to offer these services, e.g., using vendor codes with information provided, etc.
- For the Law Enforcement Subcommittee, John Noriega read a report from ARCA about a police shooting of a person with disabilities in Los Angeles County. The report expressed the need for education, training, and reform of law enforcement.
- The Employment Subgroup met last Friday to speak about some challenges of employment of the individuals that we serve. Many expressed some of the same needs related to COVID-19 including recovering from lay-offs and furloughs and redeveloping those relationships with the community organizations.
- The Transportation Subgroup did not have an update, but wanted to thank KRC for working with them on the alternative POS.

STAFF REPORT

Cherylle Mallinson, Director of Community Services

CRDP Stakeholder Input / Performance Contract (Attachment 6)

The Community Resource Development Plan related to our Performance Contract was screen-shared to the Board Members. This item is just informational for the Board of Directors and was also shared at the Vendor Advisory Committee this morning. This contract can be found on the KRC website. Some discussion on the plan included:

- Last year we submitted a proposal for a clinic to serve physically- and intellectually-disabled individuals. This was not approved last year, but it appears again on this plan.
- There are 2 candidates for the Mobile Dental services we are proposing at a cost of less than \$250,000. They are Enable Dental (from Southern CA) and Dr. Bowen who has an office in Delano. She has a local mobile practice already.
- Transportation in Eastern Kern – there are 24-25 individuals affected. We must decide by June 30, 2021. The decision will be released using a published paper, “The OCRA Server.” This publication meets Title 17 requirements.
- There is a multi-housing possibility in Bishop, CA. We are in the middle of getting more information to see if it meets the needs of our individuals.

We will do a public feedback session to talk about opportunities on June 14. A flyer, website announcement, and e-mail blast will be sent to providers. We have over 500 e-mail addresses of vendors and stakeholders that will also receive notice.



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Board of Directors Meeting Summary and Information to those Who Provided Public Input

Jasmeet Bains, MD, President

We have met and heard comments from Denise, Lindsay, Roy, and Darlene about benefits and salaries. We will be meeting in a closed board meeting within the next 2 weeks and will be looking into the possibility of a DDS representative to be present at our next Board Meeting to address some of the questions in regard to special contracts and budget and how it is that certain areas get proposed. We will look at this in detail. I want everyone to know how critical it is to preserve our Regional Center here in Kern County. It is my understanding that if things do not go according to DDS requirements, DDS can step in and dissolve KRC. Our clients could become part of other regional centers such as Los Angeles or Central Valley. This would not be of benefit to anyone. It would take away resources in our community and have a negative impact locally. Your board is very aware of this and is working hard with DDS and Finance to make sure that this does not happen. We do not want furloughs. We don't want KRC to be dismantled in any way, so we want to make decisions that will protect the resources in Kern. Your Board is made up of members of your community. We hear what you are saying. We are a volunteer board. I am here because I care about my patients who are served by KRC and want to serve my community. The Board is fighting for you and really appreciates the very hard work you do. We feel the work you are doing is magical and we thank you. It has been a very unprecedented and rough year and we will continue to be here for you and will continue to work with DDS as well.

Kevin Gosselin, Treasurer

Mr. Gosselin stressed that services will not stop for our clients in the event of a change of Kern Regional Center. These services are much larger than a Regional Center directive; however, it will present more challenges for our clients. We have been volunteer board members for some time because we care. We are here for you.

Mark Tolentino, Board Member

Mr. Tolentino stated, "to those who are still online, thank you for your input. It takes a lot of courage and passion to speak up on this type of planning. The Board will look at all the feedback provided with an open mind and all of us will look forward to finding an equitable solution for you all. This process exists for this type of communication, so we encourage you all to continue to be involved. We are available to you as well."

ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further to discuss, President Jasmeet Bains, MD, adjourned the meeting at 7:38 PM.

The next public meeting will take place on Tuesday, August 24, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Darlene Pankey



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Zoom Attendee Report
Report Generated: 6/1/2021 12:48

Attendee Details

Attended	User Name (Original Name)	First Name	Last Name	Email	Registration Time
Yes	Nicola Perkins	Nicola	Perkins	nicmit84@gmail.com	5/25/2021 17:58
Yes	veronica	veronica		vbedolla@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:57
Yes	Isabel McGraw	Isabel	McGraw	imcgraw@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:36
Yes	Ryan Garcia	Ryan	Garcia	garcaryan805@gmail.com	5/25/2021 18:01
Yes	Cynthia Sanchez	Cynthia	Sanchez	csanchez@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:56
Yes	Marco Ramirez	Marco	Ramirez	mmamirez@kernrc.org	
Yes	iliana Hill	iliana	Hill	ihill@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:53
Yes	Cd	Cd		candicedeeds@yahoo.com	5/25/2021 18:01
Yes	Mitzi Villalon	Mitzi	Villalon	villalonmitzi@hotmail.com	5/25/2021 18:00
Yes	salmo	salmo		scontreras@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:29
Yes	Patricia Cardenas	Patricia	Cardenas	pcardenas229@gmail.com	5/25/2021 18:01
Yes	Allison Allred	Allison	Allred	aallred@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:58
Yes	Chloe	Chloe		chayes@kernrc.org	
Yes	iPhone	iPhone		jj87@yahoo.com	5/25/2021 18:07
Yes	Isabel mendez	Isabel	mendez	imendez2@yahoo.com	5/25/2021 18:05
Yes	HR KRC	HR	KRC	fbesnard@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:25
Yes	maria luna	maria	luna	mluna@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:59
Yes	LaCresha Lebron	LaCresha	Lebron	cutecre@yahoo.com	5/25/2021 18:01
Yes	crisrina blackmon	crisrina	blackmon	Monlight59@yahoo.com	5/25/2021 18:01
Yes	Elbia Arreguin	Elbia	Arreguin	earreguin@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 19:12
Yes	Erika Espinoza	Erika	Espinoza	eespinoza@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:02
Yes	Roy Rocha	Roy	Rocha	royrocha058@gmail.com	5/25/2021 17:59
Yes	Cynthia Marquez	Cynthia	Marquez	cmarquez888@yahoo.com	5/25/2021 17:45
Yes	Stephen	Stephen		sjcutty@gmail.com	5/25/2021 18:23
Yes	iPad Ipad	iPad	Ipad	ymackie@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:01
Yes	Vanntha Chann	Vanntha	Chann	vchann82@gmail.com	5/25/2021 18:10
Yes	Maricela V.	Maricela	V.	mvilla@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:58
Yes	Virginia	Virginia		vlayland@krc.org	5/25/2021 18:17
Yes	Darlene Nuno	Darlene	Nuno	superman.yasania@yahoo.com	5/25/2021 17:56

Yes	Delia Serrano	Delia	Serrano	delia.serrano@seiu521.org	5/25/2021 18:00
Yes	work	work		carlitaortega25@hotmail.com	5/25/2021 18:21
Yes	Lisa Womack	Lisa	Womack	lwomack@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:28
Yes	Kristine Jandel	Kristine	Jandel	kjandel@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:53
Yes	Lindsay Stamboolian	Lindsay	Stamboolian	lstamboolian@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:58
Yes	:)	:)		otrigueros@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:00
Yes	Beatriz Alvarez	Beatriz	Alvarez	alvarezbeatriz89@yahoo.com	5/25/2021 18:04
Yes	KB	KB		k40brooks@gmail.com	5/25/2021 17:18
Yes	yvonne	yvonne		yromero@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:05
Yes	Jesus Pérez	Jesus	Pérez	jesusperez49@yahoo.com	5/25/2021 18:05
Yes	Erik Perez 40H	Erik	Perez 40H	eperez@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:05
Yes	Martha	Martha		mcarmona1972@gmail.com	5/25/2021 18:02
Yes	Kennisha	Kennisha		kennishacalvin8@gmail.com	5/25/2021 18:08
Yes	Jenny Ainsworth	Jenny	Ainsworth	jainsworth@bak.rr.com	5/25/2021 17:58
Yes	Denise Arreguin	Denise	Arreguin	darreguin2005@gmail.com	5/25/2021 18:07
Yes	lupita	lupita		lgonzalez@gmail.com	5/25/2021 18:04
Yes	Antonio Cruz	Antonio	Cruz	acruz@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:02
Yes	Souher Hanhan	Souher	Hanhan	shanhan@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:11
Yes	Michael Nieto	Michael	Nieto	mnieto@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:05
Yes	Jill Bivins	Jill	Bivins	jillbivins@gmail.com	5/25/2021 17:59
Yes	Sherri Hosey	Sherri	Hosey	mrshosey@aim.com	5/25/2021 17:59
Yes	sara	sara		sarahreichenberg@hotmail.com	5/25/2021 18:09
Yes	Melissa Searson	Melissa	Searson	msearson00@gmail.com	5/25/2021 17:59
Yes	Gumaro Mendoza Jr	Gumaro	Mendoza Jr	gmendoza@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:19
Yes	VERONICA CONTRERAS	VERONICA	CONTRERAS	veronica.contreras.00@gmail.com	5/25/2021 18:08
No	Sunshine Lopez	Sunshine	Lopez	mmattheus@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:57
Yes	Tyler Clutts	Tyler	Clutts	flicky_tooter@hotmail.com	5/25/2021 17:59
Yes	Fatima Marquez	Fatima	Marquez	fmarquez@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:54
No	Summer	Summer		summerbortiz@gmail.com	5/25/2021 17:54
Yes	Paulina Blanco	Paulina	Blanco	pblanco1@csu.edu	5/25/2021 17:59
Yes	Edwin Pineda	Edwin	Pineda	edwin.pineda@dds.ca.gov	5/25/2021 18:01
Yes	IPhone -	IPhone	-	aguerra@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:03
Yes	Cindy Martinez	Cindy	Martinez	cmartinez@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:55
Yes	mdamian	mdamian		mdamian67@gmail.com	5/25/2021 18:06

No	Tyler Clutts	Tyler	Clutts	tclutts@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 17:56
Yes	Alberto Melendez	Alberto	Melendez	kbcdzt@yahoo.com	5/25/2021 17:58
Yes	Jen	Jen		jazpitarfe@kernrc.org	5/25/2021 18:00

Chat Transcript from Board of Director's Meeting Held on May 25, 2021

00:40:17 Lindsay Stamboolian: Hello. How do you submit a request for public comment?
Thanks.

00:41:36 Lindsay Stamboolian: Hello. How do you submit a request for public comment?
Thanks.

00:42:45 Nickolerene Mensch: ask darene

00:43:48 Simon Verdugo: how can simon opt out on being recorded in the webinar?

00:43:53 Darlene Nuno: I have a Q&A button

00:44:24 Lindsay Stamboolian: I just wondered the process for speaking on Zoom. Another member would like to speak

00:44:57 Lindsay Stamboolian: Denise Arreguin would like to provide a public comment

00:45:03 Darlene Nuno: I have a Raise your hand button

00:47:48 Allison Allred: I can hear her

01:20:46 Lindsay Stamboolian: If there is money left in the operations budget at the end of the year, does the money go back to the state?

01:21:31 Denise Arreguin: DDS has rescued before and covered the outstanding balance

01:21:58 Denise Arreguin: Also we were on special contract that we have not met since 3 plus years..

01:24:46 Cynthia Marquez: For Michi- Can you tell us what the 4 are?

01:26:17 Denise Arreguin: why do employees have to be taken away benefits that have been earned to cover cost that krc admin has not been able to solve? Is that fair to keep the agency afloat..

01:28:09 Nickolerene Mensch: I got that feeling from the other RCs also

01:28:18 Cynthia Marquez: Yes

01:30:53 Denise Arreguin: to reconfirm we are not in a deficit at this time?

01:31:41 Allison Allred: Why is management getting raises if we are scrapping by???

01:32:05 Michi Gates: Link to Special Contract Language action-documents
www.kernrc.org/dds-corrective-Attachment

01:32:32 Denise Arreguin: why they need to close the Shafter office?

01:33:06 KRC Licensing Zoom: My e-mail address is dpankey@kernrc.org. Please feel free to e-mail me any further questions. Thank you for your participation.

02:04:53 Cindy Cox: good news for Bishop. wow, we need it

02:07:11 Allison Allred: Then why are we closing important offices on the branch areas?? These are important to our community!!

02:12:53 Cindy Cox: thanks everyone.

ATTACHMENT 3

Transcript of Spoken Public Input of Board of Directors Meeting of May 25, 2021

Public Input:

Dr. Bains advised that each public person would have 2 minutes in order to make comments:

Speaker 1, Denise Arreguin:

My name is Denise Arreguin and I have been a KRC Service Coordinator for 17 years and also a member of the SEIU 521 chapter. I'm just here to make a statement on behalf of the KRC line staff. We are here in large numbers to reach out to the KRC Board members to provide you with an update on contract negotiations with management. As you may, or may not know, . . . or may not be aware . . . we have been at the table for nearly 2 years and, unfortunately, things are not going well. KRC Management has met with our team to fulfill their responsibilities to bargain; however, the Agency . . . however, their agenda was already predetermined with the goal of stripping employees of the little benefits that we currently have. Management's proposals will not only damage our stability at KRC, but will negatively impact our clients, parents, and all the services we provide to the most vulnerable members of the community. Many of us have been Service Coordinators for many years. Some of us have seen our clients grow from children to adults. Many of us have developed strong relationships and together we have succeeded in providing the best for our community and clients. However, management's plan will cripple many employees financially, forcing a great number of us to go look for a job elsewhere. In the past, KRC has experienced difficulties hiring qualified employees that care to work for the intellectually disabled population of Kern. We care. We love our families. We want to stay here and continue these strong ties with our special-needs families. We need your help. During the past years, KRC has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on new management positions and new equipment, even though, at the table, they claim to have no money. At the same time, we report this to you, the Board, that we have a surplus of funds. They keep asking staff to do more and more with absolutely zero compensation. Management has already reduced our health insurance benefits and taken away our pension and longevity pay. At this time, we are told these sacrifices would fix or solve the problem, but we always seem to be in the same position having the exact number figure of \$1.4 Million as a deficit. No matter what we do to help, they claim there is no money for staff raises, but this didn't prevent them from giving themselves a 30% pay raise. I know this is not news to you all, since you, the Board, had to approve these management pay increases at the cost of taking away benefits from the employees. Last month, management gave the Union their final proposal. Unsurprisingly, their final offer is virtually identical to their first offer. The main difference is that, now, they are proposing an even more severe cut to employees' health care that would slash our benefits by more than half. Essentially, these cuts constitute a huge pay decrease for staff as many of us will have to pay over \$1,000 per month for health care. Additionally, management is proposing to eliminate sabbaticals, delete seniority and reduce bilingual pay to virtually nothing; extend probationary pay to 1 year, instead of 6 months; and decrease educational leave and tuition reimbursement to almost nothing. Management has proposed nothing but take-aways. They are trying to eliminate every benefit that made Kern Regional Center a desirable place

Attachment 3 (continued)

to work. The effect on our clients will be devastating as talented employees will now not be able to make their career at KRC. Our agency will be a stepping stone . . . not a permanent home. There will be a revolving door of employees who will never have the opportunity to really get to know our clients. Our clients deserve more. The staff deserves more, the community deserves more, the clients deserve more. Board Members, we are here today to make you aware that this is happening at the table and we are asking for your assistance and support. We feel there is no transparency. ***(Time was up and audio became choppy at this point, so it was hard to get an accurate transcription)*** . . . management and workers are not being treated . . . we've been contending . . . ***(at this point, Dr. Baines informed the speaker that her time was up)*** . . . can I just finish, I have just a few more sentences . . . as we . . continue with COVID during the year and management has taken the opportunity to increase our workloads and expect us to perform double-demand work normally. Board Members, we are employees and we tell you that enough is enough. We have families that are impacted by these drastic changes and that puts us in severe economic hardship. We need your help. Every year SEIU lobbies on behalf of KRC to increase funding for our clients, vendors, and staff. Other Regional Centers are using these funds to give their staff pay raises and additional benefits, but KRC continues to strip away our benefits and protections. Enough is enough. Thank you.

Dr. Baines:

Thank you for your comments, Denise. Any questions from the Board for Denise? Hearing no questions, do we have another person for public comment?

Speaker 2, Roy Rocha:

Hi, this is Roy calling. I heard those rumors today about what was going to happen to us. I hope it doesn't happen to us because, you know, I've worked at the Regional Center for 27 years, and these 27 years that I've been working there, you know, it was a place where I was happy working there. Now it's turning into like a riot, or something, you know . . . I can't live paying \$500 extra on my life insurance because I have a mortgage to pay, I have bills to pay and I can't make it, I mean I can't accomplish to pay \$500 more for my life insurance. I mean, you know, I have a house now, and, you know, it's going to take a long time for me to finish paying it off and if you take \$500 more out for my life insurance it's going to put me in the hole, a real deep hole. That's my part. That's it.

Dr. Baines:

Thank you, Roy. Thank you for commenting. Any questions from the Board for Roy? Hearing no comments, are there any other comments from the public?

Attachment 3 (continued)

Speaker 3, Darlene Nuno:

I used to work at KRC and I was a Service Coordinator there. I have 2 boys that are actual clients of KRC. I would hate to lose my Service Coordinator due to KRC's budget cuts. I would say that me, being a Service Coordinator, I know that the current Service Coordinators that are working now are working hard to give us the services we need and they need to be respected. And they need to be allowed to keep their health benefits. We look forward to sabbaticals. You guys need to make sure that they don't lose their sabbatical because working for KRC is overwhelming. We have to make sure that we keep our families with the services they're requesting. If their services are not given, then . . . the families are frustrated. The Service Coordinators take the brunt of the frustration. I'm just saying that I've been there and I know exactly how they feel and I'm here to advocate for them. So please, don't be a disservice to the client. Give them what they want. They deserve it. They haven't had a raise in, I believe, the last 7 years, so it's time to give them a raise.

Dr. Baines:

Thank you, Darlene, for your comment. Any questions from the Board for Darlene?

No other individuals came forward for a comment.

Dr. Bains:

The Board was able to hear comments from Denise, Roy, and Darlene. Any discussion or comments from the Board in regard to any of the comments that were made from public input?

As Board President, I want all 3 of you, Denise, Roy, and Darlene to know that we will look into this. As a Board, we will discuss this with staff as well as people from DDS. We will meet as a Board to go over this specifically. Thank you to the 3 of you for speaking up and speaking for what it is that you feel strongly about. We appreciate your input. With that said, we want to reassure you that the Board takes everything that you are saying seriously and we will work on making sure that all of your concerns are brought forward.

Attachment 3 (continued)

Chat Transcript from Board of Director's Meeting Held on May 25, 2021

00:40:17 Lindsay Stamboolian: Hello. How do you submit a request for public comment?
Thanks.

00:41:36 Lindsay Stamboolian: Hello. How do you submit a request for public comment?
Thanks.

00:42:45 Nickolerene Mensch: ask darene

00:43:48 Simon Verdugo: how can simon opt out on being recorded in the webinar?

00:43:53 Darlene Nuno: I have a Q&A button

00:44:24 Lindsay Stamboolian: I just wondered the process for speaking on Zoom. Another member would like to speak

00:44:57 Lindsay Stamboolian: Denise Arreguin would like to provide a public comment

00:45:03 Darlene Nuno: I have a Raise your hand button

00:47:48 Allison Allred: I can hear her

01:20:46 Lindsay Stamboolian: If there is money left in the operations budget at the end of the year, does the money go back to the state?

01:21:31 Denise Arreguin: DDS has rescued before and covered the outstanding balance

01:21:58 Denise Arreguin: Also we were on special contract that we have not met since 3 plus years..

01:24:46 Cynthia Marquez: For Michi- Can you tell us what the 4 are?

01:26:17 Denise Arreguin: why do employees have to be taken away benefits that have been earned to cover cost that krc admin has not been able to solve? Is that fair to keep the agency afloat..

01:28:09 Nickolerene Mensch: I got that feeling from the other RCs also

01:28:18 Cynthia Marquez: Yes

01:30:53 Denise Arreguin: to reconfirm we are not in a deficit at this time?

01:31:41 Allison Allred: Why is management getting raises if we are scrapping by???

01:32:05 Michi Gates: Link to Special Contract Language action-documents
www.kernrc.org/dds-corrective-Attachment

Attachment 3 (continued)

01:32:32 Denise Arreguin: why they need to close the Shafter office?

01:33:06 KRC Licensing Zoom: My e-mail address is dpankey@kernrc.org. Please feel free to e-mail me any further questions. Thank you for your participation.

02:04:53 Cindy Cox: good news for Bishop. wow, we need it

02:07:11 Allison Allred: Then why are we closing important offices on the branch areas?? These are important to our community!!

02:12:53 Cindy Cox: thanks everyone..