

**Redwood Coast Developmental Services Corporation  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Eureka, July 12, 2019**

**Executive Directors Report**

I regret that I will not be among you for our July meeting, as I will be taking some time off (July 1-15<sup>th</sup>). In this written report I will try to capture some of the exciting things that are happening at RCRC and in our larger community. Members of the Directors Team will be present and able to answer any questions you may have, and I will be happy to respond to questions and concerns, in person, by phone and email when I return.

I am very pleased to report that effective July 15, Laura Larson, former Executive Director of Far Northern Regional Center, will be joining our community as the Manager of the North Coast Region of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. Laura is an experienced, visionary leader. She understands the issues of our rural communities. This will be an incredible benefit to our four counties.

**The Redwood Coast Community Plan**

Redwood Coast Regional Center is growing and the needs of the people we serve are complex, challenging and are continually changing. We have a legal and ethical responsibility to use public resources efficiently and effectively. We have a contractual responsibility to the Department of Developmental Services to develop a performance plan that reflects the aspirations, needs and preferences of our whole community; children and adult clients, families, service providers, community partners, members of the Board and staff of RCRC.

I have not been satisfied with the process and content of the RCDSC Strategic Plan, or the RCRC Annual Performance Plan. In my opinion, neither has been sufficiently representative of our community and collective wisdom. They have not provided clear guidance or measurable outcomes. For this reason, Steve Perez and I have been meeting with Anh Nguyen, a consultant, about contracting with her team to receive assistance with the process of creating a community plan to provide a framework to guide our work and performance data to help us evaluate our progress. Steve and I have met with her on a few occasions and were impressed enough to invite her to make a presentation to the Board and RCRC staff at our July meeting.

**Community Safety**

Once again, it is fire season, and we are in disaster response mode. We have learned from past experience, revisited and revised our policies and procedures. We are in regular communication with our community partners.

This season, we have the issue of PG & E planned power outages. We have been informed that "high threat" areas can anticipate electrical power outages lasting 3-5 days at a time, and that

we may expect a number of these in our region this season. While this will be difficult for entire communities, we have identified RCRC clients who may be most vulnerable, due to medical equipment, supplies and medications that rely upon electrical power. In collaboration with our service providers, we will ensure that clients have a safety plan.

Myself, and the Directors of FNRC and NBRC met with the leadership of DDS to discuss planning for client safety and Regional Center operations in the event of extended power outages. We are exploring the purchase of back up power generation for clients and our offices. We have strategies for staff deployment if an office is without power. We are able to reroute communications between offices so that clients, families and service providers may contact us. I will be attending a meeting with the state Office of Emergency Services in Sacramento in July, to participate in the development of a regional plan.

In partnership with the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, we will be hosting Safety Training and Risk Reduction workshops for self advocates, family members and service providers in Ukiah on August 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> and in Eureka on August 7<sup>th</sup> ( Flyers are attached to this report). Information about registration is available on our website, Facebook page, and in our offices. Training for Law Enforcement will be conducted concurrent to these events at the College of the Redwoods.

### **The 2019-20 Budget**

The Legislature has completed work on next years budget. The funding for the next fiscal year includes an extra \$50 million beyond what Gov. Newsom originally proposed. Initial estimates are that most service providers will receive an immediate 8.2% rate increase. A few may get a smaller increase, and some will not see any increase. Some good news- the Uniform Holiday Schedule will be delayed until January 1, 2022, and not so good news- half day billing will continue. As expected, camp and social recreation funding will not be restored. Our advocacy must continue.

We have received our preliminary allocation for Operations, which suggests a modest increase for growth, but we will not have firm figures until late July or, more likely, early August. What we know at this time is included in Amy's report. More to come.

### **Family Support and Parent Empowerment**

I am pleased to report that there are currently 7 parent empowerment groups sponsored by RCRC, conducting regular meetings across our 4 counties. Three of these are for families whose primary language is Spanish. One group is located in the community of Hoopa and one will soon be offered to the community of Covelo. We are planning to establish more groups, as need and interest arise.

The first meetings of the Parent Academy, a support for families newly found eligible for Redwood Coast Regional Center services, have begun. The intent of the Parent Academy is to welcome families to our community, to educate them about Regional Center Services, and to provide information about Developmental Disabilities

### **CalFresh**

AS of June 1, 2019, Seniors and people with disabilities receiving Social Security Income/State Supplementary Payment are potentially eligible to receive supplementary food assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Pursuant to an interagency agreement between DDS and the California Department of Social Services, Regional Centers will assist with the expansion of CalFresh (SNAP) benefits to the individuals and families we serve. Funding will be allocated to Regional Centers to engage in the following activities:

- Attend trainings on the CalFresh Program
- Provide outreach and information regarding the Reversing of the SSI/SSP Cash-Out and CalFresh application assistance to individuals with developmental disabilities who receive SSI/SSP.
- Provide Reversing of the SSI/SSP Cash-Out outreach and CalFresh application assistance:
  - o Application Assistants will provide application assistance to regional center clients who are SSI/SSP recipients at regional center offices or other community locations.
  - o Regional centers or their subcontracting agencies will conduct pre-screening for SNAP CalFresh benefits with consumers.
- Track the number of clients who are prescreened, approved, and denied for CalFresh expansion and, on a quarterly basis, verify data that is sent to regional centers from DDS.

The CalFresh program will be a significant benefit for the individuals and families we serve that struggle every month to afford the basic necessities of a healthy life. RCRC staff will be communicating with our communities about the benefits of the program, conducting pre-screening for eligibility, and providing application assistance. More information will be available on our website, Facebook page and at our office locations.