



Minutes for VMRC Executive Committee Meeting

7/9/25 | 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Valley Mountain Regional Center, Stockton Office, Cohen Board Room and via Zoom Video Conference

Committee Members Present: Erria Kaalund, Steve Russel, Jody Burriss, Jeff Turner, Lisa Utsey, Alicia Schott

Committee Members Not Present:

VMRC Staff Present: Leinani Walter, Midori Perez, Gabriela Lopez, Aiko Blancaflor, Lizzie Valerio, Donna Sioson, Christine Couch, Amanda Verstl, Nathan Sioson, Brian Bennett, Mayra Ochoa, Evelyn Ledesma-Solis

Public Present: Irene Hernandez (Interpreter), Xavier Chin, ASL Interpreter - K. Grace (Kiara Grace), Gloria Sanchez

A. Call to Order, Roll Call, Review of Meeting Agenda

Erria Kaalund called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. A quorum was established. The agenda was reviewed with no changes.

B. Review and Approval of the Executive Committee Meeting Minutes of 5/14/25

Steve made a motion to approve, Jody seconded. Motion carried.

C. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

D. Items for Discussion Menu

1. Executive Director's Report

- Leinani gave brief remarks, she appreciated everyone who could attend annual board dinner. She appreciated everyone coming together to celebrate Mendel Uychutin who was the Communitas Award recipient, as well as appreciating Liz Herrera-Knapp and Alicia Schott their years of service serving on the board and all board members who took the time to join us. Tomorrow we have our Quarterly All-Staff meeting with staff, she will be talking about immigration and the budget. We will also remember

our colleague and friend, Mary Ann Gonzalez, Program Manager. It is a great loss for Valley Mountain, our staff have been contributing to her memorial book. She also shared with the budget, there are many questions with Federal budget bill being passed. Lots of information to come and some of the implementation is not for 1-2 years. We are bracing ourselves for what that will mean to regional centers, not just operational dollars but also for families and the effects it will have on different systems (Medicaid, IHSS, Snap Benefits, so many services families need. Last update to share is the Public Records Act implementation, which is January 1, 2026, we are making sure this board gets the training and understanding of what PRA really means. It requires regional centers to provide information not protected to the public. We want to make sure our board recognizes implication of board matters and communication regarding regional center matters, that is that your personal devices could be subject. We are working with our Executive Team and Jason Toepel on providing training to the board, and ensure you are supported and understanding to the PRA act. A suggestion is to providing an email specifically to each board member that is a VMRC email instead of personal use email.

2. Consumer Updates:

- Christine shared August 8 is SAC6 area meeting in Turner Park in San Andreas, Brian Bennett and Aaron McDonald will be presenting about emergency services and staying safe in transportation. On September 15, is California Memorial Project in Manteca and Stockton Campus to remember folks who lived and died in state institutions.

3. Consumer Services:

- Brian updated the committee on data to Service Provider Directory per State. They have to confirm contact information which had been extended to June 30. As of July 1, they are restricted from e-billing until they confirm their information. We have 2,817 eligible vendors, 30 who have not done them we are at 98.8% as of this morning – updated daily. He thanked Erria for attending 1612 Open House apartments, he will share an update at the All-Staff meeting tomorrow.
- Leinani gave the Brian and the team a kudos for being almost at 100%. Erria added that it was amazing to attend 1612, it was awesome and amazing to see the units. Lots of amenities in the area, housing center is in the building and a restaurant is inside.

4. Self Determination:

- We have 131 Self Determination Participants
 - 81 Males and 50 Female participants
 - 43 participants are between ages 6 to 15

- 43 are between 16 and 23
 - 42 are between 24 and up
- Latinos make up 43% of all program participants at 56. Followed by Caucasians at 30% (39) and Other at 15% (20)
- The majority of program participants, 60%, live in San Joaquin County (80)
- In the past few months, we have seen a slight increase in participants who live in the Stanislaus County, from 35 in February to 41 in June (6 people).
 - *We continue to have 9 individuals in the 3 mountain counties*
- We have seen an 11% increase in program participants since the beginning of the year
- We are also happy to report that we have a fully staffed SDP team. Two Senior Participant Choice Specialists and one Senior Participant Choice Specialist.

5. Personnel Update:

- Amanda reported there are 579 total head count, year to date turnover 3.44%, there are 4 open positions. San Andreas is a challenge to fill positions, she encouraged folks to share in professional networks. Updates from last meeting, there are 12 hires currently, process 4 internal positions. Union updates: current contract was only 1 year contract, bargaining meetings will begin in August, updates will be shared as they come. Lastly there is an internal training committee that was formed with representatives from across the agency, individuals from different departments. The goal is how to improve and enhance our training, consistency of training – initial focus on new staff, onboarding, tools and resources to be successful and ongoing professional opportunities.
- Leinani added this is a critical area to have consistency in having ongoing staff training, we are getting feedback from our staff they want this and are looking forward to shaping this to our staff.

E. President's Report – Erria Kaalund

Erria reported she attended her ARCA meeting, she connected with other board presidents and Executive Directors, looking forward to going in August. She appreciated the board dinner held last night. She will be reaching out individually to each board member to get together and talk, we will be changing committees to see who will be on what committee and doing outreach to visit centers and clients at various day programs/board and care homes.

G. Next Meeting - Wednesday, September 10, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. (In Person and Zoom)
Erria Kaalund

H. Adjournment at 5:28 p.m.