



## Valley Mountain Regional Center Board of Directors Meeting

### MINUTES

12/11/2024 | 06:00 PM - 07:00 PM

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

**Board Members Present:** Alicia Schott, Erria Kaalund, Lisa Utsey, Dr. Steve Russell, Crystal Enyeart, Jeff Turner, Jessica Quesada, Jose Lara, Jody Burriss, Kenneth Huntley, Marisela Cruz, Kyle Cox

**Board Members Not Present:** Liz Herrera Knapp (informed Absence), Robert Balderama

**VMRC Staff Present:** Leinani Walter, Brenda Crisler, Brian Bennet, Claire Lozaro, Christine Couch, Tara Sisemore-Hester, Gabriela Lopez, Midori Perez, Sandra Smith, Emelia Vigil, Aaron McDonald, Donna Sioson, Athena Jurado, Mayra Ochoa, Christie, Mary Duncan, Celeste Engkabo, Carmela Beringuela, Lindsay Wiernicki, Breeahna Cannon, Michele Poaster

**Public Present:** Rachelle Munoz (Facilitator), Irene Hernandez (interpreter-Zoom), Isela Bingham (interpreter-Zoom), Tumbora Hill, Dena Hernandez-SCDD, Minette Oliver-SAC6, Angie Nora-SAC6, JW-SAC6, Cecilia Gutierrez, George Lewis-SCDD, Alyssa Iniguez (Facilitator), Jessie Kennedy, Vivian Nicolas-Self Determination, Joel Campos-SJCOG, Sydney Rainey-ASL, Kimmy Jean-ASL, Melanie Gonzalez, James Ford, Angiel Lewis, Steven Herrera, Amaya, Steven Thurmond, Trina Castro

#### **A. Call to Order, Roll Call, Reading of the Mission Statement**

The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm by Alicia Schott. Lizzie took roll call. A quorum was established. The board read the Mission Statement.

#### **B. Review of the Meeting Agenda**

The agenda was reviewed, Alicia asked for motion to approve. Lisa approved, Erria seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **C. Review and Approval of the Board of Directors Meeting minutes of 10/23/24**

Alicia asked for a motion to approve the Board of Directors Meeting minutes of 10/24/24. Crystal motioned to approve the minutes. Lisa seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. The board of directors meeting minutes of 10/23/24 were approved.

#### **D. Public Comment**

1. Mary Duncan - VMRC staff of 15 years, President of VMRC Chapter and Secretary local 1021 Executive Board. She thanked the Board and appreciated the Board for holding an emergency meeting to ratify the contract. She didn't see minutes for the

meeting or an announcement or report for the meeting. The main reason she attended is to share why we chose to go with a one-year contract, the union was disappointed despite evidence provided, wages are not competitive with other regional centers and evidence in VMRC budget shows there may be room to bring them more into line. She reported management came with a low offer and with zero raises in years two and three of the proposed contract. She went over some of the other regional centers.

- VMRC's starting wage for a service coordinator is \$24.55/hour with 3.25 % raise and Alta RC but their contract is 5%, 2% and 4%, and an additional 4% one-time.
- Far Northern RC, wages start at \$28/hour, settled with 4.5%, 2%, 2% with a restructure of salary scheduled so that everyone has the same step.
- East Bay RC last year settles with 8%, 2%, 2% for a four-year contract, added two steps to the top of their salary schedule, and dropped to the two bottom steps. Their current wage is \$31.50/hour
- North Bay got 8% last year, this year a 2.5% raise, their current wage \$31.63/hourly

She reported the lawyer dismissed the disparity by saying that every area is different but no evidence to support that. She last stated it was alarming that they were told they have no ability to have changes go into effect when our contract when into effect because all calculations were based on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Later you will hear about the national core indicators and will hear about how VMRC is doing. End of time was called.

2. Tumbora Hill – Reported on one concern, sitting in on self-determination meetings for local advisory for a couple of years. He has applied to be on the committee. The committee is not doing anything to move self-determination forward, in the system he reports what he calls gate keepers in the system, people who present as barriers and have their own interests. When there are people who are chairpersons and present a large group, it's in their best interest not to have a lot of competition. Another issue he has raised and stated on his application is that there are no Black people on the committee, he will continue to say that. He reports he is qualified, worked at VMRC for 13 years, was a program evaluator, a liaison, versed with Title 2217, CFR 42 but not qualified to sit on the committee. Another concern is he gets a lot of calls from people, folks in the room but will not call out, in the audits he has heard there is money missing, he's hoping it's not true, it could just be a rumor. Leinani has been nothing less than perfect, but in the event that there is we move forward, we are in an area of transparency, we will all be able to support each other when we know financially and socially.

3. Dena Hernandez -SCDD wanted to share a few things. Our office would like to thank VMRC, Christine Couch and her team for coordinating Thanksgiving meal delivery, Dena Pfeiffer (SAC6), Jessica Quesada (VMRC BOD), Kenneth Huntley (VMRC BOD) delivered meals for Thanksgiving in Stockton. She also thanked Erria for meeting them at the store. Talking to individuals was a great experience and valued. It was a positive way to annually spend the Popplewell Fund dollars, knowing Dr. Popplewell personally he was smiling from above. SCDD has hired a new Deputy Director of Policy of Legislative Policy, Christopher Arroyo hopes VMRC will cross paths with legislative policy. Also have hired a new self-determination analyst that will be assisting SCDD on the self-determination orientation across the state, her name is Kelly Levig and she started today. Choices Conference 2025 will be Friday April 11, 2025, at the San Joaquin Education office starts at 10am. Everyone is invited, the cost is \$30 per person, registration materials, committee will have available. The theme is Our Voices, Our Choices artwork contest is going on. People are working on their artwork, and everything is due January 15, 2025, committee will select winners. She hopes some VMRC Board members can attend.

4. Joel Campos – Senior Regional Planner at San Joaquin Council Government

shared they are conducting their annual unmet transit needs assessment. Prior to releasing funding for non-transit funding such as streets, roads and bike lanes which we release after July 2025. We are conducting this survey now to evaluate the unmet needs in the region. essay. It's a two-step process, they evaluate comments that are submitted, if comments do not meet criteria, it is still shared to all cities and transit operators. SJCOG has provided VMRC staff with outreach materials to share with networks both in English and Spanish Thanked VMRC for being a partner.

5. Vivian is rate reform, has tried working with Fiscal Department, because there was a huge discrepancy with is what on DDS website. If you compare 2022 rates, there are significant discrepancies. I have been informed that it's related to vendors and what is set up and SANDIS. She was told by VMRC to reach out to DDS and DDS reported to reach out to VMRC. It's an ongoing circle; a lot of consumers are not getting accurate rates. Self-Determination participants are told they are not eligible under rates but are told they are so there barriers to communication and transparency. Rates are not consistent and would like a further look through.

### **E. Calendar Consent Items**

1. Finance Committee Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2024
2. Executive Committee Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2024
3. Consumer Services Committee Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2024

Alicia asked for a motion to approve, Kenneth motioned to approve minutes; Lisa seconded the motion. The consent calendar items were approved unanimously.

### **F. Presentation – National Core Indicators (NCI) Data Presentation**

Christine Couch, VMRC and George Lewis, State Council of Development Disabilities reported on the national core indicators in person survey from FY 22-23 (July 1, 2022-July 30, 2023) of 434 adults 18 and over. VMRC has to submit a report in December about plans to address priorities to continue to improve priorities, to continue to improve our performance and build on areas of our strengths. We will accept feedback until December 18, 2024. NCI data is posted on DDS website, not VMRC website. George introduced himself, he shared he works at SCDD and coordinated the quality assessment project for VMRC. He reported the work is done by mailing out surveys and in-person surveys. NCI gives individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families the opportunity to share privately and confidentially the experiences on their use of regional center services and community involvement in the state of California. The responses help California and regional center compare to other states; how things are going, what's working and what is not working and what can be improved. We also get feedback on how service coordinators are doing.

- SCDD is in review of 2021-2023 in-person cycle in the state, surveying about 8,400 in the state, 400 of VMRC. This survey is done every other year on even years
- Remaining of surveys are the mailing of adult family, family, guardian and the child family, which occur in odd years
- Adult in-person surveys are face to face with individuals who re 18 years or older, received at least one service from a regional center and in addition to case management.
- Christine reported on the IPS cycles are being presented on previous data, for VMRC average age was 41 ½, males mainly participated. Language breakdown: English, Spanish and Tagalog. We have approximately 8,050 we

serve that are 18 and over, we have a little over 5,000 that identify living with a family member or relative.

- Some areas of interest: employment, community participation, relationships,
  - **Employment:** 24% want a paid job, 64% don't want a job which is not seen on the graph. Those individuals have busy schedules, in a day program, doing community integrated things, have a personal assistant keeping them busy.
    - Leinani noted some consumers may not want (1) to work for minimum wage (2) Job opportunities may not be available and (3) they may not understand the impact of working and wages and the risk of losing public benefits. AS a result, people may be fearful of working but if they understood more about public benefits, they might choose to work
    - Christine shared that the subminimum wage is ending this year and people we serve receiving that have been transitioned out. People are slowly integrating back out into the community. We expect the data we get that are happening now will be significantly different.
  - **Community Inclusion & Belonging:** There has been a significant increase in personal assistance in folks who live at home with their families. What we want to see in the new survey data is people doing things they want to do with people they want to do it with and doing things outside of their home.
  - **Community Participation:** Folks are participating in their preferred religious practices. We want to see an increase in community groups; folks who are not in a day program, and work with self-advocacy council 6 to find ways to reach more people we don't traditionally connect with.
  - **Choice and Decision-Making:** We appreciate the work from our service coordinators, SAC6, SCDD and VMRC who encourage and empower to make their own choice and are active in making decisions in their lives. We are doing good compared to the other regional centers in the state.
  - **Relationships:** We want to improve in this area. We want to help people make new friends, maintain relationships, and see family members when they want to. There was talk about dating rules, it is difficult. There are a lot of self-advocate adults living in their home and we need to have healthy conversations around relationships outside the home.
  - **Satisfaction:** VMRC scored high in satisfaction, a huge thank you to service coordinators and specialists that put in extra work and how we serve. 100% reported they like their job. Some want to live somewhere else, explore supported living and independent living, and some want to go out for entertainment, and we hope to see that.
  - **Service Coordination:** Its own data set complements the service coordinators. They can see what's important, can talk to their SC, know what's important to them. 86% reported to be at their last IPP meeting, we are working on educating everyone on how important IPP meeting is and they should be there
  - **Workforce:** Brian and his team have done incredible amount of work educating service providers, which is the workforce. 71% of adults surveyed have reported they have staff that help them, 49% staff treat them with respect, 50% can communicate in their preferred language. Our numbers are higher than statewide, but we can do better.

- **Access and technology:** VMRC has a couple of family support groups as well as a family resource network that have had grants to support with technology, iPads, using the internet, accessing technology. Half of the surveyed used the internet every day, 21% don't use internet at all, 18% don't have access.
- **Health:** 32% reported not have had a dental exam a year ago or more, 85% have a primary care doctor, 39% have had a vision screening in the last year and 26% have gone to the emergency room in the last year. There were data points on medications and behavior plans as well. 90% don't use nicotine or tobacco on the Central Valley.
- **Rights and Respect:** Thankful for Sac6 for all work and education they do teaching people to speak up about their rights. Also, to Office of Clients Rights Advocacy and our state council on developmental disabilities for being available to encourage and advocate. 19% surveyed have gone to a self-advocacy meeting, 59% have not. We are going to work the Choice Institute to find ways reach those folks. Accessing your home, keys to your door was also addressed. Anna Sims, from Community Services provides great information. Numbers reported some people have a key to their home, others do not, which was an interesting stat. Christine shared stats and mentioned if there were questions and concerns to contact with information provided.

## Public Comment

Alicia asked if there was any public comment in regard to the National Core Indicators presentation.

1. Tumboura Hill: Reported to have attended some of these and has the same comments. Are there assurances that same people aren't getting interviewed. If these responses are reaching every demographic? Are we reaching people in care homes, FHA, day program or people not getting services at all. How do we know who we're interviewing? He reported seeing somewhere that interviewers are getting paid \$120 to go out and interview. How are we sure and certain information is certain and not unbiased and reflective of the entire catchment area of 21,000.
  - Christine responded - some of the data points regarding where people live, their ethnicity, marital status, age, status are collected by data sent to state council and then randomly selected. NCI interviewers are trained, they do in-person interviews and collect the data and gets reported back.
  - Leinani added that the team of interviewers are trained and that it is a national interview and we offer input how to be person centered and plain language but questions could be interpreted differently. The NCI is intended to get an unbiased and honest answer from the person interviewed.
  - George added that part of our charge at the state council, we independently contract with UC Davis to do fidelity reviews. There is a team that shadows us to make sure we are following the question and not rephrasing in a way that loses the intent. George also noted he has shadowed surveyors before they go out in the field and again randomly selected throughout the cycle. He also conducts validity calls/texts/emails asking how the surveyor did. We also do a proxy if the individual is unable to communicate, usually from a caretaker that

knows them very well. There are a lot of layers of validity that will take place to ensure we are getting the best response and accurate as can be.

No additional public comments in person and zoom.

## **G. Committee Reports**

### **1. VMRC Professional Advisory Committee, Coalition of Local Agency Service Provider (C.L.A.S.P.) – Melanie Gonzalez**

- Last CLASP Meeting was held on 11/18/24 at 10am via zoom
- CLASP Reviewed and approved the 2025 Holiday Schedule
- \$23,592.75 in the CLASP account with no expenditures in November.
- CLASP currently has 77 paid members
- CLASP heard reports from VMRC Staff: Leinani, Anna Sims, Brian Bennett, EJ Emerson, Katina Richison, Christine Couch and Erin Martin
- Myra from R&D indicated that if consumers have transportation issues, have them call R&D customer service department. Also, if you need an update on a specific consumer, contact R&D customer service. R&D Transportation, Myra Montejano - (209) 362-2199 x 208, myram@rdtsi.com R&D Customer Service Department - (209) 362-2199. R&D Contracts and Vendorization Department - (209) 362-2199 x 242 vendorcontracts@rdtsi.com
- Residential Work Group Continues to Meet. KC Shadman is the contact if anybody would like to join KCShadman@gmail.com
- Day Program Work Group also continues to meet. Jennifer Jones is the contact for this group jjones@cvtcinc.com
- Next meeting will be 12/16/24 10am via zoom

### **2. Self-Determination Advisory Committee – Vivian Nicolas**

#### **Fiscal Summary:**

- FY 22-23 Allocation  
DDS Directive: Funds must be expended by March 2025  
Total Budget: \$89,734.77  
Total Expenditures \$18,685.55  
Balance \$71,049.22
- FY 23-24 Allocation  
DDS Directive: Funds must be expended by March 2026  
Budget 90,983.00  
Total Expenditures \$0  
Balance 90,983.00

#### **VMRC SDP Updates:**

Christine Couch introduced Emelia Vigil as the SFP Program Manager, who will oversee the enhanced caseload team and the Participant Choice Specialists (PCSs). DDS is not funding the PCSs, but VMRC feels they are necessary to assist with SDP implementation. The two Participant Choice Specialists are Michele Poaster and Maria Gonzalez.

- LVAC Leadership will review bylaws and suggest any needed updates regarding attendance, conflicts of interest, and other.

- SCDD has been requested to present at LVAC in early 2025/new year for best practices and roles of an LVAC.

**Workgroup Updates & Projects:**

RFP Training from VMRC to LVAC Leadership was presented. We will need to determine with the committee:

- Who will review the drafted RFP before it is posted on the VMRC website?
- Who will participate in the review and interview process for RFP applications received? These participants must participate in the entire process, without exception.

**Projects Approved:**

- Independent Facilitator Training- need to discuss RFP and assign committee members to screen and interview RFP applicants. Foundation knowledge training (one day) for participants and their families within VMRC catchment.
- VMRC SDAC 1st Self Determination Resource Fair-April 28th (see Save the Date Form). Volunteers for the following areas were determined: Marketing, Food, SWAG for table, FMS invites, Vendor Tables, Speakers & Entertainment. Discussion about hiring someone with self-determination dollars to run the conference was discussed and will be brought to the full committee.
- **Statewide SDAC**-Townhall held for the public held on 12/4/2024-DDS presented updates on latest directives. Public shared areas related to what is working and what still presents as barriers to SDP-DDS was asked about what they see as barriers and they shared some barriers related to FMSs and would like to see improvement in that area.
- **LVAC Committee Membership:** 2 self-advocates joined. Still vacancies on the committee from representation from Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne counties
- **VMRC SDP Participant Enrollment Update: see below**

November 2024 - LVAC Report 118 Participant

As of November 13, 2024, and includes people starting in October  
Any category with a count of 0-4 will be reported as “other” to ensure confidentiality

**3. Consumer Advisory Council (SAC6) – Crysyl Enyeart**

- November 1st, Sac had their quarterly area meeting the guest speaker was Nicole Paterson from DDS and the topic was The master Plan and its 5 areas.
- November 12th Jessica Q attended the Office Administrative Hear Committee meeting (OAHA) on zoom from 1 pm to 4pm.
- Also, on November 12th Catrina attended the DDS CAC meeting from 10-2pm-12pm.
- November 13th Catrina attended the second day of the DDS CAC meetings via zoom.
- November 14th sac6 had their leadership meeting where Sac6 shared some ways to get the word out on the new IPP template.

- November 20th sac 6 members attended the VMRC Consumer Services meeting. At this meeting Crystal (I) had the opportunity to chair the meeting.
- On November 21 Sac6 had their quarterly finance meeting.
- November 27th Sac6 members joined VMRC staff to deliver turkeys to families in need.
- Also, on November 27th Sac6 members who are also VMRC Board members attended the emergency Board meeting via zoom.

Report submitted by Crystal Enyeart, SAC6 representative to the VMRC Board and Consumer Services.

#### 4. **Finance Committee** – Brenda Crisler, Interim CFO

##### **A. Review of Financial Report** – Brenda Crisler

Reported as of October 31, 2024, the percentage of the year elapsed is 33.3%, POS expended is 31.0%, and OPS expended is 39.0%. Some of the big expenses happened at the beginning of the year, appears we have spent overspent, but numbers don't support as it report looks distorted. For purchase of service, year to date spent is \$140,216,929, anticipate spending full amount by end of the year. Operations expended is \$24,824,030 as of this state claim in October, anticipate spending by the end of the year.

Dr. Steve reports this comes as a motion to the board and asked for a second, Lisa seconded the motion. The financial report passed unanimously.

##### **B. Approval of Contract Status Report**

Brenda reported the current year status contract balance is \$38,888,406 for operations, \$312,755,357 for purchase of services, \$386,415 for foster grandparents and senior companions and in total \$352,002,366 that ties back to financial report.

Prior year contract balance is operations is \$5,132,246, purchase of services is \$16,470,981, CPP/CRDP is \$307,177, and foster grandparents and senior companions is \$94,258 with a total of \$22,003,662.

The second prior year looks close to the same prior year operations is \$5,411,379, purchase of services is \$24,813,410, CPP/CRDP is \$271,755, and foster grandparents and senior companions is \$119,618 with a total of \$31,616,161. She reported we continue to receive purchase of service for the second prior year and prior year. We won't know if it's fully expended or not, we anticipate it.

Dr. Steve reported that this also comes as a motion to the board and asked for a second, Lisa seconded the motion, the contract status report passed unanimously.

##### **b. Approval of Contracts over \$250,000** for December 2024 and January 2025 brought forth as Motion from the Finance Committee – Corina Ramirez

-Dr. Steve reported this was discussed in Financial Committee meeting but now comes to the full board. Dr. Steve makes a motion to approve contracts. Crystal seconded the motion. The motion carries unanimously.

#### 5. **Consumer Services Committee**

No report

#### 6. **Legislative Committee**

No report

#### 7. **Bylaws Committee**

No report

#### 8. **Nominating Committee**

Erria reported if anyone is interested in letting her know, she is doing outreach and making an effort for people to join.

#### 9. **Popplewell Review Team**

Erria reported it was fun delivering meals for Thanksgiving. In donations we have had \$6987.90 come in. There have been 6 requests for help that have been approved. The current fund balance is \$11,113.06.

Christmas requests will be gift cards, same request for thanksgiving is being done.

### **H. Executive Director's Report**

1. Leinani introduced Mayra Ochoa, the new Director of Equity & Engagement and Equity. Mayra will be overseeing the Enhanced Team, Self-Determination, Foster Grandparents, Language Access and Cultural Competency, interpreters, equity initiatives, tribal engagement and outreach and engagement efforts.
2. Leinani asked Dr. Claire Lazaro to join her as she introduced new clinical staff onboarding VMRC. Dr. Claire presented Christie Steele, BCBA and via zoom Carmela Beringuela and Lindsay two clinical nurse consultants.

#### **Presentation – VMRC Performance Contract End of the Year Report 2023-2024**

Leinani presented the VMRC End of the Year Performance Report and explained in the State of California with DDS, regional centers have performance measures and how each regional center performs may vary.

- **Data overview** - largest number of consumers served are individuals with autism at 52% of approximate 22,000 we serve. It has largely increased in the last decade. We also serve mild/moderate intellectual and developmental delay, epilepsy, cerebral palsy and severe profoundly delayed. These are the measures DDS chose to highlight. We also have others we are serving with different and various disabilities.
- **Ethnicity** - Hispanic - 17%, Black/African American – 11%, Asian - 8%, Other - 22% White - 42%. Asian, which is an incredibly diverse population with a variety of languages, countries, continents. It's important to know it's a structure/percentage based on what DDS utilizes. We are the most diverse regional center in the state.
- **Ages served**, young children coming into our RC at ages 0-2 at 10%, 3 - 5 at 10%, 6-21 39%/ Majority of our population are under 21, they are either in school or not in school yet.
- **Where people live**, most consumers reside in a parent or guardian home. It's not always by choice, cost of living, or ability to afford to your home impacts you. Affordability for housing is a big barrier in California.
- **How well is VMRC performing:** If you look closely in some areas we did well. For example, 0.03% VMRC reduced number of people living in restrictive settings

which is lower than the state average. I would like to highlight we have increased the number in home settings, less living in institutional settings. VMRC achieved 100% compliance with the HCBS Final Setting Rules requirements by completing 321 onsite HCBS assessments for residentials, day program and group employment vendors.

- **How well did VMRC meet DDS standards.** We want to conduct regular and timely audits and get better in this area. We are currently in the middle of our DDS audit which is done every other year. VMRC hired a Chief Financial Officer who will begin on December 16, 2024, and will be hiring a permanent fiscal monitor to comply with DDS standards and State requirements.
- **How well is VMRC getting people working.** There are a number of areas measured. Leinani was happy to report positive things in the area of employment. We heard from the NCI report that some may not want to work but that's not always true in every area of the state, there may be more opportunities in some areas and we may have incentive payments that VMRC has utilized successfully and have been able to place people at jobs. It's also an ongoing effort with transportation. It can be challenging in the mountain county or even in the city with times. There are jobs you may be working late hours at night, you couldn't rely on transportation.
- **Reducing disparities & improving equity.** Thankfully we have Mayra Ochoa joining us but I'm happy to report that to VMRC increased service and equity access eligibility for African America and Hispanic individuals. In looking at the numbers, we've increased expenditures between the ages of 3 and 21, it might slight but 1% can be a big increase. The Enhanced Team has increased service access for Hispanic families by raising awareness about services in Spanish under Gabriela Lopez's leadership.
- **Areas to be Improved:** Three key areas to be improved. (1) Complete accurate and timely audits; (2) Continue to increase service access by providing implicit bias training for all staff which was started this year; and (3) identify appropriate support for individuals to achieve their employment goals. A reported area of challenge is transportation which VMRC will be working on in the coming year.
- **VMRC Efforts to Improve Access to Community Services:** Recruiting more diverse service providers who speak other languages. We need to focus on diverse ethnicity, race and also cultures by increasing culturally diverse community partnerships. Leinani shared she is grateful for Families United for Equity as a new partner that was recently awarded a DDS Service Access and Equity grant focused on the African-American community. VMRC is also grateful for continued partnerships with ICC and Escuchen Mi Voz in the Hispanic Community and new partnerships with Acorns to Oak Trees to impact service to our Native American tribal communities across our five counties. These are areas VMRC will continue to build on the good foundation we have and continue to move this work forward.
- Lastly a letter address to DDS was shown and it will be posted online. If you have comments or questions, you are welcome to send comments to Lizzie Valerio, Executive Assistant and support to the VMRC board at [evalerio@vmrc.net](mailto:evalerio@vmrc.net)

### Public Comment

Alicia asked if there was any public comment in regard to the end of year report.

1. Tumboura Hill: Commented on 100% HCBS compliance. On the side of advocacy, he has been in the homes and worked with individuals and has made complaints about HCBS compliance. He reported on a home who had their kitchen closed at 8, you could not get water, and they would lock it up. Another

home where a vendor does not allow access to the refrigerator. Anna Sims did come out, she interviewed everyone and addressed the issue. He questioned how VMRC is going ensure that you are consistently in compliance because settings rules are based on how the home is run. Individuals having access to food, being able to lock their doors, being able to access different parts of the house, you say you are in 100% compliance, that means across the board, every single vendor is doing 100% of what they supposed to be doing at every moment in every hour of the day.” He reported recently going to a home, in front of VMRC program manager Misty Aguarda and SC Caleb Carter in which he called out a vendor in front of them and the vendor defended his actions in front of them.

- Brian reported that today som provider may be in compliance and on another visit, they may not be. Compliance is measured on the tool provided at that time where residents were interviewed. We have to stay diligent and aggressive by training our coordinators, new providers, long time providers making sure individuals are being supported with self-advocacy and speaking up. The HCBS watch party was held today, individuals were supported, as well as day programs and VMRC staff watching an animated video on all 10 federal HCBS rules. It’s an ongoing effort when things are reported, we issue plans of corrections, and placement sanctions, we have the authority by new federal rule to provide support to individuals and give opportunities to move to another setting. Anna Sims and the team do a ton of work and receive compliments from the department. We have been vocal with DDS about HCBS.
- Leinani shared in addition we strive to meet and live up to the values of the Lanterman Act. When we vendorize providers, we expect a vendor to consistently implement services based on the Lanterman Act and Title 17. Valley Mountain met the requirements of HCBS through their evaluations which are incredibly thorough. Leinani added VMRC must continue to strive to live up to the values set forth in the law. Valley Mountain met the HCBS requirements in a meaningful way. We intend to live up to our values for the long run and not take shortcuts.

**No additional public comments in person and zoom.**

#### **I. President’s Report**

- Alicia reported, Steve, Erria, and herself are putting together a list of ideas for board retreat, please email if you have any ideas.
- There was a lot of good feedback about meals delivered, it was a positive event and community needed event. Very appreciate of those who supported.
- Erria, VMRC staff and herself attended Family United for Equity open house. She highly recommends when a program opens in the community, that folks try to attend in the future. It’s great to see programs serving our consumers who we are up on this board serving.
- Very appreciative of those who are attending the board meeting so close to the holidays and very supportive of tech team supporting.

#### **J. Next Meeting – Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 6:00pm Hybrid (In-Person and Zoom)**

#### **K. Adjournment at 7:40pm – Alicia Schott**