

**GOLDEN GATE REGIONAL CENTER BOARD of DIRECTORS  
MEETING**

**Tuesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 5:30 PM**

**Via Zoom Video Conference  
and  
In-Person at GGRC,1355 Market Street, # 220, San Francisco, CA 94103\***

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5:30pm I. **CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS** (Jacy Cohen)

5:35pm II. **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS** (Jacy Cohen)

**ACTION** A. Agenda

**ACTION** B. Record of February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Meeting

5:40pm III. **PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS** (Jacy Cohen)

5:45pm IV. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Finance Committee (Michael Bernick)

1. Monthly Financial Statement

6:00pm V. **STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

A. Update on SCDD Activities (Sheraden Nicholau)

6:10pm VI. **COMMITTEE REPORTS** (Continued)

A. Services Committee (David DeLira)

1. Board Education: *Advocacy for GGRC (Community, Legislative and Governor) and Role of Board Members in the Community*

B. Board Operations Updates (Lynn Pulliam)

1. March Board Retreat Recap

C. Service Provider Advisory Committee Updates (Kate O'Connor)

D. Legislative Committee/ARCA Update (Edith Arias)

1. Grassroots Day Recap

2. Legislative Breakfast in 2025

3. Master Plan Update

4. ARCA's Three Bills

E. Executive Committee Updates (Jacy Cohen)

a. Consideration of Committee Charters:

1. Finance Committee Charter

2. Services Committee Charter

3. Operation Committee Charter

4. Legislative Committee Charter

**ACTION**

**ACTION**

**ACTION**

**ACTION**

6:40 pm VII. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT** (Eric Zigman)

A. Service Provider Rate Increases

7:00 pm VIII. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** (Personnel Issue)

\* You must RSVP to attend in person or to receive the Zoom meeting information. To RSVP or if you have any questions, please email Aria Alokozai at [aalokozai@ggrc.org](mailto:aalokozai@ggrc.org)



# Golden Gate Regional Center

*Supporting Lives of Liberty and Opportunity*

RECORD of March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 5:30 PM

PRESIDING: Jacy Cohen

DIRECTORS PRESENT: David DeLira  
Marta Guzman  
Kate O'Connor  
Shirley Poitier  
JJ Khin  
Tracy Bullock

Lynn Pulliam  
Michael Bernick  
Edith Arias  
Brindicy Alcaraz

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Sharon Jones

STAFF: Eric Zigman  
Lisa Rosene  
Brenda Gonzales  
Kelly Blankenship  
Amanda Pyle

Aria Alokozai  
Ihsan Shagiwal  
Lop Hou  
Sean Galvin

GUESTS: Sheraden Nicholau  
Corinna (ASL Interpreter)  
Jennifer Mantle  
Jenica Hadley  
Chris Aguire

Oscar Arteta  
Audrey - deChandendes  
Jane Diaz  
Kuky Nelson

## CALL TO ORDER (Jacy Cohen)

Ms. Cohen called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. Welcoming remarks and introductions followed. Spanish and American Sign Language translations were provided.

## CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS (Jacy Cohen)

### **ACTION A. Agenda**

*The agenda for today's meeting was approved.*

*M/S/C (Lynn Pulliam motioned /Brindicy Alcaraz seconded)*

**ACTION B. Record of Feb 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Meeting**  
*No comments or corrections. The minutes were approved.*

*M/S/C (Kate O'Connor motioned/ David Delira seconded)*

**PUBLIC COMMENT / ANNOUNCEMENT**

Amanda shared that she spoke to a class at Cal State Sacramento yesterday about neurodiversity, and the experience was excellent. She engaged the students, who were highly enthusiastic, and encouraged them to consider careers in the disabilities field. She emphasized the importance of starting at the local level and shared her own experiences as a direct support professional and teacher. She also highlighted the value of hands-on experience in shaping a meaningful career in this field, making it an insightful and inspiring discussion.

Amanda also announced the recruitment of a new Community Services Director, Sean Galvin, who began his career at GGRC as an Employment Specialist, spent six years as the Manager of Community Services, and has now been selected as the Community Services Director. The board congratulated Sean on his new role.

Jacy announced that we have an Executive Session and asked board members to remain present for that session.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Finance Committee (Lop Hou for Michael Bernick)**

Monthly Financial Statement: [Financial Status as of January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025]

Lop reported GGRC's monthly financial statements as follows:

Operations

After seven months of operations, year to date expenditures are under budget by 7.1%. All operations funds are expected to be fully expensed for the fiscal year over the normal course of operations.

Purchase of Services (POS) Excluding CRDP

After seven months of operations, year to date POS expenditures are under budget by 5.1%. The estimated surplus is projected to be approximately \$20 million for this fiscal year.

Community Resource Development Plan (CRDP) Funding

Placement funds and Start-Up funds have been allocated but have yet to be expensed.

**State Council on Developmental Disabilities Update on SCDD Activities (Sharaden Nicholau)**

Sharaden shared the following updates:

Now is a critical time to meet with congressional members and U.S. Senators to advocate against potential Medicaid funding cuts as Congress moves into the reconciliation process. Nearly 1,800 Californians have already been trained in Medicaid advocacy. If you have a group of 50 or

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more (self-advocates, families, or professionals), free training sessions, full or condensed—can be arranged to help participants share their stories and influence decision-making. Reach out if interested!

Statewide Self-Advocacy Network

Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) DD Awareness Month Event Flyer

CA Commission for Behavioral Health REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA) FOR 0-5/MATERNAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INITIATIVE (RFQ 0-5/MBH-001)

A request for application from the CA Commission for Behavioral Health:

\$18 million is available in Mental Health Wellness Act (MHWA) funds to reduce out-of-home placements, improve educational outcomes, identify developmental delays, and otherwise serve the behavioral health needs of the population.

Final application due date: March 28, 2025, by 12:00 PM

Notice of intent to award: April 24, 2025.

<https://bhsoac.ca.gov/connect/grant-funding-opportunities/request-for-application-rfa-for-0-5-maternal-behavioral-health-initiative-rfa-0-5-mbh-001-2/>

Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) DD Awareness Month Event Flyer

Our next Bay Area Regional Advisory Committee meeting is April 30, from 5:30 – 8:00pm, over zoom and in person in Marin Co. We'll hear RAC and Council member updates, community partner updates, and we'll advance the RAC's health equity work in Emergency Departments

<https://scdd.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2024/11/RAC-Meeting-Schedule-FY-2024-25-English.pdf>

Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) DD Awareness Month Event Flyer

To register for the Statewide Self-Determination (SDP) Orientation

Trainings: <https://scdd.ca.gov/sdp-orientation/>.

Over the next few weeks, SCDD has several orientation sessions available in English, Spanish, Korean, Hmong and additional languages.

Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) DD Awareness Month Event:

Thursday, March 27, 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

The Choices we Make Together:

*Understanding Limited Conservatorships: Less Restrictive Alternatives Training* – Hosted by the statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SAN) as part of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. The session will cover limited conservatorships, less restrictive alternatives, supported decision-making, and related resources. It will be available in English with ASL and Spanish interpretation.

The Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) invites you to celebrate Developmental Disability Awareness Month 2025 by learning and talking about limited conservatorships and alternatives. This event will give self-advocates (people with intellectual and developmental and other

disabilities) and their family members:

- Information
- Tools and strategies
- Resources

ASL and Spanish interpretation provided. Zoom link is as follows

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_cqzJi1GVS9abUVt40pS4iA#/registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_cqzJi1GVS9abUVt40pS4iA#/registration)

National Leadership Consortium on Developmental Disabilities (Nov. 9-14) – An intensive week-long training for emerging leaders in the field.

Q and A followed.

### **Services Committee (David DeLira)**

David shared regarding the Service Committee's ongoing discussions about translating the *Future Family Planning Education* program into Cantonese. David also shared that the Services Committee discussed working on projects on Special Education, Generic Services and Legal Services.

Amanda shared that we are currently working on the content for the new website. At the same time, our web developers, project manager, and Amanda are building out the site map to ensure an intuitive user experience and organize information in a way that makes sense.

In the coming months, we will begin recruiting for the Community Advisory Board, which will include individuals who use regional center services and their family members. Their input will be valuable in shaping the website.

Amanda shared that she found the Board Retreat incredibly helpful as a GGRC staff member to hear Board members' perspectives. Amanda is in contact with Jacy about gathering more Board feedback for the website, as board members experiences and insights could greatly inform both content and user experience.

Jacy shared that last year we held listening sessions with individuals receiving services, Spanish-speaking families, English-speaking families, and SPAC, focusing on future planning. Additionally, *The Arc of California* is offering self-paced classes on this topic. Once a month, they also host in-person meetings to answer questions.

Board Education Panel *Advocacy for GGRC (Community, Legislative and Governor) and Role of Board Members in the Community*

Amanda Pyle facilitated a Q and A session with Audrey deChadenedes, Eric Zigman, Kelly Blankenship and Edith Arias regarding their advocacy journey.

### **Panel's advocacy Journey:**

Audrey Dechandandes shared that she was involved in advocacy work to overcome fear, speak confidently in meetings, and make meaningful changes. Advocacy allowed her to be more

engaged and take on leadership roles, including becoming the chair of the AdvoCates.

Kelly shared that she was involved in advocacy simply because she wanted to take action and make a difference.

Eric shared that his advocacy journey began when he worked as a direct service staff in a sheltered workshop for 110 people with developmental disabilities. As he moved into a supervisory and managerial role, he quickly realized the significant impact that state policies had on the service system and the supports people received. Around 25 years ago, Eric joined what is now the *California Disability Services Association (CDSA)*—then known as *CRA, the Rehab Association*. As part of this organization, he began advocating with legislators. He established connections with local state assembly members, giving them tours of service programs and helping them understand the real-life impact of policy decisions. Seeing how their advocacy efforts influenced legislative decisions—shaping budgets and passing laws that directly supported people with disabilities—fueled his passion for advocacy.

Edith shared that her advocacy journey began 33 years ago. Initially, she focused on fighting for change at the local level, advocating within her city and school district. However, she soon realized that many of the decisions affecting her community were being made at the state level. This realization led her to engage with legislators and become more involved as an ARCA Delegate with the regional centers statewide. She is also chair of the GGRC Legislative Committee.

As she saw the impact of advocacy, Edith recognized the power of bringing personal stories to policymakers. She found that many people shared the same goal of improving the lives of others, which strengthened the movement. She also understood that advocacy at the state level—through laws, bills, and initiatives—could lead to broader, lasting change. Her involvement in Grassroots Day provided her with the opportunity to connect with elected officials and witness firsthand how storytelling could influence policy decisions. Through her work with AdvoCates, she gained deeper insight into the legislative process and the importance of advocacy. Hearing directly from legislators reinforced her belief that sharing personal experiences is not only powerful but also a crucial tool for driving meaningful change.

### Ways They Advocate

Edith believes in the power of storytelling to drive change. She continues to share her experiences, advocate for improvements, and align with organizations that share the same mission. She collaborates with Marta Guzman to amplify their voices and uses various advocacy tools, such as writing letters, spreading awareness online with a click of a button, and engaging in public comment opportunities. Her primary focus is on sharing real stories to inspire action.

Audrey engages in advocacy through multiple channels, including writing letters, visiting local legislators, attending meetings, and speaking up. She often brings her daughter to meetings when possible, emphasizing the importance of lived experiences in advocacy. In addition to initiating letter-writing campaigns, she and her fellow advocates make a point to thank legislators when their efforts lead to positive changes. Recently, Audrey has expanded her advocacy efforts to the national level, writing letters, making calls, and creating easy-to-use templates for others to join in. This is an exciting new step in her advocacy journey.

Kelly helps set up meetings between legislators and families, persons served, provider staff and regional center staff so that policymakers can hear personal stories and gain a full understanding of how services are being affected. She also writes letters and participates in informal advocacy opportunities, such as Coffee with Elected Officials.

In the past, Eric participated in the Legislative Breakfasts hosted by San Andreas and more recently the GGRC Legislative Breakfasts, recognizing it as an effective way to amplify voices. He believes that firsthand experiences leave the strongest impact, which is why he takes people on tours to showcase real challenges. One of the most powerful moments in his advocacy work was when experienced legislative staff members from the Assembly Budget Committee visited and spoke with bilingual Social Workers about their high caseloads and the impact on individuals and families in underserved communities. Through this, he reinforced the importance of relationship-building in advocacy.

#### One Thing they Learned About Advocacy

Eric shared that with advocacy, you rarely see the fruits of your labor immediately. However, that doesn't diminish its importance. Stories are what truly resonate with legislators—Assembly members and senators alike. They remember the impact of their decisions, or their inaction, through the stories they hear. On the other hand, legislative staff often focus on data, numbers, and the broader quantitative impact. Understanding your audience is key.

Audrey emphasized that legislators are human beings with hearts and emotions, and they are moved by personal stories. Speak from the heart, trust in the truth of what you are advocating for, and don't be afraid or shy. If your cause is honorable, you have every reason to stand confidently. Also, remember to show appreciation—thank legislators, write them letters, and acknowledge their efforts when they support your efforts.

Kelly pointed out that every legislative office maintains connections with the community they serve. These relationships matter, and advocacy strengthens them. Legislators and their teams are actively involved and engaged with the people they represent.

Edith shared that no act of advocacy is too small. Every step, no matter how minor it seems, contributes to change. The key is simply to start—take that first step and think about the impact you want to make. Advocacy isn't just a one-time effort; for many, it becomes a lifelong commitment. Seeing the changes it brings is both inspiring and rewarding.

Q and A followed.

#### **Board Operations (Lynn Pulliam)**

Lynn shared a report on the Board Education Retreat, highlighting key topics of discussion, including enhancing Social Worker engagement, improving parent education, conducting workshops on future planning, emphasizing patience and adaptability, and a presentation on the Strategic Plan.

The ideas generated during the Retreat will be incorporated into the Strategic Plan Committee.

If any Board member is interested in joining the committee, they should reach out to Lynn or Jacy.

There is also a possibility of hosting more mini-Board retreats in the future. These gatherings help build relationships and foster a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives within the Board. Jacy expressed that she feels uplifted and proud to work alongside the team.

Kate emphasized the importance of strengthening relationships to enhance collaboration and effectiveness within the Board.

Q and A followed.

### **Service Provider Advisory Committee (Kate O'Connor)**

Kate shared that SPAC continues to have several ongoing, consistent conversations—many centered around the topic of service provider rate reform. The focus has been on moving that process forward, finalizing authorizations, and getting agreements in place. Rate reform has been a significant undertaking for everyone involved, but SPAC felt strong support throughout the process. Eric has been especially effective in keeping SPAC informed about the Master Plan—an initiative that's critically important not only for service providers, but also for the individuals and families we serve.

Another major area of focus has been the DDS Provider Directory. While this has presented its own set of challenges, there's been genuine collaboration between the Regional Center and DDS to determine the best path forward. SPAC is now beginning to see meaningful progress. The goal is for these efforts to help providers qualify for the 10% Quality Incentive as part of the rate reform increases.

SPAC remains a vital forum where Service Providers can voice concerns, share insights, and advocate for one another. While not everyone has the time to participate regularly, those who do are helping ensure that all voices are represented—and that advocacy is truly heard and valued. SPAC is also preparing for the upcoming Legislative Breakfast events, where local legislators will be invited to attend and speak.

Lastly, Kate shared that one participant in the SPAC meetings, Elizabeth Grigsby, offered a moving reminder of the power of speaking up. She shared her own journey of advocacy—fighting for her rights and making her voice heard. Her story served as a powerful call to action for all service providers to continue advocating for themselves and the communities they serve.

Q and A followed.

### **Legislative Committee/ARCA Report (Edith Arias)**

#### **Grassroots day**

Eric shared that representatives from One Step Beyond and Pomeroy Center had participated in Grassroots Day along with GGRC Board Members and other advocates. Thanks to the coordination work of Sarah Verity (from AbilityPath), the GGRC group was large enough to split up to cover multiple, overlapping meetings. Eric joined a key meeting with Senator Scott

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Wiener, Chair of the Senate Budget Committee, to discuss the Legislative Breakfast, advocacy priorities, and the Master Plan, while also thanking him for his support of marginalized communities.

Eric also attended a meeting with staff from Assemblymembers Haney and Connolly, and later, representatives of GGRC, NBRC, RCRC and FNRC met with a key staff person to Senator McGuire, Self Advocates took the lead in this meeting and their voices made a powerful impression for all those in the meeting.

Highlights included Elizabeth Hassler from Redwood Coast sharing outcomes from listening sessions (where over 250 individuals with IDD participated) to inform the Senator's staff about the Master Plan, as well as another self-advocate's compelling testimony to pass AB1172 regarding seizure rescue medication. Her story underscored the urgency for change and left a lasting impact.

Overall, it was a successful day of advocacy, collaboration, and strong self-advocate leadership

### ARCA Bills

AB 1172, the Seizure Medication Bill, the Workforce Policy Bill and Resolution on the Lanterman Act Entitlement are three key pieces of legislation that ARCA is sponsoring this year.

Edith provided an overview of each:

- The Seizure Medication in Day Program Bill - AB 1172 would allow trained staff in programs like day services to administer emergency seizure medication.
- The Workforce Policy Bill aims to address staffing shortages and improve conditions for the developmental services workforce.
- The Resolution on the Lanterman Act Entitlement reaffirms the legal right of individuals with developmental disabilities in California to receive necessary services and support and calls for continued protection and funding of that entitlement

### Legislative Breakfast 2025

The 2025 Legislative Breakfast events are scheduled for April 11th in Marin and April 25th in South San Francisco. Flyers are completed and will be shared soon. The planning committee continues to meet regularly, and we encourage everyone to save the dates on your calendars.

### Master Plan Update

The final Master Plan Committee meeting will take place on March 19th. The goal is to finalize the recommendations document and prepare a draft to present to legislators, with clearly defined priorities. This process has involved a great deal of learning and collaboration, and the insights gained will help shape future policy efforts.

Q and A followed.

### **Executive Committee Updates (Jacy Cohen)**

### Consideration of Committee Charter

Jacy spoke about the revised committee charters and shared that each Committee Chair was asked to review and update their respective committee descriptions and discuss with their committee members. Over the past two to three months, considerable time and thought were put into ensuring the updates accurately reflect each committee's current goals and responsibilities.

After further discussion on the Charters, Jacy requested motions to approve the revised charters.

**ACTION:** Jacy asked for a motion to approve the Finance Committee Revised Charter. Kate O'Connor made a motion and Lynn Pulliam seconded. The Board unanimously voted the motion to approve the Finance Committee Revised Charter. There were no further discussions.

*M/S/C (Kate O'Connor motioned/ Lynn Pulliam seconded)*

**ACTION:** Jacy asked for a motion to approve the Services Committee Revised Charter. Lynn Pulliam made a motion and Tracey Bullock seconded. The Board unanimously voted the motion to approve the Finance Committee Revised Charter. There were no further discussions.

*M/S/C (Lynn Pulliam motioned/ Tracey Bullock seconded)*

**ACTION:** Jacy asked for a motion to approve the Operations Committee Revised Charter. David Delira made a motion and Kate O'Connor seconded. The Board unanimously voted the motion to approve the Operations Committee Revised Charter. There were no further discussions.

*M/S/C (David Delira motioned/ Kate O'Connor seconded)*

**ACTION:** Jacy asked for a motion to approve the Legislative Committee Revised Charter. David Delira made a motion and Edith Arias seconded. The Board unanimously voted the motion to approve the Legislative Committee Revised Charter. There were no further discussions.

*M/S/C (David Delira motioned/ Edith Arias seconded)*

### **Executive Director's Report (Eric Zigman)**

#### **Caseload Ratios & Workforce Update**

Eric shared that caseload ratios have improved significantly over the past two years, now averaging around 70 individuals served per social worker. This ratio is down from over 95 individuals served per Social Worker a couple of years ago. But these ratios are still too high to do all the work required of social workers and to be as responsive and effective as we would like to those we serve. Progress in ratio reductions has slowed due to high Intake volumes, but efforts continue to hire more staff (as we have funds available from DDS). Targets remain 62–66 for ages 5+ and 40 for ages 0–5 (currently at 58).

#### **Rate Reform Update**

The provider rate reform is moving forward, with new rates based on local costs. 574 rate acknowledgement letters have been sent out to service providers with their new rates, with 62% returned so far. Rate changes are retroactive to January 1, 2025, and provider feedback will be key to understanding the reform's impact on staffing and service quality.

The Board Meeting adjourned to an Executive Session regarding personnel matters at 7:04 pm.

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Respectfully submitted,  
Aria Alokozai

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