



Golden Gate Regional Center

Supporting Lives of Liberty and Opportunity

RECORD of April 21st, 2026, 5:30 PM

PRESIDING: Jacy Cohen

DIRECTORS PRESENT: David DeLira
Kate O'Connor
Gita Gupta
Sharon Jones
Marta Guzman
Lynn Pulliam
Michael Bernick
Brindicy Alcaraz
Mariana Abballo
Jane Diaz

DIRECTORS
ABSENT

STAFF: Eric Zigman
Brenda Gonzales
Lop Hou
Lisa Rosene
Jayashree Nathaniel
Aria Alokozai
Sean Galvin
Ihsan Shagiwal

GUESTS: Calene (ASL Interpreter)
Corinna (ASL Interpreter)
Chris Aguire
Jennifer Carper
Dennise Jauregui
Oscar Arteta (Spanish Interpreter)
Barclay Lynn
Karen Pace
Vlad Mysla
Greg Gonzalez
Janica Hadley
Lilian Ansari

CALL TO ORDER (Jacy Cohen)

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

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS (Jacy Cohen)

ACTION A. Agenda

The agenda for today's meeting was approved.

M/S/C (Lynn Pulliam motioned/ Gita Gupta seconded)

ACTION B. Record of March 17th, 2026, Meeting

M/S/C (David Delira motioned /Sharon Jones seconded)

PUBLIC COMMENT / ANNOUNCEMENT

Ms. Lilian Ansari shared about establishing the Helix School in Marin County and has submitted application for GGRC vendorization with target program launch in August of this year. At present, however, there is no confirmed timeline or assurance regarding the outcome of the vendorization process. Lilian requested a standardized timeline for vendorization, along with consideration of an expedited pathway for categorization to improve efficiency and streamline approvals.

Jacy acknowledged Ms. Ansari’s concern and assured her that Community Services Department will be in touch with her.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee (Lop Hou for Michael Bernick)

Michael Bernick asked CFO Lop Hou to go over the financial report.

Lop shared the following financial report:

- Monthly Financial Statement: [Financial Status as of February 28, 2026]

Lop reported GGRC’s monthly financial statements as follows:

Operations

After eight months of operations, year to date expenditures are under budget by 10.9%. 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 eight months of operations, year to date expenditures are under budget by 6.2%. The estimated surplus is projected to be approximately \$37 million for this fiscal year.

Community Resource Development Plan (CRDP) Funding

Placement funds and Start-Up funds have been approved but have yet to be allocated. These are expected to be allocated in subsequent budget allocations and fully expensed.

B4 Contract

Lop reported that we have recently signed the B4 Contract for \$37 million as an additional allocation in Purchase of Services.

Q and A followed.

Developmental Disabilities Update on SCDD Activities (Greg Gonzalez)

Greg Shared the following updates:

- A hybrid Social Time session will be held on Wednesday, the 21st, at the Marin County Office of Education. Community members are invited to attend and share their input. This session is part of the Autism Families Workgroup.

- [Regional Advisory Committee](#)
Wednesday, April 22, 5:15p – 8:00p
Hybrid, In-person: Marin County Office of Education, 1111 Las Gallinas Ave, San Rafael
- Effective April 1, SCDD [Self-Determination Program \(SDP\) orientation](#) has been revised to allow additional time for participants to review information, ask questions, and engage more fully. Orientations are offered regularly in both Spanish and English, with additional language support available upon request.
- In anticipation of the May budget, SCDD Executive Director will host a discussion outlining proposed budget items and expected impacts. This session is scheduled for May 24 at 12:00 PM. [California Legislative & Budget Update](#)
Thursday, May 21, 12:00p – 1:00p
- In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, SCDD office will offer a series of programs throughout May. These sessions will focus on available resources, guidance on accessing services, and strategies for understanding and responding to crises. Programs will be held every Thursday during the month. [Mental Health Awareness Month Events](#) link can be found here.

Legislative Committee/ARCA Report (Kate O'Connor)

Kate reporting the following updates:

The committee had legislative and policy discussions, including several bills and the upcoming 60th anniversary Senate resolution. The committee discussed, AB 2324 that aims to support young caregivers who disengage from school to provide care for their loved ones. This bill will allow those folks to stay in school, get credit for supporting loved ones with care and pursue Direct Support Professional as a potential career path.

AB 1670 bill that will increase frequency of allowable dental desensitization services, has advanced to the Senate with strong support.

A resolution honoring the 60th anniversary of the regional center system will include a Senate floor Ceremony with GGRC and Lanterman Regional Center being represented by their, with representative individuals and families and executive directors from those two regional centers. Ceremony will take place in May we believe.

There are ongoing discussions regarding the proposed “trailer bill” focused on regional center oversight and Board composition, with some opposition stating they want to maintain current individual served and family representation requirements.

Eric reported that rate models under rate reform have been updated for service providers as required by law every two years. While the state does not have plans to fund these updated models at this time, the updates will help identify rate insufficiency and provide data to inform future legislative advocacy efforts. Eric added that areas such as supported employment services show significantly higher rates in the updated models (based upon 2026 costs).

Eric also highlighted that California State Senate Democrats released a budget proposal outlining their priorities, including proposing to delay approximately \$1 billion in cuts in DentiCal services, proposing to defer that reality until January 2028.

Legislative Breakfast Events

Kate shared that the committee is planning to host two legislative events this year. The first will take place on May 8th at 8:30 AM at the Pomeroy Recreation and Rehabilitation Center in San Francisco. The second event is scheduled for May 15 at 9:00 AM at the Key Room in Marin County.

Event flyers have been distributed to the board. Participation is open to self-advocates, family members, advocates and individuals served from the community. Kate underscored that efforts are underway to invite local legislators and policymakers to attend both events.

Lynn showed interest in attending the Marin Event as a parent advocate.

Q and A followed.

Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) Update (Marta Guzman)

Marta shared that Association of Regional Center Agencies meetings were held on March 19–20 in Sacramento, during which updates were provided to regional center delegates. There are ongoing discussions regarding the proposed “trailer bill” include provisions related to the continuation of remote services, potential changes to vendorization process, and updates to governance standards. These include considerations around Board compositions such as inclusion of legal and financial expertise—and establishing a maximum Board size of 15 members.

Additionally, Marta added that advocacy efforts and celebrations are being planned in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the regional center system, including events at the State Capitol.

Services Committee (David DeLira)

At the request of David, Brenda Gonzales shared that SF CavityFree Project is a key collaborative effort working closely with multiple partners across San Francisco. The collaborative has been actively organizing and promoting events over several years, with ongoing updates provided by our Dental Coordinator, Jessica Jorquera, regarding relevant and timely activities.

Brenda highlighted that a representative from “Happy Tooth Mobile” will be presenting at an upcoming All Staff meeting. These efforts aim to raise awareness of oral health and oral healthcare resources—both within the community and internally among our social work and interdisciplinary teams at GGRC—while emphasizing the importance of prevention, access to care, and available supports.

Other Board Services Committee highlights included:

- The Resilience and Action initiative, led by Dr. Meggie Okumura and funded by NIH, is a collaboration with partners including GGRC, UCSF, and The Arc of San Francisco. The project developed and piloted a curriculum to build resilience and independence in transition-age youth and individuals with IDD. The curriculum will be made available free to nonprofit providers and includes training for implementation.
- Jayashree Nathaniel and Lisa Rosene met with Dr. Meggie Okumura regarding this project and continued to collaborate.

Sean Galvin delivered a presentation on GGRC’s efforts in relation to affordable and accessible housing and shared the following points:

- Community Connections has received startup funding and is expected to open within the next few months. A recent open house showcased the renovated site at 92 El Camino Real in San Mateo. The program will serve about 30 participants with a 1:2 staff ratio.
- We currently have 14 different housing development projects in various stages, ranging from 7 to 18 units per site.
- A key concept in affordable housing is Area Median Income (AMI). In our region, the 2025 AMI is approximately \$186,000, meaning half of households earn above and half below this level. Most individuals we serve fall into extremely low-income categories due to reliance on SSI and other public benefits.
- We utilize several housing supports, including Section 8 vouchers (tenant-based) and project-based Section 8 tied to specific properties through HUD agreements.
- We also leverage DDS Gap Funding through our Community Placement Plan (CPP) to support developers with financing gaps in creating housing units for those served by GGRC.
- We have several successful gap-funded projects in Northern California, including Light Tree Apartments in East Palo Alto, Gateway Station in South San Francisco, and Kelsey Civic Center, totaling 35 units supported with approximately \$3 million in funding—averaging about \$85,000 per unit over the long term.

Eric introduced Miceala Connery, Co-Founder and CEO of The Kelsey, a nonprofit housing and housing advocacy agency. Miceala spoke about the Kelsey Civic Center (which is in San Francisco) and shared that their work spans four areas: Real Estate Development, Advocacy, Technical Assistance, and Resident Services. Miceala shared the following points:

- Led by Managing Director Allie Cannington, the organization develops disability-forward housing projects like the Kelsey Civic Center, while recognizing the need to scale impact through systems change, advocacy work in terms of local, state, and federal policy barriers and opportunities.
- The organization supports developers, service providers, and public agencies in designing and financing similar housing projects, including feasibility work and cross-sector partnerships in other regions through technical assistance.
- Resident services are provided through an “Inclusion Concierge” staff position and model that helps all residents access support and build community.
- The Kelsey Civic Center in San Francisco includes 112 apartment units (homes), with about 25% reserved for people with disabilities and up to 40% of households including a member with a disability. The \$88M project was financed through multiple sources, including public, philanthropic, and tax credit funding, with GGRC supporting 7 units directly and broader services reaching 18+ residents.

Eric introduced Dennise Jauregui, Executive Director of Housing Choices, shared the following points:

- Housing Choices focuses on three core areas: housing planning, resident services, and advocacy.
- The organization supports individuals and families in developing housing plans aligned with their goals.
- The organization’s Resident Formation Program provides on-site support at affordable housing properties with reserved units. Staff coordinate directly with residents, families, and property management, and support teams to ensure stable tenancy and connection to services.

April 21st, 2025

- Advocacy work focuses on increasing housing opportunities for the people served by engaging in city council meetings, redevelopment planning, and RFP processes, including educating developers and policymakers, elevating family and client stories, and training self-advocates to participate directly in these discussions.
- Housing Choices partners with developers using tools such as Section 8 vouchers and gap financing programs to expand affordable housing opportunities. In San Mateo County, Housing Choices support multiple sites, including projects in Redwood City and Belmont with dedicated units and onsite services.
- The agency is committed to supporting individuals with disabilities to be meaningfully included in housing systems and long-term planning efforts.

Sean shared that resident coordinator at Housing Choices support individuals in completing applications and understanding their housing options. They help people clarify goals and begin planning—whether the move is immediate or part of a longer-term plan. The guiding principle is that no one is “too disabled” to live independently; the key is identifying the right supports to make that possible.

Q and A followed

Board Operations (Lynn Pulliam)

Lynn shared that the Board Retreat is this Saturday, April 25th, from 10:00 AM-2:00PM at the Disability Cultural Center in San Francisco.

Call for nomination

Lynn asked Board members to send their nomination for Board Officers to Lynn and Aria by April 30th, as required in GGRC’s Board Bylaws.

Lynn shared that we have recruitment requirements to ensure representation across ethnic groups and geographic areas, including 25% individuals served and 50% family members of individuals served by GGRC and/or individuals served themselves. We aim to maintain balanced representation across all categories and ensure relevant expertise on the Board. Targeted recruitment efforts are underway, and board member characteristics and expectations will be discussed further at the upcoming Board Retreat.

Q and A followed.

Service Provider Advisory Committee (Kate O’Connor)

Kate shared that SPAC holds regular meetings focused on key priorities such as rate reform, performance measures, and special incident reporting, including related training updates. We also host Legislative Breakfast events that provide an opportunity for families and individuals served to attend, share their experiences, and advocate directly.

Executive Committee

Jacy reminded all Board members that we will have a brief Executive Session at the end of the meeting tonight, regarding a personnel issue.

Executive Director’s Report (Eric Zigman)

Challenges and Opportunities Facing the GGRC Community

Eric highlighted that GGRC’s former Vice Chair Edith Arias and Sasha Bittner have both been appointed to the California Master Plan Committee, which is leading the first major update to the statewide master plan.

Eric presented Golden Gate Regional Center’s opportunities and challenges aligned with the Master Plan on Developmental Services’ major categories.

Key themes include:

- Equity and service access: Purchase of service data continues to show disparities that require more nuanced analysis. Eric underscored that strengthening data capacity and analytics remains a key need to better inform decision-making.
- Internal culture and Diversity Equity Inclusion Belonging (DEIB): The DEIB committee is actively improving onboarding, inclusion, and belonging efforts, with ongoing work to strengthen organizational culture.
- Education and Orientation: The Education and Orientation program is supporting individuals and families from underserved ethnic and language communities to better understand the system and how to access services. Eric believes this program and it’s 1:40 ratio should be available to ALL individuals newly eligible for regional center services, as the system has grown too complex for them to make informed decisions in the absence of this kind of program.
- Employment and workforce development: There is an opportunity to further strengthen employment services and workforce support. GGRC has always been a leader amongst regional centers in this area, but we have not recovered from impacts of the pandemic as strongly as we would have liked.
- Communication and engagement: A new GGRC website is launching on May 4, along with plans to hire a Communications Coordinator to improve external communication, outreach, and community engagement.
- Data systems: The state is working on a new data system, but it remains years away. In the interim, efforts are underway to improve internal data use to better inform planning and service delivery.

Jacy thanked all Board members and adjourned the Board meeting to an Executive Session at 7:15pm

Respectfully submitted,

Aria Alokozai
GGRC Executive Assistant