



MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 18, 2025 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE HARBOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES FOUNDATION

BOARD PRESENT:

Mr. Gordon Cardona, Board Member
Mr. Fu-Tien Chiou, *Treasurer*
Mr. Joe Czarske, *Vice-President*
Mr. LaVelle Gates, *President*
Mr. David Gauthier, Board Member
Mr. Ramon Gonzalez, Board Member
Ms. Patricia Jordan, Board Member
Mr. Chris Patay, Board Member
Ms. Angela Rodriguez, Board Member
Ms. Laurie Zaleski, Board Member

BOARD ABSENT:

Mr. Ron Bergmann, Board Member
Dr. James Flores, *Secretary*
Mr. Jeffrey Herrera, Board Member
Ms. Ann Lee, Ph.D, Board Member

STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. Patrick Ruppe, Executive Director
Ms. Judy Wada, Chief Financial Officer
Ms. Elizabeth Garcia-Moya, Director of Community Services
Ms. Mary Hernandez, Director of Case Management Support Services
Ms. Eun Kim, Director of Intake & Clinical Services
Ms. LaWanna Blair, Director of Early Childhood Services
Ms. Antoinette Perez, Director of Children's Services
Ms. Judy Samana Taimi, Director of Adult Services
Ms. Jennifer Lauro, Executive Assistant
Mr. Jesus Jimenez, Executive Office Department Assistant

STAFF ABSENT:

Ms. Thao Mailloux, Director of Strategic Communications & Engagement

INTERPRETER:

Mr. Fernando Nunez, LRA Spanish Interpreter

GUESTS:

Ms. Monserrat Palacios, DDS
Mr. Paul Quiroz, Service Provider
Ms. Amalia Ceballos, HRC Parent
Ms. Esmeralda Loreto, Union Rep
Mr. Federico Nuno, Guest
Ms. Isabel Nuno, Guest
Ms. Jezebelle Rocna, Guest
Mr. Jessie Lopez, Guest
Ms. Sofia Garcia, HRC Staff
Mr. Brian Carrillo, HRC Staff
Ms. Lesly Nuno, HRC Staff
Ms. Analyssa Luna, HRC Staff
Mr. John King, HRC Staff
Ms. Melissa Estrella, HRC Staff
Ms. Rosana Preciado, HRC Staff
Mr. Jesse Torres, HRC Staff
Ms. Maria Reyes Melgar, HRC Staff
Ms. Crystal Rodarte, HRC Staff
Ms. La'Shelle Daisy, HRC Staff
Ms. Cammy Rosset, HRC Staff
Ms. Jessica Vega, HRC Staff
Ms. Angeline Guerra, HRC Staff
Ms. Claudia Menendez, HRC Staff
Ms. Heidi Colon, HRC Staff
Mr. Raphael Munoz, HRC Staff
Ms. Janett Reyes, HRC Staff
Ms. Alejandra Madrigal, HRC Staff
Ms. Gizet Arellano, HRC Staff
Ms. Isabel Castellanos, HRC Staff

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Gates called the Board to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Gates welcomed Board members, guests and staff, then led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Gates took roll call of Board Members and a quorum was established.

Mr. Gates reminded the Board that our next regular business meeting will be on January 20, 2026.

Mr. Gates called on Board member Mr. David Gauthier to read Harbor's Mission, Vision and Guiding Values Statement.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Gates advised that public input was next on the agenda. Mr. Gates stated that he will call upon each person who submitted a Public Comment Request form to address the Board and requested that he or she limit their comments to two minutes in order to accommodate everyone. Mr. Gates indicated that we had received eight (8) Public Comment Request forms.

PRESENTATION OF MINUTES

In Dr. Flores absence, Mr. Gates presented the draft minutes of the September 16, 2025 meeting of our Board which were included in the Board packet and posted for the general public on the Harbor website. **The MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 16, 2025 BOARD MEETING were received and filed.**

PRESENTATION OF FINANCIALS

Mr. Chiou reviewed the following financial statements, which were received and filed:

- Harbor Regional Center Monthly Financial Report Fiscal Year 2025-26, dated July 2025
- Harbor Regional Center Purchase of Service Line Item Report, dated July 2025
- Harbor Regional Center POS Contract Summary, dated July 2025
- Harbor Regional Center Operations Line Item Report, dated July 2025
- Harbor Regional Center Monthly Financial Report Fiscal Year 2025-26, dated August 2025
- Harbor Regional Center Purchase of Service Line Item Report, dated August 2025
- Harbor Regional Center POS Contract Summary, dated August 2025
- Harbor Regional Center Operations Line Item Report, dated August 2025
- Harbor Developmental Disabilities Foundation Harbor Help Fund Statement of Activities Fiscal Year 2025-2026

EXECUTIVE REPORT

1. ARCA ACADEMY REPORT OUT:

Mr. Ruppe informed that the ARCA Academy was held on November 14-15 at Alta Regional Center in Sacramento where key note speakers addressed the main topics of the event. Specifically, Board members broke out into groups and learned about the history and future of Developmental Services, fiscal allocations, leadership, public policy, and new Board member onboarding, among other topics. Mr. Ruppe called upon the Board members who attended and asked them to share their experience. Discussion followed.

2. FOR BOARD APPROVAL | RETIREMENT RESOLUTION:

Mr. Ruppe called the Board's attention to the Retirement Resolution requiring Board approval. Mr. Ruppe informed that the SECURE 2.0 Act passed in December 2022 aimed to enhance retirement savings and improve access to retirement plans and explained the key provisions in detail.

Mr. Ruppe asked that the Board have a motion to approve the Resolution that Harbor adopt a Roth feature to its Retirement Plans, which includes a Prototype Profit Sharing Plan with a 401(k) Feature and a 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan. The plans will be amended in accordance with the SECURE 2.0 Act to allow after-tax contributions, including age-based catch-up contributions for eligible employees.

Mr. Chiou moved to approve Harbor's Retirement Plan with a Roth Feature, and Ms. Jordan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board with no opposition or abstention.

3. FOR BOARD APPROVAL | PURCHASE OF SERVICE CONTRACT | THE COLUMBUS ORGANIZATION:

Mr. Ruppe advised that the Lanterman Act requires any regional center contract which exceeds \$250,000 be approved by the regional center Board. Mr. Ruppe indicated that this contract is for professional services for The Columbus Organization. Mr. Ruppe advised that based on Harbor's needs, we are adding two (2) BCBAs to our current contract with Columbus to allow them to complete more internal consultations. The Board previously approved the contract in May 2024 through June 3, 2026. The increase in cost for the contract is \$227,884 for the two (2) positions. A motion to approve is required by the Board.

Mr. Czarske moved to approve the Purchase of Service Contract for Professional Services with The Columbus Organization and Ms. Jordan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board with no opposition or abstention.

4. FOR BOARD APPROVAL | HARBOR OPERATIONS POLICY | CHECK SIGNATURE:

Mr. Ruppe referred the Board to Harbor's Check Signature Policy which required updating to increase limits for purchase of service checks exceeding \$150,000.00 and operations checks exceeding \$100,000.00 requiring two (2) signatures, including one (1) Board Officer. Additionally, the Policy was updated to reflect purchase of services EFTs exceeding \$150,000.00 and operations EFTs exceeding \$100,000.00 will be reported to the Executive Finance Committee of the Board annually, following the close of the fiscal year. A motion to approve is required by the Board.

Mr. Chiou moved to approve the updated Harbor Check Signature Policy and Mr. Gauthier seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board with no opposition or abstention.

5. FOR BOARD APPROVAL | HARBOR OPERATIONS POLICY | ZERO-TOLERANCE CLIENT ABUSE & NEGLECT:

Mr. Ruppe referred the Board to Harbor's Zero-Tolerance Client Abuse and Neglect Policy which required updating to be in line with person-centered language.

Mr. Czarske moved to approve the updated Harbor Zero-Tolerance Client Abuse and Neglect Policy and Ms. Rodriguez seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board with no opposition or abstention.

6. FOR BOARD APPROVAL | HARBOR SERVICE POLICY | SOCIAL RECREATIONAL, CAMPING, EDUCATIONAL AND NON-MEDICAL THERAPY SERVICES:

Mr. Ruppe referred the Board to Harbor's Social Recreational Policy which required updating by DDS pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 4434(d). Specifically, per WIC Section 4688.22(d)(2) states regional centers shall not exchange respite hours or any other service or support authorized by the regional center for social recreation or camping services or nonmedical therapy service hours. Therefore, Harbor updated this Policy to achieve compliance with the intent of the statute. A motion to approve is required by the Board.

Mr. Gauthier moved to approve the updated Harbor Social Recreational, Camping, Educational and Non-Medical Therapy Services Policy and Mr. Czarske seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board with no opposition or abstention.

7. FOR BOARD APPROVAL | HARBOR SERVICE POLICY | AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE:

MR. Ruppe informed that DDS has directed Regional Centers to adopt a service policy that addresses a new service, "American Sign Language Training and Supports". DDS provided a pre-approved standardized policy for all Centers to utilize. If a Center wants to modify the policy outside of unique "Exception" language, the policy would need to go through the Department's typical policy approval process. Mr. Ruppe recommended to the Board that Harbor utilize the standard policy template provided by DDS rather than craft a separate policy, which is the version presented this evening for Board approval.

Mr. Chiou moved to approve the new Harbor American Sign Language Training and Support Service Policy and Ms. Zaleski seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board with no opposition or abstention.

8. FOR BOARD APPROVAL: 2026 HDDF BOARD MEETINGS, PRESENTATIONS & TRAINING SCHEDULE:

Mr. Ruppe called the Board's attention to the 2026 HDDF Board Meetings, Presentations and Training schedule that was provided in their Board packets and asked the Board for a motion to approve.

Ms. Jordan moved to approve the 2026 HDDF Board Meetings, Presentations and Training Schedule and Ms. Rodriguez seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board with no opposition or abstention.

9. INFORMATION ON: "INTER-REGIONAL CENTER TRANSFERS"

Mr. Ruppe called upon Antoinette Perez, Director of Children and Adolescents, who provided a brief explanation on how Harbor conducts Inter-Regional Center Transfers.

10. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS:

Mr. Ruppe shared photos of the various community engagements Harbor has hosted over the past months, specifically Indigenous People's Day and Dia De Los Muertos where Assemblymember Jose Luis Solache and Senator Bob Archuleta attended. Mr. Ruppe then called upon Ms. LaWanna Blair, Director of Early Childhood Services who reported on Harbor's annual 'Trunk or Treat' event and shared photos of individuals we serve and their families attending this annual Halloween event.

Mr. Ruppe announced that Harbor's Holiday initiatives are in full swing working with the Carson/Gardena/Dominguez Rotary Club to provide up to 40 Thanksgiving boxes to our Harbor families. Harbor is also hosting the 'Rock for Tots Charity Concert' on November 23, 2025 in conjunction with Hermosa Beach's tree lighting ceremony with proceeds benefiting the Harbor Help Fund. Mr. Ruppe informed all who wish to donate to contact our Family Resource Center.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Czarske reported that the Board Development Committee met virtually on October 8, 2025 and prepared the 2026 Board meeting, presentation and training schedule. The next meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2025.

B. CLIENT SERVICES

Ms. Taimi reported that the Committee met on September 23, 2025 and reviewed Harbor's current service policy on Supported Employment and Transportation Services Training. The next meeting is scheduled for November 25, 2025.

C. RETIREMENT

Mr. Chiou, Committee Chair, reported on the Retirement Plan Balances as of September 30, 2025.

D. SELF-DETERMINATION ADVISORY

Ms. Perez advised the Board that the Self-Determination Advisory Committee continues to meet monthly and provided an update on the October 1, 2025 meeting.

E. SERVICE PROVIDER ADVISORY

Ms. Rodriguez, Chair of the Committee, informed that the Committee met on October 7, 2025 and were updated on rate reform, emergency preparedness, cyber security, HCBS and the Public Records Act. The next meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT 7:36 p.m.

Mr. Gates thanked all those who participated in our Board meeting tonight and wished all Happy Holidays.

Submitted by:


Dr. James Flores, Secretary

Board of Trustees

Harbor Developmental Disabilities Foundation