



**DESERT HEALTHCARE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
MEETING MINUTES
February 23, 2021**

Directors Present – Video Conference	District Staff Present – Video Conference	Absent
President Leticia De Lara Vice-President/Secretary Karen Borja Director Carole Rogers, RN Director Evett PerezGil Director Les Zendle, MD Director Arthur Shorr Director Carmina Zavala	Conrado E. Bázquez, MD, CEO Chris Christensen, CAO Donna Craig, Chief Program Officer Will Dean, Marketing and Communications Director Alejandro Espinoza, Program Officer and Outreach Director Eric Taylor, Accounting Manager Meghan Kane, Programs and Research Analyst Vanessa Smith, Special Projects and Program Manager Erica Huskey, Administrative and Program Assistant Andrea S. Hayles, Clerk of the Board <u>Legal Counsel</u> Jeff Scott	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION
A. Call to Order Roll Call	President De Lara called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. The Clerk of the Board called the roll with all Directors' present.	
B. Pledge of Allegiance	President De Lara asked all in attendance to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.	
C. Approval of Agenda	President De Lara asked for a motion to approve the agenda.	#21-23 MOTION WAS MADE by Director PerezGil and seconded by Director Rogers to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously. AYES – 7 President De Lara, Vice-President Borja, Director Rogers, Director PerezGil, Director Zendle, Director Shorr, and Director Zavala NOES – 0 ABSENT – 0
D. Public Comment		



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<p>E. Consent Agenda</p> <p>1. BOARD MINUTES</p> <p> a. Board of Directors Meeting – January 26, 2021</p> <p>2. FINANCIALS</p> <p> a. Approval of the January 2021 Financial Statements – F&A Approved February 09, 2021</p> <p>3. AGREEMENTS</p> <p> a. Las Palmas Medical Plaza Lease Renewal – LabCorp</p> <p> b. Las Palmas Medical Plaza – 6-Month Temporary Lease – Sleep Treatment Partners, Inc.</p> <p>4. HUMAN RESOURCES</p> <p> a. District Job Descriptions – Revised and Updated by HR Consultant, Maggie Martinez</p> <p>5. GRANTS</p> <p> a. Grant #1170 Jewish Family Service of the Desert – Mental Health Counseling Services for Underserved Coachella Valley Residents – \$80,000</p> <p> b. Grant #1041 Healthy Families Foundation, aka John F. Kennedy Memorial Foundation – SafeCare In Home Visitation Program six (6) month no-cost grant extension extending the grant agreement through August 31, 2021</p> <p>6. POLICIES (reference staff report for detailed changes)</p> <p> a. Policy #BOD-06 Filling a Vacancy on the Board</p> <p> b. Policy #BOD-09 Rules of Order for Board and Committee Meetings</p> <p> c. Policy #BOD-10 Board Meeting Conduct</p>	<p>President De Lara asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.</p> <p>Director Zendle withdrew items 5.a. and 5.b. explaining that the grants should not be part of the consent agenda, most of the work of the District is to promote the mission, each grant warrants a brief presentation that should be voted separately, and in the future listed in the Program Committee report out. If the grants are continuously listed on the consent agenda, Director Zendle will remove the grants during each meeting.</p> <p>President De Lara described the discussion at a prior Workshop for the Board to provide adequate time for other topics by placing the grants, which are recommended by the Program Committee with other consent agenda matters. Using a consensus vote, President De Lara inquired with each Director if they agree with moving each grant request at the February meeting and possibly the month of March to the Program Committee reports with a brief overview of each grant until the matter is discussed at the next Workshop.</p>	<p>#21-24 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Shorr and seconded by Director PerezGil to approve all items in the consent agenda. Motion passed unanimously. AYES – 7 President De Lara, Vice-President Borja, Director Rogers, Director PerezGil, Director Zendle, Director Shorr, and Director Zavala</p> <p>NOES – 0</p> <p>ABSENT – 0</p>
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<p>d. Policy #BOD-21 Board Member Compensation Guidelines</p> <p>e. Policy #OP-05 Grant & Mini Grant</p>	<p>Donna Craig, Chief Program Officer, described the grant request of \$80k from Jewish Family Service of the Desert for mental health counseling services for underserved Coachella Valley residents with a recommendation from the Program Committee.</p> <p>Director Zendle explained that grants similar to Jewish Family Service of the Desert is a model of the District’s effort to promote behavioral health issues and discover other organizations that could follow the same model given the shortage of mental health providers, further suggesting significant amounts of money or similar programs that help accomplish the District’s goals with behavioral health.</p> <p>Donna Craig, Chief Program Officer, described the Board-approved grant in February 2020 for a six-month no-cost grant extension to complete the deliverables due to COVID at the Healthy Families Foundation.</p>	
<p>F. Desert Healthcare District CEO Report</p>	<p>Before the District’s CEO report was presented, President De Lara acknowledged that February is Black History Month, ensuring that the District acknowledges and recognizes the community members contributions over many years, and the health care providers interest in the District’s Desert Highland</p>	



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<p>1. Presentation to Temple Sinai on 02/11/21</p>	<p>Gateway Estates community grant for advancing and addressing the District’s role in the healthcare needs of black communities in the Coachella Valley.</p> <p>Conrado Bárzaga, MD, CEO, described his presentation on February 11 to the Temple Sinai regarding the District’s history and the efforts to bring equity in healthcare to the Coachella Valley and assisting the County with the distributions of the COVID vaccine, thanking Director Shorr for the meet and greet with the Rabbi of Temple Sinai.</p> <p>Director Shorr explained that the presentation was exceptional, and he would like the CEO to establish additional similar presentations as a model throughout the Coachella Valley.</p> <p>President De Lara recognized Director Zendle who also attended the comprehensive virtual presentation that encouraged positive conversations about the District.</p>	
<p>2. COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign for Underserved Communities in the Coachella Valley</p>	<p>Dr. Bárzaga, CEO, described the assessment of the number of COVID cases reflecting the lack of services and difficult conditions in some areas with the highest numbers per 1,000 cases exist in Thermal,</p>	



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<p>3. Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Improvement Plan Update</p> <p>4. Strategic Planning Advisor Consultants Update</p>	<p>including the highest death rate, as well as in Garnet, detailing the disparities as a reflection of the challenges the residents are facing as COVID has elevated the visibility of those communities. Working with the County, over 4,000 vaccine doses have been distributed to the farm working communities in the Coachella Valley, further highlighting the food distribution chain of workers in grocery stores that are exposed, including line cooks and others in the service industry, and exploring additional partnerships.</p> <p>Vice-President Borja thanked the community partners for sharing resources, especially given the scarcity at this time.</p> <p>President De Lara explained that the information presented is informative and offered at a time for others to learn more about the District’s role in our communities.</p> <p>Dr. Bárzaga, CEO, explained that the report in the packet outlines the work with Health Assessment Research for Communities (HARC) to complete the needs assessment, detailing the focus groups with residents, advisory council members, and a forthcoming report to share with the Board in the</p>	
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<p>5. Lift to Rise Rental Assistance Program</p>	<p>coming weeks to assist moving forward with a strategic plan and determine the strengths, resources, and to fulfill the demands of the community while prioritizing grant-making with additional policy support and fostering a system to attract additional funds.</p> <p>Dr. Bárzaga, CEO, explained the District’s support through grant funding to assist with efforts to launch and support community with rental assistance, describing the disproportionate black and Latino communities with approx. 65% of those with job loss due to COVID with over 1,000 applicants on the waiting list for rental assistance throughout the Eastern Coachella Valley.</p> <p>Araceli Palafox, Deputy Director, Lift to Rise, explained that in early March additional funding from the county will be available to assist with the wait list and those that were not initially funded (anticipating over \$25M to the Coachella Valley), and to rotate those families into the next portion of the program. The Directors inquired on additional aspects of the rental assistance program with Ms. Palafox explaining that funding will continue to support the program, and the applications are on Lift to Rise’s website with additional</p>	
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	<p>resources of the platform, such as application status and direct questions. Dr. Bárzaga addressed Vice-President Borja’s inquiry for using additional funding from the \$3M available in grant funding to assist with the waitlist as staff moves forward with discussions to assist, in addition to staff volunteering with the outreach component and supporting the digital divide and language barriers for completing the applications.</p>	
<p>6. Board Development Workshop Facilitated by Rauch Communications</p>	<p>Dr. Bárzaga, CEO, explained the Board development study recently completed by the Board and that staff is working to schedule the next two sessions in the month of March.</p>	
<p>7. Consideration to approve an invitation for the CEO to serve on the University of Riverside (UCR) School of Medicine’s Community Advisor Board</p>	<p>Dr. Bárzaga, CEO, described the community partners that meet twice per year offering the District the opportunity to provide feedback on matters of significance that affect the Coachella Valley, detailing the invite from Dean Deas to join the University of Riverside of School of Medicine’s Community Advisory Board.</p>	<p>#21-25 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Zendle and seconded by Director PerezGil to approve an invitation for the CEO to serve on the University of Riverside (UCR) School of Medicine’s Community Advisor Board Motion passed unanimously. AYES – 7 President De Lara, Vice-President Borja, Director Rogers, Director PerezGil, Director Zendle, Director Shorr, and Director Zavala NOES – 0 ABSENT – 0</p>
<p>8. Consideration to approve an invitation from the County of</p>	<p>Dr. Bárzaga, CEO, described the voluntary invite from</p>	



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<p>Riverside Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Workforce Solutions to appoint the CEO to the Riverside County Upward Mobility Anti-Poverty Initiative Cohort and to appoint the CEO as Co-Chair of Lift to Rise’s Economic Opportunity Community Action Network (CAN)</p>	<p>Carrie Harmon, Assistant Director, County of Riverside Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Workforce Solution, to join the anti-poverty initiative and the economic opportunity community action network, which are closely aligned to address the social determinants of health and informs the District through the community health needs assessment.</p> <p>President De Lara explained that the invites are a confirmation of the CEO’s work and involvement as a community leader throughout the Coachella Valley, and she is pleased to see the CEO’s participation and input in the community.</p>	<p>#21-26 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Zendle and seconded by Director Shorr to approve an invitation from the County of Riverside Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Workforce Solutions to appoint the CEO to the Riverside County Upward Mobility Anti-Poverty Initiative Cohort and to appoint the CEO as Co-Chair of Lift to Rise’s Economic Opportunity Community Action Network (CAN) Motion passed unanimously. AYES – 7 President De Lara, Vice-President Borja, Director Rogers, Director PerezGil, Director Zendle, Director Shorr, and Director Zavala NOES – 0 ABSENT – 0</p>
<p>G. Desert Regional Medical Center CEO Report</p>	<p>Michele Finney, CEO, Desert Care Network (DCN), Desert Regional Medical Center (DRMC), described the significant decrease in COVID positive patients with January averaging 110 Average Daily Census (ADC). As of today, DRMC returned to a normal ICU occupancy rate, in the last 30 days all elective procedures are reopened and have eliminated most of the overflow units.</p> <p>As a network, DRMC has administered or committed all doses of COVID vaccines allocated to date and hosted two senior-focused</p>	



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	<p>community events at the Mizell and Indio Senior Centers.</p> <p>The state through a third-party administrator is in the process of redesigning the vaccine distribution system. Working with the District CEO Ms. Finney has commenced preliminary conversations concerning the redesign and creating opportunities to partner and further advance outreach to the underserved populations in the Coachella Valley. Additional information will be available in the coming weeks.</p> <p>A few of the accrediting entities have resumed their activities. DRMC is anticipating the Joint Commission reaccreditations for hip and knee certifications, also expecting to reaccredit Perinatal Services in the coming months.</p> <p>DRMC recently received notification of continued Blue Distinction for the Center for Bariatric Surgery and the Maternity care program. The distinction signifies that the programs meet nationally established criteria for Quality, Safety, and Efficiency. The outpatient GI lab expansion at the El Mirador Surgery Center launched and opening in February. The GI lab expands the Center by two</p>	
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	<p>OR suites and three procedure rooms.</p> <p>DRMC is commencing completion on a multi-year project to standardize the IT platforms for the three facilities in the DCN. As part of this project, DRMC is upgrading the Cerner Electronic Health Records to Cerner Plus. The upgrade will provide the hospital staff, particularly nursing, and the medical staff with improved functionality and ease of use. Later in the year, the SNF at Hi-Desert upgrade to the Cerner SNF module – a total investment of approx. \$7.5M. A few of the larger capital projects underway include the replacement of two CT scanners, a Nuclear Medicine Camera at DRMC, and the addition of a CT scanner at JFK Memorial Hospital – a total. Investment of approx. \$4.5M.</p> <p>DCN continues to focus on a variety of TV ads, interviews, digital, print, social media, and billboards on a range of topics, such as COVID, Safe Care, Orthopedics, Oncology, and Neurosciences.</p> <p>President De Lara thanked Ms. Finney and the entire Network for the capital improvements on both ends of the Valley, such as the new CT scanners.</p>	
<p>H. Desert Regional Medical Center Governing Board</p>	<p>Director Zendle described the report of the Governing Board</p>	



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	<p>meeting highlighting the comprehensive report from the Chief Nursing Officer on labor management, staffing, and competency activities throughout Desert Regional Medical Center (DRMC), which ensures the appropriate number of staff in surge and non-surge periods, and the adequate ratio of nurses to patient's as it relates to laws and regulations. The state allowed all hospitals to commence work out of ratio up to February 8, which is now lifted and DRMC is back to normal staffing ratios. The Governing Board reviewed the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) open and closed cases from the Joint Commission, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).</p> <p>Survey activities were also reviewed that are underway or postponed due to COVID; a report on service lines was provided by the DRMC CEO with an increase in Obstetrics and Gynecology patients from last year, and the outpatient GI procedure rooms are completed and running at high capacity. Concluding the report, the Governing Board reviewed capital and construction projects, quality reports, with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) ratings due in April and anxiously awaiting the</p>	
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	<p>hospital’s star rating while anticipating any areas of improvement; and the medical executive committee review of newly credentialed or re-credentialed providers.</p>	
<p>I.1. Program Committee</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft Meeting Minutes – February 09, 2021 2. Funding Requests Schedule 3. Grant Payment Schedule 4. Consideration to approve the COVID-19 Recovery Grant in Collaboration with Regional Access Project Foundation (RAP) to contribute a match of \$100,000 to a joint pool for nonprofits in the Coachella Valley and Blythe negatively impacted by COVID-19 that apply for funding. 	<p>Director PerezGil, Chair, Program Committee, inquired on any questions of the draft meeting minutes, funding requests schedule, and the grant payment schedule.</p> <p>President De Lara recused herself from discussions on the COVID-19 Recovery Grant collaboration with the Regional Access Project Foundation.</p> <p>Director PerezGil described the specifics of the recovery grant, Director Zendle explained that he supports the grant; however, the grant should explicitly state not funding cities outside of the District, such as Blythe. Donna Craig, Chief Program Officer clarified that similar to the prior collective fund with the Regional Access Project Foundation (RAP), any funding outside the boundaries were supported by RAP, which is described in the grant agreement for RAP’s benefit only.</p>	<p>#21-27 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Shorr and seconded by Director Zendle to approve the COVID-19 Recovery Grant in Collaboration with Regional Access Project Foundation (RAP) to contribute a match of \$100,000 to a joint pool for nonprofits in the Coachella Valley and Blythe negatively impacted by COVID-19 that apply for funding. Motion passed unanimously. AYES – 7 President De Lara, Vice-President Borja, Director Rogers, Director PerezGil, Director Zendle, Director Shorr, and Director Zavala NOES – 0 ABSENT – 0</p>
<p>I.2. Finance, Legal, Administration & Real Estate</p>	<p>Director Shorr, Chair, F&A Committee, provided an overview of the February F&A</p>	



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<p>1. Draft Meeting Minutes January 12, 2021</p> <p>I.3. Board and Staff Communications and Policy Committee</p> <p>1. Draft Meeting Minutes – February 09, 2021</p>	<p>Committee meeting minutes, inquiring on any questions of the Board.</p> <p>President De Lara, Chair, Board and Staff Communications and Policy Committee, described the minutes of the February meeting and several policy discussions and inquired on any questions.</p> <p>Vice-President Borja suggested consideration of the job descriptions for bilingual skills given that over 40% of the population in the Coachella Valley is multilingual. Not as a requirement, but to communicate with the non-English speaking community.</p>	
<p>J. Old Business</p>	<p>There was no old business.</p>	
<p>K. Legal</p> <p>1. AB 361 - Medi-Cal: Health Homes for Medi-Cal Enrollees and Section 1115 Waiver Demonstration Populations with Chronic and Complex Conditions</p>	<p>Jeff Scott, Legal Counsel, described AB 361 and the renumbering of new legislation for low-income individuals for home health program enrollees with chronic conditions in 2013, but AB 361 is a bill introduced for this legislative session and the codification of the Governors executive order for virtual meetings and reiterates the requirements that the meetings are open and public and in accordance with the Brown Act, suspending the Brown Act orders for</p>	



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<p>2. District Complaint Process – Policy OP-07</p> <p>3. Legislative Budget Letter for Seismic Retrofit</p>	<p>teleconferencing during states of emergencies.</p> <p>Jeff Scott, Legal Counsel, reminded the Board during the course of business the District receives complaints and inquiries about the hospital via letters, emails, and other forms of communication, which is common for Special Districts that do not operate hospitals to received complaints from constituents. The District has a formal policy for complaints and inquiries that should be forwarded to the CEO. The CEO then forwards the complaint to the hospital with a copy to the District Board, which is also the standard and used by other Healthcare Districts.</p> <p>Dr. Bárzaga, CEO, explained that as the deadline approaches for the hospital retrofit for seismic compliance, a plan is necessary to submit to the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSPHD), which is a costly process. After meeting with Assemblymember Garcia to discuss the challenges in protecting the main asset of the District, and to continue addressing the healthcare needs in the Coachella Valley, the Assemblymember is supportive of the District’s efforts to obtain state funding</p>	
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	<p>for the OSPHD seismic retrofit plan of \$5M to meet the 2030 deadline.</p> <p>Director Zendles explained that since Assemblymember Chad Mayes is in the hospital's district and should be involved in the legislation, nonetheless, staff will submit a copy of the letter to Assemblymember Mayes; however, Assemblymember Garcia has offered to submit the letter to the state for the budget process.</p> <p>President De Lara thanked the CEO for moving quickly to prepare the letter, it is a costly and necessary step possibly with funding through other means, but hopefully successful by other means, with lots of competition as Director Rogers described, inquiring how the District improve its chances for success.</p> <p>Dr. Bázquez explained that staff will work with the community to increase the visibility by sending letters of support to the legislature, mobilizing community partners, the Association of California Healthcare Districts, and the California Special Districts Association with meetings, letters, and phone calls to legislatures with consideration of hiring a</p>	
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	lobbyist to assist the District at state and federal levels. President De Lara requested that the CEO provide at the next meeting additional thoughts on progress and if any action is necessary,	
L. Immediate Issues and Comments		
M. Adjournment	President De Lara adjourned the meeting at 7:12 p.m.	Audio recording available on the website at http://dhcd.org/Agendas-and-Documents

DocuSigned by:
Karen Borja
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ATTEST: _____
 Karen Borja, Vice-President/Secretary
 Desert Healthcare District Board of Directors

Minutes respectfully submitted by Andrea S. Hayles, Clerk of the Board