



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

<b>Directors Present – Video Conference</b>	<b>District Staff Present – Video Conference</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Acting President Karen Borja Acting Vice-President/Secretary 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	President Leticia De Lara

<b>AGENDA ITEMS</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>A. Call to Order</b>  <b>Roll Call</b>	Acting President Borja conducted the meeting in President De Lara's absence, calling the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.  The Clerk of the Board called the roll with all Directors' present.	
<b>B. Pledge of Allegiance</b>	Acting President Borja asked Director PerezGil to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.	
<b>C. Approval of Agenda</b>	Acting President Borja asked for a motion to approve the agenda.	<b>#21-29 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Rogers and seconded by Director Shorr to approve the agenda.            Motion passed unanimously.            AYES – 6 Acting President Borja, Acting Vice-President Rogers, Director PerezGil, Director Zendle, Director Shorr, and Director Zavala</b>



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		<b>NOES – 0 ABSENT – 1 President De Lara</b>
<b>D. Public Comment</b>	There were no public comments.	
<b>E. Consent Agenda</b>		
<b>1. BOARD MINUTES</b> a. Board of Directors Meeting – February 23, 2021 b. Special Meeting of the Board of Directors – March 16, 2021 <b>2. FINANCIALS</b> a. Approval of the February 2021 Financial Statements – F&A Approved March 09, 2021 <b>3. AGREEMENTS</b> a. Professional Services Authorization – Prest-Vuksic-Greenwood Architects – Buildout Conference Room at Regional Access Project (RAP) Office <b>4. STRATEGIC PLANNING</b> a. Veralon Partners, Inc., and Valentine Health Advisors consulting services and engagement agreement to facilitate, develop, and guide a three-year strategic plan – NTE \$72,500 <b>5. COST GRANT EXTENSION</b> a. Grant #1134 cost grant extension to the Desert Healthcare Foundation for an additional allocation of \$100,000 towards Expanding Racial Diversity in the Health Profession Workforce for a total of \$200,000, increasing the total grant amount from \$500,000 to \$600,000 <b>6. HUMAN RESOURCES</b> a. Promotion and Revised Job Description for Alejandro	Acting President Borja asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.	<b>#21-30 MOTION WAS MADE by Director PerezGil and seconded by Director Zavala to the consent agenda.</b> <b>Motion passed unanimously.</b> <b>AYES – 6 Acting President Borja, Acting Vice-President Rogers, Director PerezGil, Director Zendle, Director Shorr, and Director Zavala</b> <b>NOES – 0</b> <b>ABSENT – 1 President De Lara</b>



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<b>Espinoza as Chief of Community Engagement</b>		
<b>F. Desert Healthcare District CEO Report</b>		
<b>1. COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign for Underserved Communities in the Coachella Valley</b>	Conrado Bárzaga, MD, CEO, provided a presentation on equity and COVID-19 – Reflection on Community Interventions, detailing equity and equality of the vaccine distribution in the Coachella Valley by identifying the gaps for a more equitable system through the collaborative.	
<b>2. Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Health Improvement Plan (HIP) Update and Future Workshop</b>	Dr. Bárzaga, CEO, explained that a preliminary presentation from Health Assessment and Research for Communities (HARC) is included in the packet with the staff report, detailing the five focus areas identified by the community.	
<b>3. Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) Sphere of Influence Review and Approval</b>	Dr. Bárzaga, CEO, summarized the 2020 Municipal Services Review (MSR), including the Sphere of Influence and demographic areas assessed by the Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO), and an approved resolution with no changes to the District boundaries.	
<b>4. Senior Program Officer, Behavioral Health Update</b>	Dr. Bárzaga, CEO, provided an update on the Senior Program Officer, Behavioral Health position explaining that the District is actively recruiting, the second round of interviews is scheduled for the	



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<p><b>5. Consideration to approve the acceptance of \$175,000 from The Coachella Valley Resource Conservation (CVRCD) and direct staff to further study the feasibility of acquiring and operating a mobile unit</b></p>	<p>two final candidates with the possibility of an offer of employment in the coming weeks.</p> <p>Dr. Bárzaga, CEO explained that the Coachella Valley Resource Conservation District (CVRCD) is a special district governed locally and working in partnership with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), a service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Given the District’s work to ensure the distribution of the COVID vaccine in the agricultural community, CVRCD approved at its most recent Board of Directors meeting, a resolution to provide the District with \$175k to purchase and retrofit a mobile unit. At the Board’s direction, staff is requesting acceptance of the \$175k from CVRCD to study the feasibility of acquiring and operating a mobile unit.</p> <p>Board discussions included recommendations that the District include Desert Regional Medical Center’s Residency Program as a possible partnership, the best approach to utilizing the funds, and consulting with the Board before accepting funding based on a resolution, such as the feasibility study first, then returning to the Board with the acceptance.</p>	<p><b>#21-30 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Zendle and seconded by Director Rogers to direct staff to study and analyze the possibility to use the \$175k funding to assist with the COVID-19 Coachella Valley Equity Collaborative, including the possibility of acquiring and operating a mobile unit for COVID vaccinations. Motion passed unanimously. AYES – 6 Acting President Borja, Acting Vice-President Rogers, Director PerezGil, Director Zendle, Director Shorr, and Director Zavala NOES – 0 ABSENT – 1 President De Lara</b></p>
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	<p>Director Zendle thanked the CVRCD and motioned to direct staff to study and analyze the possibility to use the \$175k funding to assist with the COVID-19 Coachella Valley Equity Collaborative, including the possibility of acquiring and operating a mobile unit for COVID vaccinations.</p>	
<p><b>G. Desert Regional Medical Center CEO Report</b></p>	<p>Michele Finney, CEO, Desert Care Network, Desert Healthcare District, explained that the hospital has returned to normal operations with single-digit COVID patients and low positivity testing rates. The ICU rate has returned to the customary range of 28-31 ICU patients. Effective today, DRMC reintroduced visitors to the hospital following the California Department of Public Health guidelines on a restricted basis. The process of reintroducing volunteers by the beginning of the week requires additional steps, such as the completion of the flu vaccine, TB Testing, and PPE training.</p> <p>An event is planned to honor the physicians due to the pandemic and to say thank you on Doctors Day March 30 with various activities planned throughout the week.</p> <p>Construction projects will resume, such as the remodeling and refurbishing of patient rooms, and the</p>	



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	<p>nursing system call update. Mrs. Finney explained that DRMC is willing to partner with the District on the mobile unit during the planning and reaching the population to participate and assist with the vaccine activities. A contract has commenced with Blue Shield as the statewide Third-Party Administrator (TPA) provider and DCN is also in the process of converting to the new TPA rules in April.</p> <p>At the most recent vaccination clinic in the Desert Highland Gateway Estates community, 400 individuals were inoculated in collaboration with multiple churches and organizations, primarily the Baptist Church, further describing the efforts to reach communities for equitable distribution of the vaccine.</p> <p>A psychiatrist has signed a letter of intent to start full-time in August, a second psychiatrist is in the process, and a third psychiatrist employed with Arcadia, but on the staff with the DCN will work with the local community.</p> <p>Acting President Borja thanked Mrs. Finney despite the pandemic and the health care professionals working year-round, caring for the communities throughout the Coachella Valley, and the</p>	
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	<p>District genuinely thanks DCN for assisting families throughout the year with the pandemic, including other challenges. On behalf of the District Mrs. Borja asked that Mrs. Finney relay the District’s thanks to the entire DRMC workforce and appreciates the offer to continue to work with the District in underserved communities.</p>	
<p><b>H. Desert Regional Medical Center Governing Board</b></p>	<p>Director Rogers described the comprehensive report from the Maternity Director and increased utilization of services with national recognition and the only Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) in the Coachella Valley. The Governing Board received a community giving report illustrating the various areas of giving throughout the community.</p> <p>Other discussions were new legislation if passed proposes that hospital procurement of services and materials will require 51% of hospital purchases offered to local minority business, such as LGBTQ, women, disabled veterans, and black-owned businesses, further describing that DRMC provides 42% of their services to the Medicaid population in the Coachella Valley, and the reinvestments in the hospital facility every year were provided at the Governing Board meeting.</p>	



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	<p>The chief of staff for credentialing provided the report on credentials and peer reviews and the Governing Board received the self-evaluation results.</p> <p>Hanson House, a grantee of the District has reopened for housing to families of inpatients, and lastly, Mr. Rogers, the Chaplain at DRMC received his TB test and is eager to start back volunteer services.</p> <p>Michele Finney, CEO, Desert Care Network, Desert Regional Medical Center, clarified that the senate bill for equity in hospital procurement has passed and is managed by the Office for Statewide Health Planning effective July 1. The first phase of the bill is for reporting with procurement for businesses owned and operated with 51% minority ownership, and the goal of OSHPD is to use the data statewide with a focus on increasing procurement with minority-owned businesses.</p> <p>Director Zendle explained that not for profit hospitals must spend a certain amount of money on community benefit; however, for-profit hospitals pay taxes that do not require the same amount of expenditures describing that he and Director Rogers are impressed with the charitable</p>	
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	<p>contributions and involvement with non-profit Boards in the community the Desert Care Network provides to the community.</p>	
<p><b>I.1. Program Committee</b></p> <p><b>1. Draft Meeting Minutes – March 09, 2021</b></p> <p><b>2. Funding Requests Schedule</b></p> <p><b>3. Grant Payment Schedule</b></p> <p><b>4. Consideration to approve Grant #1141 Martha’s Village &amp; Kitchen – Homeless Housing with Wrap Around Services – \$210,905</b></p>	<p>Director PerezGil inquired on any questions of the Board concerning the meeting minutes, funding requests schedule, and grant payment schedule.</p> <p>Director PerezGil inquired on any questions of the Board concerning Martha’s Village &amp; Kitchen’s grant request with Donna Craig, Chief Program Officer describing the request and answering questions of the Board describing a prior inquiry in the Program Committee meeting concerning the showers and meals to people experiencing homelessness living outside of Martha’s Village &amp; Kitchen, which are accessible.</p> <p>Linda Barrack, President and CEO, Martha’s Village &amp; Kitchen explained that the grant request is to serve Desert Hot Springs, Mecca, and other underserved areas to provide case management and wrap-around services.</p> <p>Greg Rodriguez, Government Relations and Public Policy Advisor, Office of Supervisor Perez, applauded Ms. Barrack for the agencies work concerning referrals and the</p>	<p><b>#21-31 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Zendle and seconded by Director Zavala to approve Grant #1141 Martha’s Village &amp; Kitchen – Homeless Housing with Wrap Around Services – \$210,905 Motion passed unanimously. AYES – 6 Acting President Borja, Acting Vice-President Rogers, Director PerezGil, Director Zendle, Director Shorr, and Director Zavala NOES – 0 ABSENT – 1 President De Lara</b></p>



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	<p>workforce development training to fill much-needed service in Desert Hot Springs and Mecca as the county focuses on outreach, transitional housing, and other services, a complement to the overall services explaining that the program fits into the overall Continuum of Care.</p>	
<p><b>5. Consideration to approve Grant #1171 Blood Bank of San Bernardino &amp; Riverside Counties, aka LifeStream Blood Bank – Bloodmobiles for Coachella Valley – \$150,000</b></p>	<p>Director PerezGil inquired on any questions concerning the Blood Bank of San Bernardino &amp; Riverside Counties funding request with Director Rogers describing the importance of the grant and the value of blood donations, especially during the pandemic and the vital work of LifeStream Blood Bank.</p>	<p><b>#21-32 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Zendle and seconded by Director Zavala to approve Grant #1171 Blood Bank of San Bernardino &amp; Riverside Counties, aka LifeStream Blood Bank – Bloodmobiles for Coachella Valley – \$150,000</b>  <b>Motion passed unanimously.</b>  <b>AYES – 6 Acting President Borja, Acting Vice-President Rogers, Director PerezGil, Director Zendle, Director Shorr, and Director Zavala</b>  <b>NOES – 0</b>  <b>ABSENT – 1 President De Lara</b></p>
<p><b>6. Consideration to approve Grant #1174 Mizell Center – Geriatric Case Management Program – \$100,000</b></p>	<p>Donna Craig, Chief Program Officer, described Mizell Center’s grant request, inquiring on any questions of the Board.</p> <p>Acting President Borja thanked the Mizell Center for partnering with the District while recognizing their long history of work in hopes that it continues.</p>	<p><b>#21-33 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Zendle and seconded by Director Rogers to approve Grant #1174 Mizell Center – Geriatric Case Management Program – \$100,000</b>  <b>Motion passed unanimously.</b>  <b>AYES – 6 Acting President Borja, Acting Vice-President Rogers, Director PerezGil, Director Zendle, Director Shorr, and Director Zavala</b>  <b>NOES – 0</b>  <b>ABSENT – 1 President De Lara</b></p>



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<p><b>I.2. Finance, Legal, Administration &amp; Real Estate</b></p> <p><b>1. Draft Meeting Minutes – March 09, 2021</b></p> <p><b>2. District and Retirement Plan Investment Reports 3Q20</b></p> <p><b>I.3. Strategic Planning Committee</b></p> <p><b>1. Draft Meeting Minutes – March 09, 2021</b></p>	<p>Director Shorr provided an overview of the F&amp;A Committee meeting minutes, which also included the 3Q20 District and Retirement Plan Investment Reports, inquiring on any questions of the Board.</p> <p>Director Zendle provided an overview of the Strategic Planning Committee meeting minutes.</p>	
<p><b>J. Old Business</b></p> <p><b>1. Desert Healthcare District and Regional Access Project Foundation (RAP) Collective COVID-19 Recovery Fund</b></p>	<p>Donna Craig, Chief Program Officer detailed the Board-approved match of \$100k totaling \$200k with the Regional Access Project's contribution totaling \$200k. As outlined in the staff report, 72 applications were received totaling over \$717k, and staff's meeting with the Regional Access Project Foundation (RAP) grant team and Director PerezGil to review the applications.</p> <p>Director Zendle explained that if there are more worthy proposals than funds, then staff could possibly return to the District to request an increase of funding. Ms. Craig explained that RAP is revisiting an additional \$50k, and the District is reviewing the shortlist of applicants with many that do not meet the protocols and a few that include open grants with the District.</p>	



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	<p>Director Zendle proposed that staff is directed for agencies that meet criteria to return to the Board for additional funding if staff determines those organizations should be funded.</p>	
<p><b>K. Legal</b></p> <p><b>1. AB 705 – Health care, Facilities, and Medical Privileges</b></p> <p><b>2. AB 1132 – Health Care Consolidation and Contracting Fairness Act of 2021</b></p>	<p>Jeff Scott, Legal Counsel, provided background on the charitable trust division explaining that bill relates to protecting patient access to medical care and expands the oversight function of the Attorney General’s office related to mergers and transfers of assets of non-profit hospitals to single corporations, which in some cases creates monopolies by acquiring all the health facilities in one region allowing for unlimited power to dictate patient care.</p> <p>Jeff Scott, Legal Counsel, described AB 1132 similar to SB 977, which failed to pass concerning the authority of the Attorney General to have approval over all hospital mergers or transfers, including Healthcare Districts. Association of Healthcare Districts (ACHD) believes that the bill could have unintended consequences of closing some District hospitals in the state that are struggling with access to healthcare.</p>	



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<p><b>3. Consideration to approve a Business Associate Agreement between the Desert Healthcare District and Rite Aid for Vaccination Clinics Coachella Valley</b></p>	<p>Director Rogers, in favor of AB 1132, explained that last year she submitted a letter to the District’s Assemblymember and that ACHD is a trade group representing hospitals, not a public benefit. The District should examine a second opinion in terms of the effect of the bill and the “Sutter-effect” leading to monopolistic pricing, detailing her work combating Sutter Health with acquisition practices and another opinion that benefits the community, not solely hospital owners.</p> <p>Counsel Scott explained that there could be devastating consequences and there is a role to work with the parent organization ACHD with rural and urban facilities interest and opportunities to provide additional input.</p> <p>Jeff Scott, Legal Counsel, described his acceptable review of the Business Associate Agreement (BAA) between the District and Rite Aid from a legal standpoint with Dr. Bárzaga detailing the standardized BAA agreement regulated by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to allow the transfer of personal information between two protected entities as part of the efforts to vaccinate and partner with Rite Aid.</p>	<p><b>#21-34 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Zendle and seconded by Director Shorr to approve a Business Associate Agreement (BAA) between the Desert Healthcare District and Rite Aid, including similar BAAs with legal counsel’s review and approval for Vaccination Clinics in the Coachella Valley. Motion passed unanimously. AYES – 6 Acting President Borja, Acting Vice-President Rogers, Director PerezGil, Director Zendle, Director Shorr, and Director Zavala NOES – 0 ABSENT – 1 President De Lara</b></p>
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	<p>Dr. Bárzaga clarified that the recommendation is to execute the BAA with Rite and similar BAAs with legal counsel’s review, such as with Walgreens, the County, or Desert Regional Medical Center. Director Zendle amended his motion to include similar BAAs with legal counsel’s review and approval for Vaccination Clinics in the Coachella Valley.</p>	
<p><b>L. Immediate Issues and Comments</b></p>	<p>Director Rogers reported that the Hospital Lease Oversight Committee met and inspected a portion of the El Mirador building.</p> <p>Regarding AB 2019, Director Rogers contacted Assemblymember Garcia on the impact and the ability of the District and the Directors to reach out to the community to solicit grant applications with a response from Assemblymember Garcia, in hopes that staff will work with the Assemblymembers office.</p> <p>The Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) CVHEART Subcommittee met and discussed the Housing Catalyst Fund. Mr. Rodriguez at some point during the meeting, acknowledged Director Rogers background portrait from prior long-term serving director Kay Hazen.</p>	



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	<p>Acting President Borja specified that the Board did not initiate the letter to Assemblymember Garcia, which was not on behalf of the District with no prior discussions of the Directors that was solely executed by Director Rogers.</p> <p>Director Zendle explained consideration of the CEO and Legal Counsel as a future agenda item to discuss AB 2019 to eliminate any confusion and the history of the bill to better understand and guide discussions with future grantees.</p>	
<p><b>M. Adjournment</b></p>	<p>Acting President Borja adjourned the meeting at 7:39 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Audio recording available on the website at <a href="http://dhcd.org/Agendas-and-Documents">http://dhcd.org/Agendas-and-Documents</a></b></p>

DocuSigned by:  
  
 ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Carole Rogers, RN, Acting Vice-President/Secretary  
 Desert Healthcare District Board of Directors

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