

**THE CEDARS OF MARIN  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS RETREAT  
November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**Time and Place:** The Board of Directors of The Cedars of Marin held the annual retreat on November 10, 2018 at the Textile Art Center, upon notice duly given.

**Participants:** Participating in the Board meeting in person were Scott Clifford, James Brentano, Jane Brown, Scott Erickson, Alexis Lynch, Gail McCallister, Julie McNerny, Madeline Miller, Jim Peterson, Scott Price, Anna Rosen, Terry Ross, Steve Shaw, Greg Sherwood, Debra Stutsman, Suzanne Joy (CFA representative).

Also attending the meeting by invitation were: Connie Pellissero, former TAC Director; Jared Polsky, architect; and Chuck Greene, Jeanne Lipson, Katherine Newberry, Mark Felgen, John Pope, as additional representatives of the organization.

**Opening Statements:**

President Scott Clifford called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Scott welcomed Alexis Lynch, a new board member, to the meeting, and welcomed Scott Price and Terry Ross back to the board.

Scott announced the tour of Group Homes Monday, November 12th.

Upon motion duly made and seconded the directors unanimously approved the board minutes from the September 2018 meeting with corrections: Anna was not present at the September meeting. Detailed comments from Eric Zigman should be removed from formal minutes as it was an informational presentation and could be misinterpreted.

Chuck introduced Connie as the next speaker and a modern founder of Cedars.

**Connie Pellissero**

Connie's background includes a Bachelors in Art, Masters in Education with emphasis in special education, and credentials in K-12. She taught with Marin County Education for nine years then took leave.

Connie wanted to expand opportunities for the DDS population beyond sheltered workshops. She approached Cedars with an idea for a project that would include weaving and sharing textiles, among many other enriching activities. Connie worked with John McIvor, Executive Director at the time, and Marie Tappendorf, owner, originally in one of the smaller buildings at the Textile Art Center. Then in September 1981, Connie submitted a letter of intent and an application for a grant, which started really breaking down barriers. There was a segment of the population that embraced us, but there was a certain amount of prejudice we had to battle as well. They entered craft fairs based on the quality of the work and merit, but in one case when they realized who we were, they moved us by the bathroom. Levi Strauss loved what we were doing and they came and volunteered and awarded us with additional grants. They did forms of

reverse integration to educate the community. The sheep and goats were donated for natural fibers. Interestingly enough, this property was originally designated for a zoo. Cedars was connected with UC Davis and got involved with Farm Day. The press came to us, they were so excited about what we were doing.

They were going to get funded by the department of rehabilitation services, so Denise and Connie had to prove that we were eligible as a janitorial program. We were receiving awards from the state of California for providing dignity for the clients. It was an exciting, creative time and challenging time. People would hear about the weaving here at Cedars from across the United States and Colorado adopted our weaving program. Connie, Denise and participants would attend international workshops so our participants could keep up with the best of the best. The first store was down across the bridge where the Safeway is now, and it touched many.

We were the first of our kind. Everyone was jumping on the bandwagon, and the families were able to feel proud and empowered.

Connie urged the group to never give up the fight for funding. Families, board and staff at Cedars have the power to make change.

### **Executive Director Report**

Chuck Greene presented to the board an overview of the state of the organization.

What is great about this day is that it is our opportunity to spend a chunk of time together and go into more depth and take our time on important topics.

Chuck hoped that everyone had a chance to read the Heart of Marin application included in the packet. That piece summarizes the rigorous and entrepreneurial work we have been doing over the last few years. If you haven't read it, please do.

We are really in excellent shape, which isn't to say we don't still face a consistent set of challenges. The Achilles heal continues to be staff hiring and our ability to pay a competitive wage. Low wage and staff vacancies does not impact the budget with the expense of overtime, as much as it creates stress. The turnover rate for DSPs is 32%/ year which is high, but less than national average of 45%/ year.

Our organizational momentum is significant and the committed and talented staff are paying off.

Looking forward, we will be need to address HCBS compliance issues and the disconnect between what makes sense and what is required.

Integration into the community is a priority.

### **1040- Presentation by Architects**

The board agreed to contribute to the Helpers grant for the TAC kitchen expansion project.

Jared Polsky, because of his kindred connections with Cedars, has agreed to work for us on a pro bono basis. The quality of their work and the imagination they have brought to this project has

been extraordinary. Most recently, Jared's team has been working closely estimating the cost of the various options and steps moving forward.

John Pope, Chuck, Lauren Sockler and Amy Whelan met and considered several alternatives and concluded that the beautiful porch was an asset of the building. They determined it would be easier to add one big 490 square foot addition on the North side. In this case, the facility does not need to be shut down at all with the exception of one bathroom. They also hired a CASP consultant to meet ADA requirements. At this point they are determining the 'need to haves' and 'nice to haves'. There are many unknowns with county in terms of permits, sprinklers, etc.

For more detail please reference preliminary Architectural Plans. A full set of drawing is available for review.

Design Presented:

Base option- \$442,783

15% contingency

Nice to haves (eg. Tile, French doors, etc):

Additional - \$100,000

County Requirement Contingency:

Additional - \$100,000

Given the fire activity, we may want to go forward with the sprinklers even if it is not required (quote is \$30,000).

The new building will be able to dramatically improve the quality of the experience of the program. Then it gives us the option to expand later for the Senior Program, etc. This is an opportunity given we have the reserves and \$250,000 has been granted and restricted to the kitchen.

John has agreed to be the general contractor and proposed an expected one-year timeline.

Programmatic opportunities include improved quality of teaching program and impact of experience, quantity of participation, capacity in building, potential business and income program.

**The board gave the 'go ahead' to move forward on doing the formal drawings, engineering, and structural planning and pricing for the base for submission.**

**Action Item: Reach out to HELPERS and/or other Foundations for additional funds to fill the gap and for additional 'nice to haves'.**

### **Finance Update**

Scott Erickson provided a positive overview of the financials for the fiscal year. We are ending the year with a net income of about \$1,300,000\* with our biggest unbudgeted expense being the \$100,000 for settling the lawsuit. This has been a year of solid performance and everything is on

track going forward. By using the union health insurance program, next year we will save about \$100,000.

Scott requested the board approve a \$25,000 match to funds donated by the Cedars Family Association (CFA) for the staff holiday bonuses.

**Madeline moved to approve the match up to \$25,000, Jane seconded, and all approved.**

Scott is asking for commitment from each board member to fill a table. Board individual action plans include filling a table, which is separate from the annual obligation.

**Scott Erickson will send an offline request for formal approval for loan refinancing of an external (HUD) loan.** This vote must be unanimous. If you have questions regarding the terms reach out to Scott Clifford.

**Action Item: If you have not submitted your individual action plan to Scott Clifford, please do so.**

### **Person-Centered Planning – Mark Felgen**

Cheryl introduced Mark Felgen, who has deep experience in the field. Person Centered Planning is a big part of compliance, and the hope is that it will infuse every aspect of what we do. We are currently working with Marin Ventures in San Rafael and Kainos in Redwood City both of whom received similar grants. Main Campus is a congregate setting, and Mark believes we can remove the institutional stigma the size presents.

Mark believes this is less about the settings and more about the Person Centered Thinking and Planning. Unfortunately however, it is far easier to regulate something tangible like beds, than a mindset.

The Person Centered Planning philosophy needs to be trained throughout the staff and with the families. Cedars needs to create systems of documentation and apply available technology where possible. Mark has been exploring the E-learning guild.

### **Development Update**

Jeanne Lipson, Development Director, presented a brief year in review in the context of the goals the board set for Cedars 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary:

- Broadening our base:
  - In FY 17-18, there were 509 donors, up from 431 the year before. 172 were first time donors, a majority from our bowling fundraiser.
  - Kicked off the anniversary with Cedarsville at San Anselmo's Country Fair Day, gaining exposure and building support within the community.
- Attracting new sources of corporate and foundation support:
  - Total partnership commitments in FY17-18: \$270,000, including sponsors for the anniversary, for the bowling event and for Cedarsville.

\*not finalized

- Cedars was awarded several grants including HCBS, Healthy Living (4 grants from 3 different funders), TAC kitchen expansion, AHEAD to expand income opportunities for Cedars artists.
- Secure legacy commitments to support Cedars long-term financial sustainability. We added 19 members to the Legacy Circle, going from 47 to 66. Will continue the campaign in 2019.

Looking forward to 2019 – our centennial year! – we will be celebrating with several events:

**Cedarsville at San Anselmo County Fair Day.** Debbie Stutsman reported on the success of our Sept, 2018 event. We received tremendous feedback from the Town, members of the community, Cedars families and all who participated. In 2019, we will present Cedarsville again at Country Fair Day on Sept 29, 2019, building on this success.

Jane Brown reported on the **Centennial Gala**, which will be held on March 30 at the Osher Marin JCC in San Rafael. Theme is “Our Love is Here to Stay”. We’ve made much progress: Entertainment by the Royal Society Jazz Orchestra, caterer has been selected, wine will be donated, Save the Date and sponsor mailings have gone out, event web page is up and we will have a Cedars art exhibit during the event. The event is first and foremost a fundraiser, and while we have identified a few auction items (trips to Africa and Hawaii) we are still working on live auction items and would welcome ideas. We would like to include a “Board Wine Lot” by having each board member contribute two bottles of nice wine.

There have been questions about gala sponsorships and board member annual commitments. Our budget includes \$140,000 for Board Giving. Gala sponsorships go towards our “Event Income” budget goal, so they are accounted for separately.

**Anniversary Ball for Cedars resident and program participants** will be on June 15 at Branson High School in Ross. Dorreen Roth is heading up the committee for this prom-style party, working closely with the Best Buddies club at Branson. Cedars and Branson received approval on Nov 8 from the Ross Town Council for the event, and planning will begin shortly.

**Shake, Rattle & Bowl Fundraiser** will be in August this year. We’ve moved it into the summer so this event won’t conflict with the Gala.

**Action Item: Consider any significant items you can contribute or arrange through your relationships to the live auction.**

**Let Jeanne know if you would like to send a Gala Save the Date to anyone.**

### **Visioning**

Chuck expressed how this is the perfect time and opportunity to look forward. We are on a roll of excellence. We have a board and staff team who are informed about who we are and are enthusiastic about continuing to enhance and grow as an organization. Our big picture goal is to develop a 5-10 year vision for Cedars that becomes a general guide for decision making. Today, we would like to have a fully engaged and provocative discussion about the range of issues and ideas that relate to our vision for Cedars.

At this retreat, we will be working towards developing a Vision statement unique to Cedars, to use as a guide for decision making. The hope would be that we can move towards developing something more concrete that we can talk about in February.

A mission is what we do, a vision is where we want to be that is somewhat unique to us and can embrace paradoxes.

We decided the best way to begin this process is to figure out where we are today. Chuck created working assumptions/ operating guidelines that describe “where we are today”:

- While Cedars does not have a program and staff designed to meet the needs of a wide range of autistic individuals, we do accept participants ~~who may be on the autism spectrum~~ as long as they can be successfully served by current staff and programs.
  - o James Brentano suggested we do not limit this statement to autism (see edits above)
- While Cedars maintains a waiting list for residential services, applicants are not necessarily accepted on a first-come first-serve basis, but admissions are based on the specific fit between an individual and any potential opening.
- While reserves may be used to improve or maintain current homes, generally Cedars would not use reserves to purchase additional homes.
  - o Considering the cost effectiveness impact
- While some efficiencies might be gained by increased enrollment in an area, currently Cedars does not see an internal need for growth just for growth sake.
  - o In light of the current reimbursement rate
- Given the current state of reimbursements and therefore the difficulties of hiring competent staff, program expansion should take into account how this difficulty may impact service quality.
- Cedars resides in a high cost of living area and currently State reimbursements do not take cost of living into account when determining rates. A state-sponsored rate study will be completed before the end of the year that may impact reimbursement rates for this and other issues.
- The low wages of staff who work directly with residents and participants create difficulty with hiring and maintaining good staff and therefore efficiently managing programs. Efforts to increase wages should continue.
- The HCBS mandates need to be a primary driving force as Cedars reviews current and future services; especially relevant for main campus largely due to it’s size and the perception that it mirrors an institutional setting.

- Cedars very likely can remain at capacity enrollment well into the future given its current admission criteria (ie. there probably isn't a need to expand our service profile to individuals with high behavioral needs just to be at capacity).
- Supported living (individuals who live in small group settings/apartments on their own and served by staff who help aid their independent lives) **may be** a very cost effective way of serving an expanded residential population.
- Generally, Cedars financial model is to raise funds to balance annual operating and capital needs (about \$1 million annually) while securing Legacy Commitments to ensure our long term financial security.
- Though not preferable, Cedars likely can continue to attract highly competent management staff despite paying about 20-25% below market rate.
- Any future growth in Cedars day programs should reflect the tenants of the HCBS final rules, and therefore should focus on community engagement as opposed to site based activities.
- In part because Cedars is 100 years old, we have an older (and aging) client population. There are several implications:
  - o There is the desire/need to expand services to seniors
  - o We want residents to age in place with the clear understanding that when we deem that Cedars can no longer effectively serve a person they are demitted back to the regional center system for more appropriate placements.
- Cedars Health & Wellness Department offers a unique model for providing healthcare coordination and advocacy and may be a marketable asset in the context of private pay and self-determination models.
  - o **Action Item: Health & Wellness Department to present on departmental progress and opportunities for the future.**
- Person centered thinking and practices should guide our policies and procedures in all organizational areas.
- Though not primarily an advocacy organization, it is critical for Cedars to consistently ensure that participants—and the organization—are positively portrayed throughout the community and that we work with legislatures and others to secure policies and reimbursement rates that are in the best interest of the organization and the field.

Then after that, small groups of five gathered to brainstorm ideas their visions, questions, concerns for the next 5-10 years. Groups came up with the following:

1. Become “the model” for integration nationally, including by employing reverse integration. Diagnosis.

2. Match our services and level of services with the demand in the local community, identifying where we achieve economies of scale. Improve and enhance fundraising on an ongoing basis.
3. Lead in advocacy of inclusion across the entire/ broad community including for the aging population whom we no longer are able to provide residential services. Partnerships may be a key way to enhance or extend services and a potential way to leverage our expertise.
4. Partner with the caregivers for the balance of the resident to End of Life; Notion Senior current management team forecast what the aging population implications what does the broader service market place to identify holes; We are going to take care of our population first, extension of the logic – future provision of services, navigate how those needs are met.

After the exercise was complete, we were pleased that there was a lot of consistency across the groups. The board is generally aligned about where we should be headed.

The next steps will be to have an update and discussion at the February Board meeting.

#### **Board Business**

Anna Rosen collected the signed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest forms.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m. Pacific Time.

James Peterson, Secretary  
The Cedars of Marin Board of Directors