

## MINUTES

### MARIN COUNTY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION RETIREMENT BOARD STRATEGIC WORKSHOP

Acqua Hotel  
555 Redwood Highway  
Mill Valley  
October 22, 2009

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#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Phillips called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

#### **ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Arrigoni, Bolger, Given (non-voting), Gladstern, Haim, Hufford, Phillips, Richardson, Smith, Sweet, Webb (non-voting), Wofford (non-voting)

ABSENT: None

#### **A. OLD BUSINESS**

##### 1. FY09-10 MCERA Budget

Upon recommendation of the Finance Committee Chair, the Board Chair tabled discussion of the FY 09-10 Budget until the November regular Board meeting.

#### **B. NEW BUSINESS**

##### 1. MCERA Operations

Discussion moderated by consultant Mary McGovern regarding MCERA Board and staff operations.

Jim Phillips, Board Chair, discussed the staff session held on October 21, 2009. He was impressed with the dedication, work understanding, and commitment to the customer expressed by staff during the session. He stressed the importance of the staff understanding their various functions, responsibilities, and authority levels in order to meet customer needs. The entire Board remarked on the progress made by staff in the last year.

The Board expressed a desire to continue to strengthen the organization given budget concerns and the number of possible County and San Rafael employees retiring due to incentives currently offered. Members stressed the need for ongoing communication and feedback regarding customer satisfaction and ongoing trends.

Mary McGovern delivered staff feedback to the Board from the session the day before. Feedback included:

- Acknowledgement of BBQ and appreciation of Board involvement
- Acknowledgement of Board attendance at staff session for entire morning and obvious Board willingness to listen, appreciate, and communicate with staff

- A better understanding of the Board role in the organization and a sense of partnership for the good of the membership
- Willingness to sit down with individual Board members in a casual way when Board visits the workplace to help inform Board members about ongoing, daily duties of staff
- Staff interest in continuing progress to keep records/requests current and the possible impact of cutting overtime on that progress
- Awareness of software implementation timelines and impact on outcomes
- Charnel Benner keeping big picture for staff and the ongoing need to hear from Board members regarding big picture
- Dedication to quality for members and not cutting corners on quality

General discussion was begun regarding the four elements of management most important in guiding the organization. These included Planning, Organizing, Leading, and Controlling.

Minutes from the session designed and facilitated by Mary McGovern with staff in January, 2009, were reviewed to demonstrate the level of intervention necessary to build a cohesive, work centered multi-level staff team. The work was initiated with an individualized oral history to document the necessary transformation from a small compartmentalized (siloed) group to a full service interactive organization focused on customer outcomes and membership satisfaction. Topics included:

- Identification of organizational needs and goals
- Vision/mission/values clarification as drafted by executive team
- Identification of customer service needs and necessary customer satisfaction levels
- Internal and external communications necessary for quality, customer education, and customer feedback
- Identification of customer service frameworks
- Marketing, customer relations, customer concerns
- Technological design and goals to inform customers and deliver timely, reliable outcomes
- Clarification of administrative and technical duties
- Communication strategies to build necessary vehicles to transmit information and feedback among board, administrator, staff, county-wide systems, and the membership
- Communications problem solving and corrective teamwork among staff
- Staff meeting design
- Work teams generation
- Individual team meetings design to increase productivity
- Centralized work output communication strategies
- Delegation of tasks
- Work flow and process agreements
- Work environment
- Workplace satisfaction
- Performance measurement

- Necessary manuals, information, quality controls
- Ongoing correction and goal adjustment

It was discussed that prior to the January session, Mary McGovern conducted individual interviews with each staff person, designed and facilitated an executive session which outlined the draft strategic framework for MCERA, conducted ongoing needs assessment, executive coaching, and problem solving. Subsequent sessions for the full staff team included specific follow along and review of planned outcomes, as well as new strategies and objectives.

The Board discussed the information Ms. McGovern provided in the context of current MCERA operations.

2. Strategic Plan

The Board discussed its current assessment that development of a formal written strategic plan for MCERA, in light of MCERA's other ongoing initiatives, was not an appropriate use of resources at this time.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:55 AM.

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James Phillips, Chairperson

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Michael Smith, Secretary