

**The Arc- Jefferson, Clear Creek & Gilpin Counties  
General Membership Annual Meeting  
Wednesday, June 18, 2025  
Convened at 6:00 PM  
Meeting via Zoom and Conference Call**

**Board Members Present**

Rob Smariga, President  
Sharon Yee, Vice President  
Dave Norwood, Treasurer  
Helen Pietranczyk, Secretary  
Caryn Quinkert, Immediate Past President  
Jacob Hollars  
Molly Kirkham  
Christine Plentyhoops

**Staff Members Present**

Lori Ropa, Executive Director

**Welcome**

Lori Ropa, Executive Director, opened the meeting, sharing how the meeting would be conducted on Zoom, reminded members about voting, and welcomed questions in the chat.

Lori continued to speak, sharing information about the work of The Arc this past year.

As she has invested her time in more community engagement, speaking to various groups about what it is that The Arc does, most importantly, how. She shared the analogy that one of our advocates offered; that The Arc serves as a kind of GPS that aids in navigating the world of disabilities. She shared a story about a family who came to The Arc because their child's "destination" was a safe learning environment. Another person with an IDD (intellectual or developmental disability) was being pulled in different directions by family and medical professionals. Her destination was to be able to heal and live in her own apartment. A third story was about a teen with seizures as a result of a TBI, whose destination was determined by asking a simple question: "Is this what you want?" And finally, a family came to The Arc because all they wanted was their son with Down's Syndrome to be safe from the domestic violence that impacted the family.

Lori also spoke about the work that The Arc has done with both the national and state legislatures, advocating for the rights of people with disabilities to be part of the community in which they live, have meaningful work, and to be considered in all situations to be just like anyone else. Our chapter has had excellent self-advocate participation in this work, providing insights from lived experience.

She thanked both The Arc's staff team for their tremendous hard work and skill and the Board of Directors for their unwavering support.

Lori then introduced Rob Smariga, Board President.

## **Rob Smariga, Board President**

Rob thanked everyone attending tonight and then spoke about some of the accomplishments of the past year.

- The staff team was very creative this year, envisioning a different opportunity for community engagement. Peace, Love and Neon, an event held in May, brought together the entire community, including families, people with an IDD and people with no direct connection to The Arc and its work. Highlighting the 60's and the 80's, attendees were encouraged to come dressed as either decade. A DJ played music from both era's, and dancing was the 'main' event. Included was a raffle of a number of prizes, including family events and trips. It was a great time.
- The staff team also launched Peer Power, a way to take consulting advocacy (peer advocacy) to the community, one group of self-advocates at a time. This effort will continue into the next year.
- The new organization structure, with teams built around a focus of Child and Family, Teen & Young Adults, and Adults, was successfully launched; additionally, the staff is now able to support Spanish speaking families with an advocate on staff who speaks Spanish.
- Two significant recognitions occurred this past year; the first is the Denver Business Journal's Best Places to Work award, naming The Arc as one of the top 15 organizations to work. The second is the naming of The Arc as an organization that has achieved Candid's highest level of transparency, their Platinum Seal. , This is the organization t that many people use to confirm the legitimacy and rating of non-profits before they donate. Both are significant achievements for The Arc.

Rob then introduced Helen Pietranczyk, Board Secretary.

## **Approval of the 2024 Annual Membership Meeting Minutes** **Helen Pietranczyk, Secretary**

Helen moved to approve the minutes of the Annual Membership Meeting of 2024. Rob Smariga seconded the motion; the members voted electronically and by phone to pass the motion. This included any ballots submitted via mail.

Helen then introduced Christine Plentyhoops, Chair of the Governance Committee.

## **Reelection of Current Board Members and Election of New Board Members** **Christine Plentyhoops, Chair of the Governance Committee**

Christine recapped the previously publicized bios for Teena Cooper and Caryn Quinkert.

Christine moved to accept the slate of candidates for reelection to two-year terms, effective July 1, 2025. .Rob Smariga seconded the motion; the members voted electronically and by phone, and included any votes mailed in. Christine announced that both Teena and Caryn were reelected.

Christine introduced two new Board members and recapped their bios, also previously

published: Catherine (Cate) Humbert and Mark Lancaster. Christine moved to accept this slate of new candidates for two-year terms, effective July 1, 2025. Rob Smariga seconded the motion; the members voted electronically and by phone, and included any votes mailed in. Christine announced that both Cate and Mark were elected.

Christine then turned the meeting over to Rob.

**Recognition for Outgoing Board Members**  
**Rob Smariga, Board President**

Rob recognized Helen Pietranczyk for her years of service and contributions to The Arc over the past twelve years. Helen served as President for five of those years, as well as many other committee and officer responsibilities. She will be missed!

The meeting was adjourned by Board President Rob Smariga at 6:32pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Helen Pietranczyk, Secretary