

North Los Angeles County Regional Center  
**Government & Community Relations Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
August 19, 2015

**Present:** Jessica Gould, Myriam Jovel, Marcia Leija, Caroline Mitchell, Bridget Moss, Debra Newman, Sean Stalbaum, Jeremy Sunderland, Curtis Wang, and Tavia Wooley – Committee Members  
Michelle Heid and Dolly Wauls – Vendor Advisory Committee Representatives  
Diane Ambrose, Sara Iwahashi, Ruth Janka, Jennifer Kaiser, Michele Marra, and Jessica Whitney – Staff Members

**Absent:** Jun Antonio

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**I. Call to Order & Introductions**

Jeremy Sunderland, chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Sara Iwahashi was introduced to the new committee members.

**II. Public Input** – There was no public input.

**III. Consent Items**

A. Approval of Agenda

**M/S/C** (S. Stalbaum/J. Gould) To approve the agenda as presented.

B. Approval of Minutes of July 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting

**M/S/C** (M. Leija/T. Wooley) To approve the minutes as presented.

**IV. Committee Business**

A. Board-Approved Priority Activities for FY 2015-16

The board approved the committee's proposed priorities for this fiscal year with 1 change: the date of the April 8<sup>th</sup> legislative event was noted as "tentative." Copies of the approved priorities were provided to the committee.

B. Legislative Update

Sara provided the committee with a summary of legislative bills being tracked by the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA). She also provided the committee with the upcoming legislative calendar and an update on the special sessions being held. An Assembly hearing was held yesterday where ARCA and staff from the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) provided testimony. They were urging a bipartisan solution to the funding crisis of our system. Legislators are aware of the issue and support the Lanterman Coalition's recommended 10% funding increase, but the governor isn't listening. It was pointed out that a 10% increase for our \$4 billion system would be \$400 million. Jeremy stated that unlike legislators, who work for their constituents, Santi Rogers, DDS director, was appointed by the governor. In addition, Santi is well aware of the funding issue because before he became director of DDS, he was the director of a regional center. Santi regularly attends the ARCA Board of Directors meetings and the next one will be held on Friday. Diane Ambrose and Tavia Wooley will be attending that ARCA meeting as well. Perhaps they could ask Santi his thoughts on how we could reach the governor's ear. After further discussion, the committee members agreed that a multi-prong approach was needed and the following thoughts were generated:

1. Invite Santi to a meeting to speak about the funding crisis and what we can do.
2. Each of the 21 regional centers have their own plans; perhaps we could collaborate with like-minded L.A. regional centers, southern California regional centers, and/or ARCA.
3. Gather signatures statewide via Change.org.
4. Focus on communicating with 2 legislators who work closely with the governor: Speaker of the Assembly Toni Atkins and Senate President Pro Tem Kevin de Leon.
5. Hire a consultant to expand our outreach to the press and provide legislative workshops for our consumers and families. The consultant could be someone who has been an exceptional advocate for our system (e.g. Steve Miller, former director of Tierra del Sol).
6. It took us 5 years to get the Early Start program reinstated; the 10% increase may take years for us to get.
7. Caroline is chair of the center's self-advocacy group; she could get her group active and they could go back to their homes and day programs and get consumers there activated.
8. Marcia suggested producing a DVD with consumers' and families' personal stories. Marcia is a producer and has her own staff and recording equipment.

**Action:** Sara will find out more about how we can provide input for the special session discussions and report back to the committee.

**Action:** Diane will ask Santi if he would be willing to come to a NLACRC meeting.

**Action:** Diane and Michele will talk with George on Monday about the idea to invite Santi to a meeting (board meeting vs. large community forum).

**Action:** Jeremy recently met the governor's sister, Kathleen Brown, and will write her a letter about our issues that she will hopefully share with her brother.

**Action:** Sara will provide Jeremy with facts that he can reference in his letter to Kathleen Brown.

**Action:** Sean will reach out John Chiang, California treasurer; he has known him for many, many years. Jennifer added that John Chiang was recently recognized by The Adult Skills Center at their annual fundraiser and Mr. Chiang attended that event.

**M/S/C** (J. Gould/S. Stalbaum) To recommend to the Executive Committee that the center hire a consultant, possibly in collaboration with other regional centers, who would develop short and long term goals, media outreach, and provide workshops to help our community learn how to advocate, to help us reach the governor and get him to approve the recommended 10% funding increase.

**Action:** SBX2 1 (Beall) would provide us with the 10% funding increase that we need. The committee recommended that the Executive Committee approve supporting SBX2 1 with written support letters.

**Action:** To recommend to the Executive Committee that a legislative training session be held for all board members early this fiscal year.

C. Report on July 29<sup>th</sup> Legislative Strategy Community Meeting

Copies of the meeting minutes were provided and Sara reviewed the highlights of the meeting with the committee. The group decided that a multi-pronged approach should be taken in order to reach our legislative goals and objectives, including:

1. Capture data to support our claims.
2. Outreach to the press.
3. Collect human stories and photographs.
4. Provide legislative workshops.

D. Report on August 5<sup>th</sup> Roundtable Forum

ARCA and the LA regional centers held a roundtable forum at Lanterman Regional Center to inform legislators about the funding crisis of our system and the options available in the Special Session (X2). The roundtable included representatives of 8 Senators and 6 Assembly members. Over 30 invited representatives of the developmental services community were also in attendance to share their personal stories. Senator Jim Beall spoke about the needs of our community and his bill to provide a 10% across-the-board increase to the developmental disabilities service system and funding reform for the long-term. Michelle Heid and Tavia Wooley represented NLACRC at the forum. Michele reported that a lot of heart-felt stories were shared by the people in attendance. Tavia added that it's important to communicate with legislators even if they don't serve our area.

E. FY 2014-15 Committee Action Log

Copies of the committee's action log were provided to the committee for their information. The log lists all of the formal and informal actions that were taken by this committee last fiscal year.

- F. Board Audit: Does the center have a training & information plan that meets the requirements of statute, contracts, and board policy?

**Action:** Michele and Sara will respond to this question at next month's committee meeting.

V. **Board Meeting Agenda Items**

The following items were identified for the committee's section of the September 9<sup>th</sup> board meeting agenda:

- A. Minutes of August 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting
- B. Legislative Update

VI. **Announcements / Information / Public Input**

A. Complete Meeting Evaluations

Jeremy asked the committee members to please complete evaluation forms after the meeting and submit them to him with any comments.

B. Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 16<sup>th</sup>

**Homework:** Committee members should consider what type of legislative event they would like the committee to organize in April 2016 and come to next month's meeting with their ideas.

**Homework:** Before next month's committee meeting, each committee member will contact their Assembly member, Senator, and the governor to support SBX2 1 (Beall).

C. Legislative Training

Michelle Heid announced that she provides 1-2 hour legislative trainings on an ongoing basis.

**Action:** Michelle will provide details about her legislative trainings at next month's committee meeting.

## VII. Adjournment

Jeremy adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Submitted by,

*Jennifer Kaiser*

Jennifer Kaiser  
Executive Assistant

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