

North Los Angeles County Regional Center  
**Government & Community Relations Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
October 19, 2016

**Present:** Adelina Castellanos, Jessica Gould, Michelle Heid, Erika Hernandez, Meagan Miller, Caroline Mitchell, Debra Newman, Curtis Wang, and Tamar Witmer – Committee Members  
Sharoll Jackson – VAC Representative  
Diane Ambrose, Sara Iwahashi, Jennifer Kaiser, Michele Marra, and George Stevens – Staff Members

**Absent:** Shant Kotchounian and Oscar Mejia

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**I. Call to Order & Introductions**

Tamar Witmer, chair, called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.

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

**III. Consent Items**

A. Approval of Agenda

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

B. Approval of Minutes of the September 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting

**M/S/C** (M. Miller/A. Castellanos) To approve the minutes as presented.

**IV. Committee Business**

A. November 16<sup>th</sup> & Annual Legislative Trainings

At last month's meeting the committee recommended to the Executive Committee that a legislative training be held on November 16<sup>th</sup> (for all board members), in lieu of the 2 committee meetings. The committee further recommended that a legislative training be held every November for the board. The Executive Committee agreed with this plan and presented it to the board and it passed with board approval. As such, next month a legislative training will be held from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in lieu of the 2 committee meetings.

B. Legislative Update

Sara provided the committee with 2 reports. The first was a list of bills that were signed by the governor and that will have an impact on the regional center system. The second was an updated list of the bills the committee has been tracking and their status. We will begin seeing new bills in late January/ early February.

C. Reports on the Candidates' Forums

The October 6<sup>th</sup> forum, which was held in the Santa Clarita Valley, was a big success with all candidates participating and with well over 100 attendees! Our second forum was held last night at Sam's Café at New Horizons in North Hills. The second forum was also a huge success with all candidates attending and standing room only!

**Action:** Sara Iwahashi will work with Michelle Heid to put together the comments made at the candidates' forums.

Next steps were discussed, including sending thank you letters or Facebooking thank you messages to the candidates who participated. However, any formal next steps will occur once the elections are held and the newly elected candidates are settled in their new offices. Michele followed by talking about 2 grass roots activities that are held each spring:

1. The Association of Regional Center Agencies' (ARCA's) Grass Roots Day: This is a day when each regional center sends a team of 4 or 5 people to Sacramento to visit with legislators at the State Capitol. The team usually includes a board member, a service provider, a consumer, and a staff lead.
2. NLACRC's Grass Roots Week: The teams are composed the same as with ARCA's Grass Roots Day, except the teams meet with senators and assembly members in our catchment area at their local offices. These visits also take place in the spring. There was some conversation about sending staff to Sacramento, in addition to once a year during ARCA's Grass Roots Day, to give testimony on a bill or attend a hearing.

**Action:** Additional board member visits to Sacramento for legislative activities will be considered and revisited at the January committee meeting.

D. Update on Lanterman Act Anniversary Party & Open House

Sara reported that due to restrictions at the new office building in Chatsworth, we will not be able to have the Lanterman Act Anniversary party that we were hoping to have. The building owners will not allow us to use the outdoor space. As such,

the event will not include an open house at the new building. We are considering alternatives, including partnering with CSUN and using their theater to show the “We’re Here to Speak for Justice” documentary. The theater is large enough so we could hold a reception in the lobby. We’re hoping to be able to organize the event in time so it could be held in December.

- E. Board Audit: Does the center’s training and information plan include a sufficient variety of training and communication methods to reach all of the center’s constituents? **Yes.**
- F. Board Audit: Are there sufficient financial and human resources available to carry out the center training and information plan? **Yes.**

After answering yes to both questions, conversation ensued on the following subjects:

1. Core Staffing Plan: George explained how the center’s staffing is affected by the state’s core staffing plan, which hasn’t been updated in many, many years. In fact, it only includes 1 consumer services director position – and we have 3!
2. “Road Map” for New Families: Tamar thought it would be a good idea for the center to have a “road map” for new families just coming in to the system so they have an idea of what to expect. George explained that all new families are invited to attend a new family orientation and provided with an extensive packet of information. If they cannot attend the orientation, then the service coordinator brings this information to them at their first face-to-face meeting. Tamar, Meagan, Adelina, and Michelle all did not remember being invited to an orientation or given orientation materials.

**Action:** George will follow up and find out why Tamar, Meagan, and Adelina were not told about the orientation or provided with the orientation materials and will report back.

**Action:** Sara will post the new family orientation dates on the center’s new Facebook page.

3. Staff Trainings: Michelle Heid reported that we are partnering with CSUN to improve our new staff orientation process and trainers. The orientation covers all major topics including the Individual Program Plan (IPP) process, the Lanterman Act, and visits to provider sites. George added that the center will be holding several management and leadership trainings in the spring.

We may have up to 500 staff next year and we need for all staff to provide services in a consistent and uniform manner.

## V. Board Meeting Agenda Items

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

- A. Minutes of the October 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting
- B. Legislative Update
- C. Report on the Candidates' Forums
- D. Update on the Lanterman Act Anniversary Party

## VI. Announcements / Information / Public Input

### A. Complete Meeting Evaluations

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

### B. Legislative Training

A legislative training will be held for all board members on Wednesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The training will be held in lieu of the committee meetings that month.

### C. Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m. (no December meeting)

## VII. Adjournment

Tamar adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

*Jennifer Kaiser*

Jennifer Kaiser  
Executive Assistant

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