

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Government & Community Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2025

Present: George Alvarado, Lety Garcia, Jennifer Koster, Laura Monge, Curtis Wang, Jodie Agnew-Navarro-
 VAC Rep. – **Committee Members**

Chris Whitlock, John Van De Riet, Lindsay Granger, Arezo Abedi, Belinda Abatesi- **Staff Members**

Mark Wolfe – DDS Technical Advisor, Tresa Oliveri– DDS Technical Advisor, Marianita Mendoza
 – DDS, Nicholas Mendoza- **Guests**

Absent: Cathy Blin

I. Call to Order & Introductions

- A. Curtis Wang called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.
- B. Belinda Abatesi was introduced as NLACRC’s new Legislative Specialist.

II. Agenda

- A. Approval of the January 15, 2025 Agenda

M/S/C (George Alvarado/Jennifer Koster) To approve the agenda as presented.

III. Public Input

No public input

IV. Consent Items

- A. Approval of Minutes from the October 16, 2024 Meeting

M/S/C (George Alvarado / Juan Hernandez) To approve the meeting minutes as presented.

V. Action Items

- A. GCRC Critical Calendar

Chris Whitlock gave an update on the changes to the critical calendar. There was a previous proposal that the Legislative Town Hall (virtual) be added to the month of February. In May, the Legislative Breakfast would be added.

Tresa Oliveri asked if staff would have enough time to put together the Legislative Town Hall event in February given that it is currently January. Chris responded that can have the event in February with the panelists ready to go. Promotions for the event have already started. The flyer includes a line item stating the event is virtual.

The event information is provided in the chat, our website, and social media (the news you could use).

M/S/C (George Alvarado / Juan Hernandez) to approve the updated Critical Calendar with the Legislative Town Hall (Virtual) added to February and the Legislative Breakfast added to May.

Action: Board Support will email George Alvarado the information and link for the Legislative Town Hall.

B. Legislative Breakfast**1. Create a Workgroup**

This workgroup would be arranging the breakfast to be held in person in a post-COVID world in May. The event is in honor of Jynny Retzinger Community Service Award. The community is invited, which includes family service providers, board members, individuals served, legislators, and more. This is the perfect event to have the community come together and to acknowledge the recipient of the Jynny Retzinger Community Service Award. The workgroup typically includes a board member, a service provider, and NLACRC staff to help put the event together. The workgroup typically selects the date, venue, look at the individuals, who have been nominated for the Jynny Retzinger award, and determine the best way to get the legislators at the event. We need to set up how often the workgroup would meet, using the template from the previous years. What topics will be discussed, typically employment is a big topic for discussion.

George Alvarado asked about when and where this workgroup would be taking place.

Mark Wolfe suggested that Chris put together a quick summary about what the workgroup would be covering to see who might be interested in volunteering to be a part of the workgroup.

Juan Hernandez asked if the workgroups would be during the day. Chris responded that typically workgroups occur during the day.

Jennifer Koster stated that she would like to be a part of the workgroup.

Lety Garcia asked if the workgroup would be addressing two separate items – both the award and the breakfast. Chris provided further clarification.

Chris Whitlock explained that historically the Jynny Retzinger award was given at the Legislative Breakfast. The posted document provides a little bit of information about Jynny Retzinger, who was a board member at NLACRC and started the first legislative breakfast. This award is in honor of her and the work that she did for the community.

Action: Chris Whitlock will compose an email with a brief description of the workgroup, the topics that will be addressed to send out to the committee members and ask who would like to volunteer for the workgroup.

Action: Chris Whitlock will send out a quick email to the members of the committee, and those who are interested will email him back. Committee Members can also email Board Support if they are interested in joining the workgroup or have any questions.

M/S/C: (George Alvarado/Jennifer Koster) To approve creating a workgroup for the Legislative Breakfast Workgroup.

VI. Committee Business

- A. Legislative Town Hall Update - A community event designed to foster dialogue between local legislators and the communities they serve. The Legislative Town Hall provides a platform for a discussion, where individuals can voice their concerns, ask questions, and gain insights into the legislative process.

The virtual Legislative Town Hall will be on February 25, 2025, from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. Belinda Abatesi has invited several of our legislators to attend as panelists, and we will be reaching out to the community asking for specific questions that they might have for the legislators so that they can be asked the night of the event. This will be done through an email sent out shortly along with social media posts and another email blast to everyone that signed up for the news you could use.

The town hall will not be interactive, but staff has prepared a few questions for the legislators to address one at a time. The registration link was added to the chat. There is a place on the registration to include an optional question for the legislator.

Action: Chris Whitlock and Belinda Abatesi will collaborate with Board Support and send out an email after the meeting with the link to register for the Legislative Town Hall.

B. Board Recognition Update

Chris Whitlock provided an update on the change of the Board Recognition. This will be awarded during the Legislative Breakfast, which was when the recognition took place prior to COVID. Also, there was clarification on the Board Recognition Update. The Board Recognition is the same as the Jynny Retzinger Award, which can be given to individuals served, family members, Board of Trustees members, Committee members, Regional Center staff, service providers, and members of the community representing the NLACRC catchment area (San Fernando Valley, Santa Clarita Valley, and Antelope Valley) who has performed exceptional service for people with developmental disabilities.

Action: Chris Whitlock will email additional information about the Board Recognition and send out a form asking the community if there is anyone that they would like to put forward for the award.

C. ARCA's Grassroots Day and NLACRC's Grassroots Week

Belinda Abatesi provided the update on the ARCA Grassroots event, which will be taking place on March 3rd and March 4th this year (2025). Lety Garcia asked how people are being selected to go up to Sacramento. Belinda is working with Michelle Hyde our legislative consultant and ARCA to coordinate the project. Chris explained to Lety that the delegation group that will be going up to Sacramento will be helping represent North Los Angeles County Regional Center.

Action: Chris Whitlock, Belinda Abatesi, and Board Support will work together to put together an announcement at the next Board of Trustees meeting under the GCRC Committee Update or to be added under Public Input and Announcements.

VII. Report Outs/ Discussion

A. Social Media

1. Social Media Analytics Report – Oct., Nov., & Dec. 2024

John Van de Riet reviewed the Social Media summary as presented in the packet. This report includes the data for social media platforms and NLACRC's numbers.

B. Legislative Update

1. Legislative Letter Writing Campaign

Belinda Abatesi provided 3 major updates to the committee.

*CHAPTERED after a bill has been signed by the Governor, the Secretary of State assigns the bill a Chapter Number.

- **AB 1147 (Addis) Disability Equity and Accountability Act of 2023:**
Status: On September 28, 2024 the bill was approved by Governor Newsom, and chaptered as Chapter 904, Statutes of 2024.
- **AB 1906 (Gipson) Persons with disabilities: terminology -**

Status: On September 14, 2024 the bill was chaptered* by the Secretary of State – Chapter 233, Statutes of 2024.

- **AB 2423 (Mathis) Developmental Services: rates**

Status: On September 28, 2024 the bill was approved by Governor Newsom. Chaptered by Secretary of State – Chapter 904, Statutes of 2024.

VIII. Board Meeting Agenda Items

IX. Announcements / Information / Public Input

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Committee Attendance

Public Input - No public input

X. Adjournment

Curtis Wang adjourned the meeting at 6:48 pm

VII. Review of Meeting Action Items

- Board Support will email George Alvarado the information and link for the Legislative Town Hall.
- Chris Whitlock will compose an email with a brief description of the workgroup, the topics that will be addressed to send out to the committee members and ask who would like to volunteer for the workgroup.
- Chris Whitlock will send out a quick email to the members of the committee, and those who are interested will email him back.
- Christ Whitlock and Belinda Abatesi will collaborate with Board Support and send out an email after the meeting with the link to register for the Legislative Town Hall.
- Chris Whitlock will email additional information about the Board Recognition and send out a form asking the community if there is anyone that they would like to put forward for the award.
- Chris Whitlock, Belinda Abatesi, and Board Support will work together to put together an announcement at the next Board of Trustees meeting under the GCRC Committee Update or to be added under Public Input and Announcements.
- Board Support, Belinda Abatesi, and Chris Whitlock will put together an email to send the Board of Trustees members giving an update and asking who would be interested in attending the event.
- Board Support will add Lety Garcia to the attendance roster.
- Board Support and Chris Whitlock will work with Curtis Wang to draft a summary and assist him in presenting the report out at the next Board of Trustees meeting.

Submitted by:

Lindsay Granger
Executive Administrative Assistant