

**Minutes of Regular Meeting
of
North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees of North Los Angeles County Regional Center, Inc., a nonprofit corporation, held their regular board meeting via Zoom on **January 11, 2023**

Trustees Present

Ana Quiles
Brian Gatus
David Coe
Lety Garcia
George Alvarado
Andrew Ramirez
Jordan Feinstock
Nicholas Abrahms
Rocio Sigala
Sharmila Brunjes
Suad Bisogno
Cathy Blin
Sylvia Brooks- Griffin
Alma Rodriguez
Lillian Martinez

Guests Present

Nancy Gallardo – Interpreter
Jasmine Barrios- Minutes Services
Suzanne Paggi
Lori Walker - SDLAC
Lia Cervantes Lerma - SCDD
Anthony Rodriguez
Victoria Berry - FFRC
Alexis Soto – SEIU
Approximately 100
Service Coordinators & Guests

Staff Present

Ruth Janka
Vini Montague
Lizeth Chavez
Gabriela Eshrati
Dr.Michael Fernandez
Liliana Windover
Cristina Preuss
Evelyn McOmic
Chris Whitlock
Robert Dhondrup
Sheila King
Clarence Foster

1. Call to Order & Welcome – Ana Quiles, Board President

Ana called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Housekeeping

A. Spanish Interpretation Available

Ana informed attendees that instructions for Spanish Interpretation in are located the chat.

B. Public Attendance

Ana asked public attendants are to notate their name in the chat.

C. Board Support Updates

Ana reminded Board Members that Board Support is available to assist Board Members during regular business hours. Inquiries made to Board Support outside of normal business hours will be returned upon the return to office. Ana thanked the Board Members and NLACRC staff for their continued hard work.

3. Board Member Attendance – Lizeth Chavez, Executive Administrative Assistant

Lizeth Chavez took attendance of Board Members; a quorum was present.

4. Introductions

A. Brian Gatus, Board Member

Brian has served on the Board. He is a father of 6 kids, two of whom are NLACRC Consumers. He was born and raised in the Philippines and now lives in Los Angeles. Brian enjoys cooking and travelling, he has visited 40 states so far. He has an undergraduate business degree, an MBA and is completing his first year of law school and he hopes to provide better access to legal resources for special education. Brian is a procurement specialist and is adjunct professor at Oregon State University, teaching contracts and procurement. He is excited for the opportunity to bring his areas of expertise to NLACRC to help consumers.

B. Dr. Michael Fernandez, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Supervisor

Dr. Fernandez serves as the DEI Supervisor; he is based in the Chatsworth office and supports all 3 NLACRC sites. This April will mark 2 years for Dr. Fernandez with NLACRC, prior to that, he worked in the educational sector as well as the Department for Homeland Security. He was born in Mexico City and served in the U.S. Marines before earning a Ph.D in Educational Leadership and Sustainable Change. Dr. Fernandez hopes to continue to serve individuals in marginalized, underserved populations. He and his wife have 2 children.

5. Public Input

Victoria Berrey, from Family Focus Resource Center shared information on Workshops in January and February. January topics include: Early Start: Functional Ways to Incorporate Speech and Language and School Age: Understanding Educational Assessments. In February, workshops include information on IHSS and Taxes. Victoria also reported that the Toy Lending Library will reopen in late January for Early Start Parents.

Kermit Jackson stated that he has been a NLACRC Service Coordinator (CSC) for 15 years. He shared a list of concerns to the Board in regards to the challenges faced by Service Coordinators. The concerns were related to the quality of service that CSCs are able to provide to Consumers due to critically-low staffing levels. Kermit encouraged the Board to collaborate with the collective bargaining team to increase wages for Service Coordinators.

Rosalind Nations has been a Service Coordinator for 14 years with NLACRC. She inquired if CSCs were permitted to apply for Board Membership. It was determined that current employees of NLACRC were not permitted to serve on the Board, however, former employees interested in Board Membership are eligible to serve, once vetted for conflicts of interest.

Lia Cervantes-Lerma, from SCDD, shared that there was an access issue for some individuals trying to log in to the Zoom Meeting. The attendance issue was resolved to allow more people to join the meeting.

Amparo Dallas shared that NLACRC is dramatically understaffed and that she has noticed a decrease in the level of service that the CSCs have provided due to the constant turnover. She implored the Board to assist in finding a solution for low wages.

Lety Garcia, Board Member, shared that transportation to and from services has been a continued issue. NLACRC's sole vendor has been understaffed due to the driver shortage which has resulted in some families having gone 6 to 8 months without transportation services. She requested that this issue be placed on the agenda for a future Vendor Advisory Committee Meeting to address this critical need.

Ana Quiles, Board President, announced that the State's required electronic visit verification for timekeeping is now mandatory. She stated that there has been some challenges logging in to the system and accessibility issues. Families with more than 1 consumer have an added stress in ensuring that all times are entered into the app correctly. Ana requested that the Board explore other avenues of support on this issue.

Karla Robles, a CSC with NLACRC asked for clarification on why NLACRC employees are not eligible to serve on the Board. The link to the bylaws were sent to Karla for further information.

6. Consent Items

A. Approval of Agenda

M/S/C (J. Feinstock/A. Ramirez) To approve the agenda as revised.

B. Approval of November 9th, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes

M/S/C (B. Gatus/C. Blinn) To approve the Minutes as presented.

7. Executive Session

A. Union Negotiations

M/S/C (L. Martinez/D. Coe) To move in to the Executive Session at 7:01 pm. The motion passed with 1 abstention from Jordan Feinstock.

M/S/C (L. Martinez/D. Coe) To close the Executive Session at 7:19 pm.

8. Committee Action Items

A. Consumer Services Committee – Andrew Ramirez

1. Approval of the Revised Critical Calendar

The revised Critical Calendars were reviewed as presented in the packet.

M/S/C (C. Blin/ R. Sigala) To approve the revised Critical Calendar as presented.

2. Approval of Revised Fair Hearing Service Standards
The revised policy was reviewed as presented in the packet.

M/S/C (G. Alvarado /C. Blin) To approve the revised standards as presented.

B. Executive Committee - Ana Quiles

1. Approval of Board Annual Training Plan FY2023-24
The draft Board Annual Training Plan was reviewed as presented in the packet.

M/S/C (A.Ramirez/G.Alvarado) To approve the Training Plan as presented.

2. Approval of Revised Board Member Responsibilities Policy
The revised policy was reviewed as presented in the packet.

M/S/C (R.Sigala/G.Alvarado) To approve the revised policy as presented.

C. Administrative Affairs Committee – David Coe

1. Approval of Contracts
 - a. Modern Support Services HL1015-520
POS Contract – Provides Independent Living Program Services
5-year contract effective January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2027
Projected total contract amount is \$614,335.35
Projected to serve 12 consumers per month.
 - b. Liberian-Bert, Lucia PL0496-625
POS Contract – Provides counseling
5-year contract effective January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2027
Projected total contract amount is \$360,000
Projected to serve 8 consumers per month.

M/S/C (A. Quiles/R. Sigala) To move the Liberman-Bert, Lucia PL0496-625 contract to Administrative Affairs Committee for further vetting. This motion would also limit contracts determined to be urgent and with appropriate compensation/median rate will not be sent to the Board for approval without first being approved through the Administrative Affairs Committee.
The motion passed with 1 abstention for Jordan Feinstock.

- c. 24Hr Homecare PL2137-102
POS Contract – Provides individual or family training services
5-year contract effective January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2027
Projected total contract amount is \$1,552,680.00
Projected to serve 38 consumers per month.

This contract will also be moved to the Administrative Affairs Committee as per the motion listed above.

d. Zooz Fitness PL2143-008

POS Contract – Provides sports club services

5-year contract effective January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2027

Projected total contract amount is \$1,281,280.00

Projected to serve 8 consumers per month.

M/S/C (G. Alvarado/G. Alvarado) To approve contracts Modern Support Services HL1015-520 and Zooz Fitness PL2143-008 as presented.

9. Executive Director's Report - Ruth Janka

Ruth shared information related to the Governor's Budget proposal that was recently released. She announced that there were no major cuts proposed, and puts forward \$102 million to support reduced case load ratio for children 0-5 years of age. There is a \$10 million preschool integration grant that will become effective 2024-25. There was also \$355 million approved to support the cost for rate reform. The technologies being recommended by DDS are under review for assessment in preparation for implementing technology statewide. The budget proposes to establish an Autism Services Branch at DDS that would include 6 new positions. Funding would also support children in to Early Start under the expansion and provisional eligibility for 3–4-year old's.

Ruth summarized the contents of the report as presented in the packet; highlights are outlined below.

Staffing

Public Information Officer- Robert Dhondrup was re-hired for the Public Information Manager position in early December and reports to the Executive Director. Christopher Whitlock, a former Public Information and Training Specialist has returned to the organization in a newly added position, Public Information Supervisor. This position will directly supervise the Public Information Specialist and will provide technical support to direct service professionals using the statewide learning management system to earn performance incentives.

Director of Consumer Services – Adult and Transition Services – The Center is interviewing candidates for this position; meantime Consumer Services Managers Donna Rentsch and Emmanuel Gutierrez continue to provide support and direction to the SFV Adult and Transition teams.

Effective November 30, 2022, the Center has 726 positions authorized, 11 positions on hold, 105 vacant positions (60 are service coordinator positions), 618 positions

filled. Annualized turnover rate is 0.15%. NLACRC will be hosting a job fair on February 8th, themed “Fall in Love with North LA”.

Transportation Services

Keolis, NLACRC’s vendored transportation service provider, is working hard to increase their workforce and is making some progress. Further, DDS has announced that they are working with a small group of providers to develop a temporary transportation option while a long-term alternative is explored. DDS is authorizing transportation providers to complete alternative billing through a monthly provision of 19 or more trips through December 31, 2023. Providing transportation services outside of “normal” business hours and to other destinations in the community is being encouraged to help increase access to the community and to transportation services. The Participant Directed Services model is another avenue for Consumers to access transportation through reimbursement for the purchase of transportation from services such as Uber and Lyft.

Little Hoover Commission

The Little Hoover Commission held its third and final hearing on California’s developmental services system on December 8th, where Executive Director of SCDD Aaron Caruthers testified. SCDD is an organization largely federally funded to provide board systems advocacy for those with developmental disabilities and their families. The Commission will now work off their report to make legislative recommendations on how to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of DDS.

Office of the Ombudsman

DDS has established the Office of the Ombudsperson to assist individuals and their families who are applying for or receiving regional center services under the Lanterman Act. Effective December 1st, 2022, this office became available to provide information, facilitate resolution to disagreements and complaints, make recommendations to the Department, and compile and report data. Information about the Office of the Ombudsperson can be found on NLACRC’s website in the Publications & Resources section.

Lanterman Act Hearings Advisory Committee

DDS and the Office of Administrative Hearings are establishing an advisory committee to provide input regarding mediations and hearings conducted by the OAH. The committee will have up to 18 members, with at least half of the membership being individuals and families served by the regional center. Other members will include Disability Rights California, State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Association of Regional Center Agencies, Office of Clients Rights Advocacy and other developmental advocacy services organizations. Committee will meet virtually twice per year.

Quality Incentive Program

DDS has validated over 2,000 providers eligible for an incentive payment for completing the Direct Support Professional Workforce survey which supports

Service Access and Workforce Capacity focus areas within the QIP. There are approximately 190 providers remaining for validation, which DDS anticipates completion by January 4th, 2023.

Employment Workgroup Meeting

This group met on November 14th, 2022, and discussed the transition of individuals from Work Assistant Programs (subminimum wage) and from high school. Recommendations for a service model were solicited from participants and included braiding services for individuals transitioning from WAPs, provision of transportation, benefits counseling, consideration for those currently in group employment in subminimum wage programs, and employment training for direct support professionals.

10. **Self Determination Program (SDP) – Gabriela Eshrati**

A. SDP Report

Gabriela Eshrati reviewed the SDP Report as presented in the packet.

As of December 1st

Participants have completed Orientation: 576

Total number of budgets that are certified: 197

Total number of budgets that are in the certification process: 2

Total number of spending plans that are approved: 164

Total number of spending plans in progress: 33

Total number of PCP's completed: 186

Total number of participants that have opted out of SDP after enrolled: 1

Total number of Inter-Regional Center Transfers (out):2

Total number of participants that have fully transitioned into SDP with approved spending plans and active SDP IPPs: 164

FMS Providers are not accepting new transitions until February 1, 2023 due to delays in start dates during the holiday season.

Recruitment for FY2021-22 and FY 2022-23 SDP Implementation Funding.

Applications and interviews were completed and the awardees will be notified next week.

The SDP Workbook has been updated and is currently in printing, will be available soon.

The Pre-Enrollment Transition Support directive has been extended through June 30, 2023.

A basic informational survey will be sent out regarding barriers to the Self Determination Program and RFPs have been issued for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 funds that will be closing in 20 days to commence the selection process.

Jordan Feinstock reported that FMS is not accepting new clients due to not receiving money from Regional Centers. Ana recommended further discussion at the next SDP Meeting and recommended Jordan consider the SDLAC Liaison Position. Ana requested that information related to SDP training be available at least 30 days in

advance to allow consumers and families the opportunity to ask questions that may be better addressed in a larger forum.

11. Administrative Affairs Committee – David Coe

David reviewed the information as presented in the packet.

A. Minutes of the October 26th Meeting

B. Minutes of the November 30th Meeting

C. FY2022-2023 Financial Report - Vini Montague

Vini reviewed the report as presented in the packet.

D1 Allocation: \$882,180,063

Monthly Expenditures for October: \$59,025,073

YTD Expenditures: \$217,694,917

Total Expenses Administrative vs Direct Allocation is at 15.1%, NLACRC is working to meet the goal of 15%.

D. Monthly Human Resources October Report - Clarence Foster

The report was presented in the packet. Clarence shared information on the upcoming Job Fair being hosted by NLACRC. Clarence is currently working on marketing of the job fair to attract candidates and is anticipating a large turnout. Clarence also clarified that LinkedIn is being used to recruit staff, not open Board Member positions.

E. Personnel Classification and Compensations

This report is presented in the packet.

12. Association of Regional Center Agencies - Lety Garcia

A. ARCA Liaison Report

Lety shared that there will be an ARCA Training at the end of the month. Daniel Savino, ARCA's Government Affairs Director, will be presenting the training on January 23rd. Ana requested help in navigating the ARCA system as there is a fee to be part of the organization.

13. Consumer Advisory Committee – Dr. Michael Fernandez for Jennifer Koster

Dr. Fernandez reviewed the information as presented in the packet.

A. Minutes of the November 2nd Meeting

B. Minutes of the January 4th Meeting

C. Chair Board of Trustees Report

Lety encouraged members of the Committee attend the ARCA Training on January 23rd. Liz will send the ARCA Training invitation to the Consumer Advisory Committee Members.

14. Consumer Services Committee – Andrew Ramirez

Andrew reviewed the information as presented in the packet.

A. Minutes of the October 26th Meeting

Ana requested transportation services and Electronic Services Verification (EVV) be added

to the agenda for this Committee to determine alternatives to meet the need of consumers.

15. Executive Committee – Ana Quiles

Ana reviewed the information as presented in the packet.

- A. Minutes of the October 26th Meeting
- B. Minutes of the November 30th Meeting
- C. Minutes of the December 30th Meeting

D. Committee List Update - Ana noted that this list has been updated as there was 1 resignation from Kimberly Bermudez from the Vendor Advisory Committee. Suad will address this vacancy at the next Committee Meeting.

E. Monthly Board Support Check-In Meeting with Executive Members

Ana proposed open meeting times for Board Members to check-in with Executive staff on a monthly basis.

M/S/C (G. Alvarado/A. Ramirez) To approve board member check-in on the last Tuesday of every month at 5 pm.

F. FY2022-23 Board vs Expenditures

G. Board Resolution for Workers Compensation Insurance Coverage CY2023

H. Master Board Resolution - Angel Wings HL0998-880

I. Master Board Resolution - Pyles & Associates PL2121-062

J. Master Board Resolution – Covid 19 Contract

K. Master Board Resolution – Covid 19 Subcode

L. Master Board Resolution – Tailored Day Services

M. Master Board Resolution – SCV Expansion Project

N. Master Board Resolution – SFV Expansion Project

O. Master Board Resolution – SFV Reconfiguration Project

P. Master Board Resolution - City National Bank

16. Government & Community Relations – Jordan Feinstock

Jordan reviewed the information as presented in the packet.

A. Next Meeting is Scheduled for January 18th, 2023 at 6:00pm

Ana proposed NLACRC individual grassroots or ARCA grassroots program determination to be considered at the next Committee Meeting. She also wanted to add an agenda item related to both Transportation Services and EVV in a time-sensitive manner.

Jordan requested a Chair Report be added to the agenda for future Committee Meetings, Ana stated that at this time, public input is on the agenda in lieu of a Chair Report. Further discussion will be had at the next meeting.

17. Nominating Committee - Lillian Martinez

Lillian reviewed the information as presented in the packet. She also shared that the January meeting was rescheduled to February 27th. Recruitment efforts are increasing and application submission deadline has been extended to February 15th. Current needs for recruitment are a consumer and an African-American individuals.

Ana requested continued marketing for the vacancies and Robert Dhondrup confirmed.

- A. Redacted Minutes of the November 14th Meeting
- B. Status of Board and VAC Recruitment
- C. Interest and Recommendations in Serving as a Board Officer, ARCA Delegate, ARCA Alternate, CAC Chair or CAC Vice-Chair in FY2023-24

18. Post-Retirement Medical Trust Committee – Ana Quiles

Ana reviewed the information as presented in the packet.

- A. Minutes of the October 26th Meeting

19. Strategic Planning Committee- Ana Quiles for Lety Garcia

Lety reviewed the information as presented in the packet.

- A. Minutes of the September 26th Meeting
- B. Minutes of the October 24th Meeting

20. Vendor Advisory Committee – Suad Bisogno

Suad reviewed the information as presented in the packet.

Vendor Forum will be held January 12th at 10 am to voice concerns and collaborate on solutions. Transportation service issues will be added to the next agenda. Ana requested that the Committee help identify consumers that may have been missed for Early Start due to the pandemic. Suad requested to add Participant Directed Services to the next Committee Agenda as it relates to transportation.

- A. Minutes of the November 3rd Meeting
- B. Minutes of the January 5th Meeting –*defer*

21. Old Business/New Business

Ana reviewed the information as presented in the packet.

- A. Board and Committee Meeting Attendance Sheets
- B. Board and Committee Meetings Time Report
- C. Updated Acronyms Listing
- D. Meeting Evaluation Form - fillable

22. Announcements/Information/Public Input

- A. Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 8th, 2023 at 6:30pm
- B. Public Meeting Attendance
- C. Board Training: Cultural Competency and Implicit Bias, January 30th at 6:00pm
- D. Board Presentation: Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA), January 23rd at 5:30p
- F. FFRC AV Parent Support Group, January 12th at 11:00am
- G. Virtual Cafecito Entre Nos, January 12th at 11:30am

- H. FFRC Functional Ways to Incorporate Speech & Language into Everyday Activities, January 17th & 24th at 1:00 pm
- I. Different Thinkers, Different Learners Workshop, January 24th at 10:00 am
- J. FFRC Life After High School, January 26th at 6:00 pm

Public Input

Ana Quiles noted that NLACRC staff will address the numerous comments and questions that were listed in the chat.

Amparo Dallas, stated that due to teacher staffing shortages, the ratios to children to teachers in the classroom have been increased. She encouraged the CSCs and the Board to work together to find a solution to the concerns shared tonight.

George is a CSC in the Antelope Valley area. He proposed looking at other processes that can help make duties more efficient for CSCs (such as the elimination of certain approvals where management sign-off is required) in addition to continued recruitment.

23. Adjournment

Ana Quiles, Board President, adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

Submitted by:



Lizeth Chavez

Executive Administrative Assistant

for:



Lillian Martinez

Board Secretary

() The majority of these minutes are taken from the Minutes Service submission and reviewed/edited as presented herein by NLACRC staff.*