

**NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL CENTER (NLACRC)
9200 OAKDALE AVENUE, SUITE 100
CHATSWORTH, CALIFORNIA**

**MINUTES OF THE VENDOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
HYBRID – SANTA CLARITA VALLEY OFFICE / TELECONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 13, 2025, 9:30 A.M.**

MEMBERS:

Alex Kopilevich, Jaklen Keshishyan, Jodie Agnew-Navarro, Octavia Watkins, Masood Babaeian, Paul Borda, Andrea Devers, Cal Enriquez, Ute Escorcía, Ricki Macken Chilvers, Vahe Mkrtchian, Jen Pippard, Sharon Weinberg

STAFF:

Angela Pao-Johnson, Vini Montague, Arshalous Garlanian, Silvia Renteria-Haro, Betsy Monahan, Evelyn McOmie, Belinda Abatesi, Chris Whitlock, Arezo Abedi, Lindsay Granger, Arezo Abedi

GUESTS:

Mark Wolfe – DDS Tech Advisor, Sasha Chernik- Minute Solutions
Other than panelists, there were 82 other attendees.

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, and adequate and proper notice of the meeting having been given, the meeting was called to order at 9:33 a.m. Alex Kopilevich presided as Chair.

2. COMMITTEE MEMBER ATTENDANCE

Members were asked to identify themselves when speaking or making a motion.

3. PUBLIC INPUT

ACTION – Staff will follow up with DDS about which providers qualify for the ACRE training incentive.

Scott Shepard, Avenues SLS:

Noted that service providers who have an IPP goal may not have the information on how to get receipts reversed. He also inquired about the payments for ACRE training completed by staff.

4. CONSENT ITEMS

On a motion made by Sharon Weinberg, seconded by Jaklen Keshishyan, it was resolved to approve the minutes of the Vendor Advisory Committee meeting held on January 9, 2025, as amended. Motion carried.

On a motion made by Masood Babaeian, seconded by Paul Borda, it was resolved to approve the agenda of the Vendor Advisory Committee meeting held on February 13, 2025, as presented. Motion carried.

5. ACTION ITEMS

5.1 Discussion and Vote on VAC Member Applications

On a motion duly made, it was resolved to defer the discussion and vote on the VAC member applications to the next VAC meeting. Motion carried.

ACTION – Staff will email the VAC nominee information to the Board members via encrypted email.

ACTION – Alex Kopilevich will inquire if the fourth applicant is interested in a VAC or Trustee Board position.

The Board noted that there was not enough information provided on the applicants to discuss and make a decision. A personal interest statement and resume would provide the necessary information. Some Board members also had issues accessing the Dropbox folder with the applicant information.

6. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 Nominations for Annual Jynny Retzinger Community Service Award

Chris Whitlock reported that the nominations for the Jynny Retzinger Community Service Award are open. Jynny Retzinger was a long time NLACRC Board member who was very active in the legislative system and grass roots. A legislative breakfast will be held in 2025 to commemorate Jynny Retzinger.

6.2 Local Grass Roots Visits Update

The team will visit Sacramento in March of 2025. After the Sacramento visit and town hall, the team will focus on forming delegation teams, who will go to Sacramento regularly to continue partnerships with the legislators.

6.3 Service Provider Vendor Training and Mentorship Program Updates

There will be a meeting with the community services team on March 4, 2025. NLACRC will work to provide more support to new vendors.

6.4 Self-Determination Update

If a consumer is transitioning out of the program, vendors need to establish contracts to support the consumer and the vendor. The Board discussed that when consumers enter self-determination, the service codes change, so they are subject to a different skill environment and standards.

6.5 VAC Members' Terms

ACTION – Board Support will complete the outstanding columns in the VAC members' term list.

Several members' terms are expiring. Board Support will provide a letter so members can file official extensions to continue to serve on the Board.

7. REPORT OUTS

7.1 Deputy Director Officer's Report

Evelyn McOmie presented the Deputy Directory Officer's Report. There are currently 912 applicants in the vendor portal. Of those 140 are pending with IT and 146 are pending vendor acceptance. There are 565 vendors up and running and 21 requests submitted with errors which will be followed up with the IT team.

7.2 Chief Financial Officer's Report

Vini Montague presented the Chief Financial Officer's Report. Phase 2B of the rate model implementation has been completed, which included implementation of the rate increase from July of 2024 and processing of retro payments.

Of Phase 3, 23 service codes were implemented before processing the turnaround invoices in January of 2025. There are still 6 service codes which the accounting team is working on internally: 862, 868, 062, 113, 116, 616. Once the service codes are processed, any retroactive payments that are due will be calculated automatically.

All the 1099s were mailed to vendors the week of January 27, 2025.

The current NLACRC controller is leaving his position; his last day will be on February 14, 2025. The team is actively recruiting for a new controller.

Vini Montague provided the contact information for NLACRC accounting staff and explained who to contact for various issues.

7.3 Community Services Director's Report

ACTION – Staff will resend the staff directory to all the people who receive notification of the VAC meetings.

ACTION – Staff will investigate if it is possible to hold an additional management training.

ACTION – Staff will inquire with the team if there are any upcoming person-centered trainings.

Arshalous Garlanian reviewed the Community Services Director's Report, highlighting certain items. She noted that the information from DDS has been received for Codes 862 and 113. NLACRC is working on validating and sending them to accounting as soon as possible. A large portion of the QIP incentives have also been received and will be included as part of the providers' Phase 3 rates. NLACRC will be communicating with providers about the rate letters shortly, with a deadline of March 31, 2025. There are rate reform office hours every two weeks, and NLACRC will also host an in-person meeting for residential providers about rate reform.

The dates for the vendor fair are being finalized for April of 2025. The dates and registration will be announced at the next VAC meeting.

The Board noted that some members still have not received a list of NLACRC service coordinators and staff emails and phone numbers.

Only a few responses have been received to the vendor support forum survey. All attendees were encouraged to complete the survey so staff can draft the agenda for the forum.

7.4 Legislative Report

Belinda Abatesi presented the Legislative Report.

7.5 Executive Director's Report

Angela Pao-Johnson presented the Executive Director's Report and highlighted significant items. She also noted that one of the Board members requested that an individual served impact story is shared at the start of every meeting. Attendees were asked to recommend consumers who may want to be highlighted with a testimonial, live presence or a video.

Sharon Weinberg:

Inquired if anyone has checked in with the 38% of new hires to the new hire survey.

Angela Pao-Johnson:

Explained that there are lead trainers who conduct regular check-ins and mentors who guide each new hire through the process. Anyone with concerns and suggestions can bring them to the vendor forum.

Alex Kopilevich:

Expressed a desire for feedback from service providers about the career building system for service coordinators. He noted that it is important that leads and supervisors are also provided with growth opportunities.

Octavia Watkins:

Inquired when the SDP lead specialist position will be implemented.

Angela Pao-Johnson:

Responded that the position will likely be posted soon, but it will take time to fully deploy the program because it is necessary to hire and train many people.

8. OPEN TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

8.1 Admission Agreements

The Board discussed that the admission agreements take an excessive amount of time to generate. This is partially due to the training on admission agreements being insufficient and partially due to the issues with FACT, the third-party payee system. Staff noted that they will be meeting with FACT to discuss the issues, and in the meantime NLACRC will loan the money to continue making the payments. On the case management end, the internal form for placements has been streamlined and the instructions were improved. Staff are working to streamline the process further and provide more information to providers.

9. COMMITTEE WORK GROUP INFORMATION

9.1 Early Start Services

Jodie Agnew-Navarro reported that the Early Start Services Committee Work Group met on January 16, 2025. There was a very productive conversation about the assessment tool requested by the regional center for intakes and the social and emotional development closing report. Several members felt very strongly that the tool was not good, so there was a discussion with NLACRC early start staff about a tool that would be more appropriate. Rate reform and QIP were also discussed. There was a continuation of the discussion about lack of funding for six-month progress reports, which is very costly to vendors and has led to the quality of the progress reports diminishing over time. Approximately 50 to 70 people attend the Early Start Services Committee Work Group meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for March 20, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

9.2 School Age Services

Paul Borda and Cal Enriquez reported that the School Age Service Committee Work Group met the week of February 10, 2025. The meeting was lightly attended. Rate reform was discussed briefly and the other items were deferred. The next meeting will be on March 11, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. Approximately 10 to 15 people attend the School Age Services Committee Work Group meetings.

9.3 Adult Services

Octavia Watkins reported that the Adult Services Committee Work Group met on January 13, 2025. Some of the topics discussed were ACRE training, PIPs and ageing specialist resources, with invitees from employment support staff and outside sources attending to provide information. The next meeting will be on March 10, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. There are approximately 15 attendees at the Adult Services Committee Work Group meetings.

10. COMMITTEE WORK GROUP FINAL REPORTS

All the final committee work group reports were provided in the previous meeting.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

11.1 Administrative Affairs

Jaklen Keshishyan reported that the Administrative Affairs Committee will meet on February 20, 2025.

11.2 Consumer Services

Sharon Weinberg reported that the Consumer Services Committee will meet the week of February 17, 2025.

11.3 Government and Community Relations

Jodie Agnew-Navarro reported that the last meeting of the Government and Community Relations Committee was on January 15, 2025. Board recognition and the ARCA grassroots day were discussed. There will be a legislative town hall on February 25, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

11.4 Nominating

Alex Kopilevich reported that the Nominating Committee met multiple times, focusing on filling officer positions. The new President of the Board of Trustees is Juan Hernandez, who is a consumer of NLACRC. Three new Board members have also joined. The Nominating Committee is still meeting at least once a month to discuss open positions and interview applicants. The next meeting will be held on March 5, 2025.

11.5 Strategic Planning

Octavia Watkins reported that the Strategic Planning Committee will meet on February 24, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

12. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT BOARD MEETING

There were no agenda items for the next Board meeting.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC INPUT

ACTION – Staff will share the council meeting information through NLACRC channels.

Attendee:

Noted that the annual resource fair will be on March 15, 2025, with over 30 exhibitors already confirmed.

Scott Shepard, Avenue SLS:

Noted that there will be a brunch on March 27, 2025. There will be a flyer and link provided at the next VAC meeting. He also noted that the Cal-TASH conference will be on March 28, 2025, and March 29, 2025. Three legislators will be recognized, with two of them in the NLACRC area, for their support in ensuring that vendors were included in the budget increase.

Ricki Macken Chilvers:

Noted that there will be a council meeting on March 14, 2025, and that residents, families, consumers and service coordinators are invited to represent the community and support the city’s acknowledgement.

13.1 Committee Attendance

It was noted that if a Board member has three consecutive absences, they will likely be disqualified from the Board.

14. NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Vendor Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled on March 13, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. at the NLACRC Antelope Valley office.

15. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made and carried, it was agreed that there was no further business to transact; the meeting closed at 11:27 a.m.

DISCLAIMER

The above document should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.

Director

Director

Date

Date