

**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 **March 8, 2023**

Trustees Present

Ana Quiles  
David Coe  
Leticia Garcia  
George Alvarado  
Brian Gatus  
Jordan Feinstock  
Nicholas Abrahms  
Rocio Sigala  
Sharmila Brunjes  
Suad Bisogno  
Cathy Blin  
Alma Rodriguez  
Jennifer Koster

Trustees Absent

Sylvia Brooks- Griffin  
Lillian Martinez  
Andrew Ramirez

Guests Present

Ismael Maldonado - Advocate  
Perla Zuniga- DDS  
Lori Walker - SDLAC  
Richard Dier - SDLAC  
Erica Beall - PathPoint  
Jaklen Keshishyan- Creative Minds  
Azucena Bustillos – Interpreter  
Lucy Paz - Interpreter  
Jasmine Barrios- Minutes Services  
Brian Otchis  
Lori Walker - SDLAC  
Lia Cervantes Lerma  
Anthony Rodriguez - George’s Coach  
Victoria Berrey - FFRC  
Arleen Flores- FFRC  
Monica Lee  
G. Espino Romero  
Anna M. Hamilton  
Victoria Mackey

Staff Present

Ruth Janka  
Vini Montague  
Lizeth Chavez  
Lilliana Windover  
Cristina Preuss  
Silvia Haro  
Malorie Lanthier  
Donna Rentsch  
Chris Whitlock  
Robert Dhondrup  
Clarence Foster  
Dr.Michael Fernandez

**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 are located in the chat.

**B. Public Attendance**

Ana asked public attendants to note their names in the chat.

**C. Board Support Updates**

The Board Dinner survey was sent out to members regarding a potential date of May 20<sup>th</sup>. Members were asked to submit their survey responses by March 10<sup>th</sup>. Board Members were also asked to begin submitting respite invoices to Board Support during the first week of each month for more efficient processing.

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

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

#### 4. **Introductions**

##### A. Andrew Ramirez, Board Member

Andrew introduced himself as an educator for Palm Dale School District, where he serves as the Palmdale Elementary Teachers Association President. He is originally from east Los Angeles. Andrew joined the US Army and lived in many places for eight years. He holds a Bachelor's degree from UCLA in psychology, which led him to education. Andrew and his wife have a 14-year-old daughter who is a consumer, which prompted his interest in serving on the NLACRC Board. He is a current Board Member.

##### B. Donna Rentsch, Consumer Services Director

Donna is the Consumer Services Director for the Adult and Transition Department at the San Fernando Valley Location. She is from Peoria, Illinois, where she worked with her dad in a poultry processing plant and has earned an Associate's degree in law enforcement, and a Bachelor's degree in criminal justice, focusing on social justice. She worked for the Illinois Department of Human Services and relocated to Burbank in 2002. Donna also holds a Master's in Public Administration from California State University. She began her work with NLACRC as an Adult Service Coordinator in 2003 and was promoted to her current position at NLACRC in January 2023 after 20 years of service.

#### 5. **Public Input**

Rocio Sigala shared that on April 1<sup>st</sup>, AV Seed and Grow will be hosting a Disability Resource Fair in Lancaster in conjunction with the Family Focus Resource Center; anyone is encouraged to attend.

Lori Walker, the chair of the Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee, raised a question about appointing a Board Liaison for the SDLAC. Her question concerns how both NLACRC and State Council can appoint one person. She understands that NLACRC will appoint a liaison in addition to State Council's appointment.

Richard Dier introduced himself as the co-Chair of the Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee. His affiliation with NLACRC, from serving on the Vendor Advisory Committee in 1978, prompted the adoption of his son. He noted that Self-Determination is not referenced in NLACRC's bylaws or service standards. However, he hopes that NLACRC can continue collaborating to care for consumers.

An advocate and consumer, Ismael Maldonado, shared that the California Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities has extended its application deadline to March 17<sup>th</sup>. He also shared that the Department of Mental Health is hosting a meeting on April 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss funding programs and grant proposals.

From Family Focus Resource Center, Arlene Flores shared the launch date for a new bilingual English/Spanish support group for Early Start Parents. This week, FFRC will

host presentations about applying for Supplemental Security Income. Next week's presentation will focus on using a motivation to increase positive behaviors.

Last month, FFRC hosted Coffee and Conversations for parents on social recreation. On April 27<sup>th</sup>, an in-person transition to resource presentation will be held in Santa Clarita.

## 6. Consent Items

### A. Approval of Agenda

Item was added under Government and:16. B: Grassroots Updates

Item was added 8.C.5: Approval of revised Executive Director Performance Evaluation Timeline

It was noted that for the presentation of National Court Indicators, Ruth Janka would be presenting for Evelyn McOmie. Also, Silvia Haro will be presenting the Self-Determination Report for Gabriela Eshrati.

**M/S/C** (A. Ramirez/D. Coe) To approve the agenda as revised.

### B. Approval of February 8, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes

**M/S/C** (D. Coe/R. Sigala) To approve the Minutes as presented.

## 7. **National Core Indicators (NCI) FY19/20 Family Guardian Survey and FY19/20 Adult Family Survey Presentation – Ruth Janka**

Ruth shared a high-level overview of the surveys and results. NCI, National Court Indicators, is an independent, third-party survey that conducts assessments across the 21 Regional Centers to help the State of California and Regional Centers understand what is being done well and where growth opportunities exist.

One survey presented was from the FY2019-20 Family/Guardian survey. A family member of an adult consumer completes this survey. Areas in which NLACRC did well include: providing information about services, the information offered in the preferred language, copies of IPP in the preferred language, accessing service coordinators when needed, CSC respected opinions and service providers spoke in a way that was easy to understand. Areas for improvement include families receiving services needed, emergency planning at IPP meetings, receiving crisis or emergencies when needed, and knowing how to file a complaint about a provider/agency.

The second survey reviewed was the FY2019-20 Adult Family Survey, which represents families with an adult that resides in the family home. Areas in which NLACRC did well include: receiving information that was easy to understand, all services needed were included

in IPP, the information offered in the preferred language, copies of IPP provided in the preferred language, overall satisfaction, and services received made a positive impact. Areas for improvement include: getting information to help plan for services, using respite services, and accessing different services.

The Board asked what was being done to improve a 50% respite response. NLACRC is vrending more agencies to provide respite and is encouraging agencies to staff providers that can deliver services in the ways that families need. In addition, some community areas are using the parent conversion program for families to refer their preferred workers. Continuing to provide resources in multiple languages will also alleviate some questions for families. It was noted that these surveys were taken before the COVID pandemic, which may not reflect the sentiments of families in the present day.

## 8. Committee Action Items

### A. Approval of Administrative Affairs, Executive Committee, and Strategic Planning Critical Calendars - Ana Quiles

Revisions were made to these calendars to reflect the new bi-monthly meeting formats.

M/S/C (G. Alvarado/C. Blinn) to approve the critical calendars as revised.

### B. Administrative Affairs Committee– David Coe

#### 1. Approval of Contracts

##### a. Mind Matters Psychological Services PL2150-785

POS Contract – Provides Individual or Family Training services  
2-year contract effective February 1, 2023, through January 31, 2025  
Projected total contract amount is \$621,072,00  
Projected to serve 38 consumers per month.

M/S/C (R. Sigala/C. Blinn) to approve the Mind Matters Psychological Services PL2150-785. The motion passed with one abstention from J. Feinstock

### C. Executive Committee – Ana Quiles

#### 1. Executive Director Evaluation Form Update – Clarence Foster

Clarence shared that four outstanding evaluations are needed from Board Members. Clarence will reach out to those specific members to remind them to complete these evaluations by tonight.

#### 2. Approval of Sponsorship for AV Seed and Grow - Ana Quiles

The Executive Committee recommended sponsorship in the amount of \$3000 for AV Seed and Grow's disability-friendly Egg Hung Event, to be held on April 8<sup>th</sup>,

from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Lancaster Prime Desert Woodland Preserve. The advertisement for the event was pending the decision of sponsorship from NLACRC and will be updated to reflect the correct information.

Leticia Garcia recommended that NLACRC branding be included in any event sponsored by NLACRC in any way. It was noted that NLACRC branding will be included in flyers and at the event for this event. AV Seed and Grow will also ensure that this event is not billed as being associated with any religious activity for this event.

Ruth reviewed NLACRC policy, identifying sponsorship requests must be approved by the Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees. In addition, it was noted that for this event, sponsorship branding will be in place, and the organization making the request has provided a breakdown of how the funds will be used to support the event.

M/S/C (R. Sigala/C. Blinn) to approve the sponsorship for the AV Seed and Grow Egg Hunt Event. The motion passed with one abstention from R. Sigala.

### 3. Approval of Sponsorship for CSUN Hearts of Glass Screening

The Executive Committee recommends sponsorship of CSUN's "Hearts of Glass" screening. The request was made by Beth Lasky, a professor and founder of CSUN's "Explorers Program", which allows students with disabilities to attend classes at CSUN and participate in college life. Hearts of Glass is a documentary that follows individuals with developmental disabilities as they experience employment at Vertical Perfect, a work program in Wyoming. The event will be held on April 24, 2023. Sponsorship provides NLACRC with a branding opportunity as well as having an information table at the event, and 20 tickets to attend the screening.

M/S/C (G. Alvarado/D. Coe) to approve the sponsorship for the CSUN Hearts of Glass Screening at the \$1000 level.

There is currently a line item in the budget to support sponsorships; the Executive Committee will evaluate this item to determine the allotted amount for Sponsorships for the upcoming FY.

### 4. Executive Director Evaluation Timeline - Clarence Foster

Clarence reviewed the revised document as presented in the packet. Adjustments were made to update titles and information on HR compensation.

M/S/C (L. Garcia/G. Alvarado) to approve the revised evaluation timeline as presented.

### 5. Approval of the Appointment of Jordan Feinstock as SDLVAC Board Liaison

Jordan Feinstock has volunteered to serve as the Board Liaison to the SDLVAC. Ruth will speak to Chris Arroyo from the State Council to clarify the requirements. There are no bylaws that speak to the issue as the SDLAC Committee. The likely resolution is that NLA will appoint a liaison, and the State Council will appoint its liaison, but Ruth will confirm and report back to the Board.

M/S/C (A. Ramirez/G. Alvarado) to approve Jordan Feinstock as the Board Liaison for the Self-Determination Local Volunteer Advisory Committee.

D. Additional Action Items:

1. Administrative Affairs Committee – David Coe

Approval of Contracts - Vini Montague

a. Essential Pay PL2135

POS Contract Amendment – provides startup funds for FMS  
6-month original contract effective October 1, 2022- March 31, 2023  
Term date was extended to April 30, 2023, per 1<sup>st</sup> amendment  
Term date was extended to May 31, 2023, per 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment  
Projected original total contract amount is \$500,000  
Contract amount increased to \$600,000 per 1<sup>st</sup> amendment  
Contract amount increased to \$700,000 per 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment

**M/S/C** (G. Alvarado/C. Blin) to approve the Essential Pay contract amendment as presented

**9. Executive Director's Report - Ruth Janka**

Ruth shared that negotiations with the Union reached an agreement and were finalized. She also summarized the report's contents as presented in the packet; highlights are outlined below.

**Recruitment and Retention**

NLACRCCRC's "Fall in Love with North LA" Career Day/Job Fair was held February 8th and February 11th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the San Fernando Valley office, with a total of fifty-nine (59) attendees and fifty-nine (59) applications. As of February 17th, twenty-one, (21) of the applicants met minimum qualifications for hire; three (3) applicants have been hired, one (1) applicant has been offered employment, and the remaining applications are under review. New hires effective February 13th included 7 Consumer Services Coordinators (3 Bilingual Spanish), Intake Associate, Human Resources Specialist, Human Resources Coordinator, and Information Technology Specialist II. Effective February 27th, NLACRCCRC hired 4 Consumer Services Coordinators (1 Bilingual Spanish) and 1 Administrative Assistant in – Appeals & Complaints Unit.

**State of Emergency and DDS Directives Expiration**

The Governor ended the State of Emergency due to COVID effective 2/28/2023; thus,

DDS' directives also expired as of this date. While many areas of operation previously waived to allow regional centers to prioritize our response to COVID have been restored, remote service delivery across service types, where applicable, was allowed due to the DDS directive. Of note, the only services that may continue to be delivered remotely are those allowed by either regulation or DDS.

Staff Training Lanterman Act and System Reform training is being conducted in January, February, and March for all Consumer Services staff (service coordinators, supervisors, managers, and directors); the training is open to additional staff from other areas of operation. The Lanterman Act portion of the training will focus on service coordination and program planning.

#### DDS Direct Service Professional Training Stipend and Incentive Program Pilot

NLACRC will pilot the department's DSP Training Stipend and Incentive Program and will provide technical assistance to DSPs to ensure they can access the online training. In addition, the program will provide DSPs with up to two (2) \$500 stipends for participating in the program. DSPs employed by regional center vendors or who provide services to Self Determination Program participants and spend at least 50% of their time providing direct services to consumers are eligible to participate.

#### DDS Guidance/Directives

Department Directive 01-122022: Extension of Waivers, Modifications, and Directives due to COVID-19 The most recent directive issued by the department extends the provisions of several former directives into late January and mid-February of 2023. Governor Newsom has announced the State of Emergency will end on February 28, 2023, which will end the extension of waivers and modifications due to COVID-19.

#### Purchase of Service Data Expenditure Meetings

Meetings are scheduled for March 16th at 12:00 p.m. and March 21st at 6:00 p.m. to review the Center's Purchase of Service data expenditure information and solicit community recommendations for increasing service access and equity.

#### Resumption of the Parental Fee Program

The Parental Fee Program assesses a fee on behalf of minor children placed in 24-hour care outside of the family home. DDS suspended the fee program during the Governor's State of Emergency, and now that the SOE ends on February 28, 2023, the program must resume effective March 1, 2023. Parents with minor children in a 24-hour placement will be notified of the program's resumption and asked to complete a Financial Statement Form; notifications will be provided in English and Spanish. The notification will be translated into other languages as needed. Failure to complete the form may result in assessing the maximum fee. Fees become effective May 1, 2023.

#### Current Public Health Order

Los Angeles County's Health Officer Order (LACDPH) aligns with the California Department of Public Health's Guidance for Face Coverings (CDPH), which requires indoor masking in specific high-risk settings, including healthcare settings. Regional center staff and direct service professionals were prioritized in the vaccination as

“healthcare workers” given their direct work with individuals with developmental disabilities, and thus, under the current public health order, are required to wear a mask when interacting with individuals served. Also, the current public health order is not tied to the State’s Public Health Emergency declaration and remains in place. Should any policies get updated in the State Health Officer Order, then LACDPH will review the updated State order and assess LA County’s local situation, which will be included in the local public health order. Lastly, the Board of Supervisors has not yet stated when Los Angeles County’s Emergency Declaration will expire.

**10. Self Determination Program (SDP) – Silvia Haro**

SDP Report

Silvia reviewed the SDP Report as presented in the packet.

As of March 1<sup>st</sup>

Participants have completed Orientation: 594

Total number of budgets that are certified: 234

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

Total number of spending plans that are approved: 186

Total number of spending plans in progress: 47

Total number of PCP’s completed: 183

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

The Board asked how NLACRC’s active IPPs compare to the other regional centers. Unfortunately, DDS only tracks data for regional centers in the lottery. As such, there is no information on comparison, but it is expected in the future from DDS.

NLACRC meets with FMS providers monthly and will continue to update the Board on individuals looking to transition. A parent suggested adding the contact person for each FMS agency which will be added and posted to the NLACRC website.

**A. SDLVAC Liaison Report**

The Committee has created an email address to better communicate with the public to notify them of upcoming events and to help facilitate answering questions. The Committee asked the Board to revisit the 099 requirements, pending DDS guidance. The outstanding billing issues for GT payments have been resolved.

**11. Administrative Affairs Committee -David Coe**

David reviewed the information presented in the packet.

A. Minutes of the February 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting

B. FY2022-2023 Financial Report - Vini Montague

Vini reviewed this information as presented in the packet.

D1 Allocation: \$882,180,063



Expenditures for the month: \$61,995,231

YTD Expenses: \$403,412,228

Projected annual expenditure: \$88,832,862

Expected POS Surplus: \$49,0317,357

Total Expenses Administrative vs. Direct Allocation is at 14.9%, and NLACRC has met the goal of maintaining administrative expenditures under the 15% cap.

C. Monthly Human Resources Report - Ruth Janka

Ruth reviewed this report as presented in the packet

D. Committee will continue with virtual meetings for the remainder of the FY

E. Committee will alternate bi-monthly meetings with the Executive Committee

F. Next meeting: April 26, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

12. **Association of Regional Center Agencies** - Leticia Garcia

A. ARCA Liaison Report: No report

13. **Consumer Advisory Committee** – Jennifer Koster

A. Minutes of the March 1, 2023 Meeting - *defer*

B. survey re: hybrid vs. virtual meeting format for FY22-23, still in the determination

C. Vice Chair Vacancy - looking to fill in the next few days

14. **Consumer Services Committee** – Andrew Ramirez

Andrew reviewed the information presented in the packet.

A. Minutes of the February 15, 2023 Meeting - *defer*

B. Strategic Plan Focus Area Review Update

Andrew shared that he worked with Evelyn McOmie to compile and highlight areas of the strategic plan. Once approved by the Board, the plan will be reviewed by all of the Committees.

C. Committee will continue with virtual meetings for the remaining of FY22-23

D. Next Meeting is Scheduled on April 19, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

15. **Executive Committee** – Ana Quiles

Ana reviewed the information presented in the packet.

A. Minutes of the February 22, 2023 Meeting - *defer*

B. FY2022-23 Board vs. Expenditures

C. ARCA draft Strategic Plan Review Update

Board members were tasked to review this plan and send feedback to Board Support

D. Advanced Behavioral Pathways – Legucator Contract

E. SCDD Conflict of Interest Waiver Approvals for Rosie Sigala and Ana Quiles

F. Committee will continue with virtual meetings for the remaining of FY22-23

G. Committee will alternate bi-monthly meetings with Administrative Affairs

H. Annual Board of Trustees Dinner Status - current date is May 20; however, the survey remains open for alternates to be proposed.

I. Next meeting: on March 29, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

**16. Government & Community Relations – Jordan Feinstock**

Jordan reviewed the information presented in the packet.

A. Next Meeting on March 15, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

B. Grassroots Update - Robert Dhondrop

Robert reviewed the upcoming Legislative Grassroots Visits Project Plan:

The grassroots team will comprise Board members, Service Providers, Consumer/Family members, and NLACRC staff members. Currently, 4 VAC and 3 CAC committee members have signed up for legislative visits. The ARCA will continue to solicit board members and staff to participate in visits ARCA is looking to finalize the grassroots teams on March 15. These teams will conduct 12 total legislative visits, 11 directly with legislators and one with a field representative. The format will be virtual meetings and the leg core staffing formula and seek Senator Menjivar's support as co-sponsor of the core staffing formula update. The priorities will be finalized at the March 15th government and community relations meeting.

It was noted the planned Legislative training scheduled for March 13 from 3p-5 p.m. would be conducted separately from the ARCA Grassroots Legislative training that will be taking place on the same day at the same time.

Ruth and Robert have a list of bills that NLACRC has previously supported and will identify a follow-up on those bills. The Government and Community Relations Committee will review the bills as part of their agenda. In addition, Robert's project plan will be revised to include timeframes and zip code locations and should be sent to the Board when soliciting volunteers.

**17. Nominating Committee - Ana Quiles for Lillian Martinez**

Lillian reviewed the information presented in the packet.

A. Status of Board and VAC Recruitment

Interviews are being scheduled for the last three weeks of March. Recruitment will also remain open to continue to allow interested individuals to apply. Notices are being updated to reflect this change and to specify what areas can participate.

B. Interest and Recommendations in Serving as a Board Officer, ARCA Delegate, ARCA Alternate, CAC Chair, or CAC Vice-Chair in FY2023-24

Anyone interested in serving as a Board Officer can request more information from Board Support.

**18. Post-Retirement Medical Trust Committee – Ana Quiles**

Ana reviewed the information presented in the packet.

A. Next Meeting on April 26, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.

**19. Strategic Planning Committee- Ana Quiles for Leticia Garcia**

Ana reviewed the information presented in the packet.

A. Minutes of the February 6, 2023 Meeting

B. 2022-2026 Performance Contract Metrics Status

- C. 2nd Quarter Report on CIE/PIP Activities
- D. 2nd Quarter Report on New Vendorizations
- E. 2nd Quarter Report on Program Closures
- F. 2nd Quarter Report on Health & Safety
- G. Next Meeting is Scheduled on April 3, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

20. **Vendor Advisory Committee** – Suad Bisogno  
Suad reviewed the information presented in the packet.
- A. Minutes of the March 2, 2023 Meeting – *defer*
  - B. Committee will continue with virtual meetings for the remaining of FY22-23  
Suad shared that housing and employment are areas of the Strategic Plan for the VAC to make recommendations to the Board.
21. **Old Business/New Business**  
Ana reviewed the information 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, April 12, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.
  - B. Public Meeting Attendance
  - C. Virtual Cafecito Entre Nos, March 9th at 11:00 am
  - D. Virtual Alianza de Hombres, March 14th at 7:00 pm
  - E. Purchase of Services Data Information Meeting, March 16th at 12:00 p.m. and March 21st at 7:00 p.m.
  - F. Filipino Support Group, March 20th at 9:00 a.m.
  - G. Cultivar and Crecer, March 24th at 6:30 pm

Action Item Review

- A. Clarence to send out the email for outstanding Executive Director Evaluations
- B. Board members to complete the Board Dinner survey
- C. Ruth to discuss SDLAC Appointment of Jordan Feinstock as the Board Liaison with Chris Arroyo from State Council.

Public Input

George Alvarado shared that there is a sale at Happy Ace Hardware store.  
Jordan Feinstock announced that the Abilities Expo would be held. He proposed a possible sponsorship at next year's event.

23. **Adjournment**  
Ana Quiles, Board President, adjourned the meeting at 8:25 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 NLACRCCRC staff.*