

North Los Angeles County Regional Center  
**Executive Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**  
August 28, 2025

**Present:** Board of Trustees President Sharmila Brunjes, Vice President Juan Hernandez, Board Treasurer Anna Hurst, Board Secretary Curtis Wang, ARCA Representative Leticia Garcia, VAC Representative Jaklen Keshishyan – Committee Members

Executive Director Angela Pao-Johnson, Deputy Director Evelyn McOmie, Chief Financial Officer Vini Montague, Human Resources Director Betsy Monahan, Contract Administration & Privacy Manager Megan Mitchell, and Executive Administrative Assistant Lindsay Granger – Staff Members

George Alvarado – Board Member, Jacquie Colton – Board Member, Jeremy Sunderland – Board Member, Jason Taketa – Board Member, Laura Monge – Board Member, Leslie Rosas – Tierra del Sol, Ron Burkhardt – Newmark, Steve Kolsky – Newmark, Suzanne Lee – Newmark, Elizabeth Tom – DDS, Jacqueline Gaytan – DDS – Guests

**Absent:**

---

**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 5:05 p.m.

**2. COMMITTEE MEMBER ATTENDANCE**

Sharmila Brunjes reminded members to identify themselves prior to making a motion and reviewed the NLACRC Board of Trustees Civility Code.

**3. AGENDA**

**On a motion made by Juan Hernandez, seconded by Lety Garcia, it was resolved to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.**

**4. PUBLIC INPUT – AGENDA ITEMS**

There was no public input regarding the agenda.

**5. ANNUAL COMMITTEE ORIENTATION**

Angela Pao-Johnson reviewed the Bylaws pages pertaining to this committee.

Angela Pao-Johnson provided an overview of the Executive Finance Committee as outlined in the bylaws. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that the committee is composed of duly elected board officers and the immediate past president, if still serving as a trustee. The Board may also appoint up to three additional trustees. The President serves as the Chairperson, and each officer has one vote regardless of whether they hold multiple roles.

NLACRC Executive Finance Committee  
Meeting Minutes

Angela Pao-Johnson clarified that the Executive Finance Committee is empowered to handle urgent matters between Board meetings with the full authority of the Board, except in certain areas. These exceptions include amending the articles of incorporation or bylaws, filling vacancies on the Board or committees, appointing or removing the Executive Director, removing a trustee, amending or repealing certain Board resolutions, spending funds on contested trustee elections, and approving self-dealing transactions.

Angela Pao-Johnson stated that the Executive Finance Committee is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the strategic plan, with staff reporting progress updates. The committee also carries financial oversight responsibilities, including reviewing and monitoring contracts, budgets, expenditures, and taxes, and reporting expenditures to the Board. In addition, the Executive Finance Committee recommends personnel and administrative policies relating to hiring, salaries, and retention.

Because there is no separate Audit Committee, the Executive Finance Committee assumes those responsibilities. This includes reviewing the performance of the independent auditor, recommending retention or termination, negotiating compensation, conferring on financial matters, reviewing audit and management reports, and recommending acceptance to the Board. Angela Pao-Johnson noted that the committee also oversees the Executive Director's performance evaluation and contract negotiations. All business conducted on behalf of the Board must be reported at the next Board meeting.

Angela Pao-Johnson explained that special Executive Finance Committee meetings may be called by the President or two members of the committee. These meetings are held when the Board is not in session and must be noticed as special Board meetings. A quorum is established with a majority of Executive Finance Committee members.

Angela Pao-Johnson introduced the topic of the Board Audit section, explaining that it is a historical document originally used by the former Administrative Affairs Committee, dated September 12, 2018. The audit was intended to serve as a tool to ensure the committee was fulfilling its responsibilities, but it does not appear to have been used in recent years. Angela Pao-Johnson asked the committee to consider whether the audit should be revived, revised, or discontinued.

Sharmila Brunjes noted that the document may be outdated and similar in concept to a board self-evaluation, which the Board has been discussing implementing in a new format. Sharmila Brunjes expressed agreement with sunseting the old audit process. Juan Hernandez commented that if the audit has not been in use, it may no longer be necessary.

Jaklen Keshishyan asked whether eliminating the audit would leave the Board without any evaluation process. In response, Sharmila Brunjes confirmed that while there are multiple audits conducted at NLACRC, no specific audit of the Board itself has occurred since 2018.

Lety Garcia shared a different perspective, stating that the audit is important as a safeguard to ensure the committee fulfills its responsibilities and remains aligned with the bylaws. Lety Garcia suggested revising and updating the audit to reflect the combined structure of the Executive Finance Committee, rather than eliminating it. According to Lety Garcia, the audit also helps new Board members and officers understand the mission and responsibilities of the committee.

Angela Pao-Johnson clarified that while the audit document was created in 2018, its actual use remains unclear. Sharmila Brunjes added that past governance reviews revealed Board violations, raising concerns about whether the document was effective. Sharmila Brunjes emphasized the need for a clearer process, parameters, and accountability if the audit or an evaluation is to be meaningful.

Angela Pao-Johnson recommended forming a work group to review the audit document in conjunction with committee priorities. The work group could determine how the historical audit should be adapted for the current Executive Finance Committee and bring back a proposal for a revised approach. Sharmila

Brunjes supported the idea and suggested delaying the formation of the work group until after the upcoming Board elections on September 10 to allow new members the opportunity to participate.

The committee agreed that further review and development are needed, and appreciation was expressed to Lety Garcia for raising the importance of safeguards and transparency.

Angela Pao-Johnson reviewed the committee's meeting schedule for the upcoming fiscal year, noting that the schedule is also included in the meeting packet for reference.

Lety Garcia raised a concern regarding the July meeting schedule. Lety Garcia explained that although July is typically a dark month, the Executive Finance Committee traditionally meets at the end of July to prepare for the August Board meeting and set the agenda. In 2025, the meeting was instead held at the end of June, which did not follow the usual practice. Lety Garcia recommended that for the next year's calendar, the committee ensure a meeting is scheduled at the end of July, two weeks prior to the August Board meeting.

Sharmila Brunjes agreed with this recommendation and emphasized that the Executive Finance Committee does not need a meeting in June unless required by the Administrative Affairs component. Both Sharmila Brunjes and Lety Garcia confirmed this adjustment should be noted for the future schedule.

Angela Pao-Johnson added that the meeting packets also include action logs from the Administrative Affairs Committee and the Executive Committee. These logs were provided at the request of an Executive Finance Committee member to review the actions approved by both committees in the previous year. The logs cover February 2025 through June 2025.

## **6. CONSENT ITEMS**

Betsy Monahan deferred consent item E. Approval of Conflict Resolution Plan for Employee Zaira Lainez.

**On a motion made by Anna Hurst, seconded by Juan Hernandez, it was resolved to approve consent items A, B, C, and D. Motion carried.**

## **7. ACTION ITEMS**

### **7.1 Review and Approve Board Master Calendar for Fiscal Year 2025-2026**

Sharmila Brunjes introduced the Board Master Calendar for the 2025–2026 fiscal year, noting that it is included in the packet in list format rather than calendar format for ease of use. The document contains all meetings with their corresponding dates and times and will be pinned on OnBoard once finalized for easy access.

During review, Sharmila Brunjes pointed out that the previously discussed adjustment to the Executive Finance Committee schedule may require amending the calendar. Specifically, there was discussion with Lety Garcia about whether a June EFC meeting should remain on the calendar. Sharmila Brunjes suggested keeping the June meeting on the schedule and canceling it if it is not needed. Lety Garcia clarified that the adjustment relates to adding a July meeting, which would apply in the next fiscal year (2026).

#### **Action Item:**

- The Board Master Calendar for FY 2025–2026 was reviewed, with the note that the Executive Finance Committee meeting timing may require adjustment. The calendar was moved forward for approval with the understanding that future modifications may be made as needed.

**On a motion made by Lety Garcia, seconded by Anna Hurst, it was resolved to approve the Board Master Calendar for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Motion carried.**

## **7.2 Approval of Vendor to Conduct Year 2 Executive Director Evaluation**

Anna Hurst provided context on the Executive Director evaluation process and the work group's efforts. The work group reviewed last year's evaluation process and determined it lacked depth and actionable feedback. To improve the process, the group researched approaches that would include more robust feedback and a 360-degree element incorporating input from direct reports.

The group explored the feasibility of conducting the evaluation internally but concluded that the staffing hours and costs would be extensive. As a result, the group reviewed three external vendors and shared their proposals. Anna Hurst noted that the work group was especially positive about one vendor, Kinetic Flow, citing the balance between comprehensiveness and cost.

The work group will not be making a direct recommendation at this time. Instead, proposals are being turned over to Megan Mitchell, who will take ownership of the contracting process and solicit additional proposals in line with NLACRC's policy. The goal is to present vendor options to the full Board, potentially at the September Board meeting, though timing may require deferral to November.

Sharmila Brunjes commended the work group's efforts, noting the research conducted provided valuable insight into the Executive Director evaluation process. Lety Garcia raised a question regarding policy requirements to review three vendor proposals, which was confirmed as part of the process. Sharmila Brunjes explained that, due to time constraints, the September Board meeting is the target for presenting a vendor recommendation, but November remains a possible fallback if necessary.

**This item was deferred.**

## **7.3 POS Startup Contract – Contract Amendment – Brilliant Corners PL2186-999**

Vinnie Montague, CFO, presented a second amendment to an existing POS startup contract. The amendment increases the contract amount from \$750,000 to \$1,262,470 and reallocates the funding from fiscal year 2023 to fiscal year 2025, as the vendor did not complete the project in the original fiscal year. Both the funding increase and reallocation have been approved by DDS.

Anna Hurst moved to recommend the amendment to the full Board for approval, and Juan Hernandez seconded the motion. Anna Hurst confirmed that DDS had approved the funds and asked Vinnie Montague about the process and vendor reliability, to which he expressed confidence. Sharmila Brunjes noted that this contract has been ongoing for several years.

**On a motion made by Anna Hurst, seconded by Juan Hernandez, it was resolved to move the Contract Amendment – Brilliant Corners PL2186-999 to the full board for approval. Motion carried.**

## **8. CLOSED SESSION**

On a motion made by Juan Hernandez, seconded by Lety Garica closed session was entered at 5:43 p.m. to discuss real estate negotiations.

On a motion made by Juan Hernandez, seconded by Curtis Wang. It was resolved to exit closed session at 6:39 p.m.

A motion was made during closed session to recommend to the board to pursue real estate negotiations that were discussed.

## **9. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **9.1 Review Center's Insurance Coverage for FY2025-26**

Vinnie Montague introduced Simone Khanna from Gallagher Insurance, NLACRC's insurance broker, who provided a summary of the fiscal year 2026 insurance coverage secured with Board approval.

Simone Khanna explained that market conditions were volatile earlier in the year due to state law changes, natural disasters, and industry losses, raising concerns about renewal costs. A full marketing effort was conducted, resulting in significant improvements and savings across most lines of coverage.

Key outcomes included moving from NIAC to Hartford Insurance for general and professional liability, resulting in a premium savings of approximately \$107,000, stronger financial ratings, and increased aggregate abuse coverage from \$5 million to \$7 million. Directors and Officers coverage was shifted to Ascot, providing greater limits and saving an additional \$45,000. Property and crime coverage were also improved, with crime premiums reduced from \$18,000 to \$8,000 and deductibles significantly lowered.

The only major premium increases were in cyber insurance, due to an unresolved claim, and workers' compensation, driven by organizational growth and a higher loss ratio. Other coverages such as earthquake, fiduciary, employed lawyers, and workplace violence remained stable.

Overall, NLACRC secured broader coverage, improved financial strength, and substantial cost savings across multiple policies.

### **9.2 Review of Executive Finance Committee Deadlines**

Sharmila Brunjes presented a month-by-month hard-deadlines document (not a calendar) intended to keep the committee on track with required due dates. Sharmila Brunjes explained that Executive Director evaluation milestones are not listed for the current fiscal year because the process is in motion without a finalized plan/vendor; a separate ED Evaluation timeline document exists and outside vendor timelines will be incorporated once established. Documents will be pinned in OnBoard when available.

Lety Garcia requested that Executive Director evaluation and Negotiating Committee milestones be memorialized on the deadlines document (e.g., via an asterisk/note) to guide future boards and avoid missed dates, and suggested committee approval for changes to the deadlines list. Anna Hurst opposed requiring committee approval for each change, citing process slowdowns.

A discussion followed on whether the Board previously decided to replace the "critical calendar" with a reviewed (not voted) hard-deadlines list. Sharmila Brunjes recalled that decision; Lety Garcia stated no formal Board vote is recorded. Anna Hurst recalled prior counsel guidance that Board approval of a critical calendar is not required. Juan Hernandez noted the meeting was running over and urged moving on.

### **9.3 Contract Changes with DDS**

Vini Montague reported that, per prior Board request, only the pages reflecting changes from the previous year were included in the packet. The sole change in the FY 2026 B1 contract is the addition/clarification of definitions for "artificial intelligence" and "generative artificial intelligence." Vini Montague noted that last year's contract already required regional centers to notify DDS if generative AI is used; the new language primarily provides clearer definitions and references the State Administrative Manual.

### **9.4 Status Report on Credit Line and Cash Flow**

Vini Montague provided an update on the agency's credit line and cash flow. He reported that NLACRC successfully made it through June, July, and August without borrowing against its line of credit. With

Board approval, the line of credit with City National Bank was renewed and increased from \$70 million to \$80 million.

Additionally, City National Bank granted a seasonal fluctuation increase for the period of March 1, 2026, through June 30, 2026, to address potential higher cash flow risks at the end of the fiscal year. Vini Montague emphasized that, despite the availability of the expanded line of credit, no borrowing has been necessary to date.

## **9.5 Financial Reports**

Vini Montague presented the fiscal year 2025 financial report as of the July 18th state claim. The A2 allocation was approximately \$1.1 billion, with projected annual expenditures close to \$1.18 billion. Current projections show a \$37 million deficit in Purchase of Services (POS) and a \$1.5 million deficit in CPP, primarily due to the rate implementation effective January 2025, which significantly increased service provider costs. DDS has been informed of the projected deficits.

Supporting documents included a consolidated report, detailed allocations from DDS (operations and POS), CPP and LDC breakdowns, and specific project funding such as the Family Resource Center. The administrative vs. direct allocation report confirmed administrative expenses at 12.8%, below the statutory 15% cap.

Anna Hurst asked whether the DDS allocation for caseload reduction, previously renewed annually, was continued. Vini Montague confirmed it has been built into the FY 2026 B1 allocation, though final detail is pending.

For fiscal year 2026, the B1 (formerly preliminary) allocation is nearly \$1.1 billion. The first POS expenditure projection has not yet been completed, so no surplus or deficit is currently reported. The administrative vs. direct allocation for FY 2026 shows administrative costs at 11% year-to-date, also under the 15% statutory cap.

## **9.6 Board Budget vs. Actuals Report**

Vini Montague presented the Board Budget vs. Actual Report, noting that the budget had been approved in July and expenditures remain low given the early point in the fiscal year.

Angela Pao-Johnson inquired whether legal fees should be reduced in the budget, given amended contract language no longer requires legal attendance at board and committee meetings. Vini Montague responded that adjustments may be considered once the B2 allocation is finalized and contract changes become official, though some other line items may increase.

Lety Garcia raised concerns about whether the full board formally approved the budget. Vini Montague clarified that the Executive Finance Committee (EFC) approved the budget under emergency circumstances to meet DDS deadlines, and the decision was later presented to the full board for ratification. Sharmila Brunjes and Angela Pao-Johnson confirmed this process was consistent with legal guidance, and that the board ratified the decision via consent items.

A broader discussion followed on transparency and ensuring the board is included in budget approvals. Jeremy Sunderland emphasized the importance of allowing full board discussion without time pressure, while Juan Hernandez reminded the group to also remain mindful of staff and meeting time constraints.

## **9.7 POS Late Bill Report**

Vini Montague presented the POS Late Bill Report. Fiscal years remain open for three years to accommodate late payments. In the most recent claim, \$232,000 was paid for July 2024. Late bills

currently account for 34.9% of FY 2025 expenditures and 31.55% of FY 2024 expenditures.

#### **9.8 Quarterly Fees for PRMT and UAL**

Vini Montague presented the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter PRMT Fees Report and the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter UAL Fees Report. For FY 2025, quarterly PRMT account fees totaled \$177,000. For FY 2025, quarterly fees totaled \$55,000, with detailed explanations of the fees attached to the report.

#### **9.9 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Human Resources Report**

Betsy Monahan presented the Human Resources report for FY 2024–2025. In the fourth quarter, there were 78 new hires, 18 promotions, and 29 separations, resulting in a turnover rate of 3.42%. For the full fiscal year, there were 242 new hires, 52 promotions, and 86 separations, with a total turnover rate of 10.8%. This represented a 7% decrease from FY 2023–2024, when the turnover rate was 17.8%. The primary reasons for separations included personal decisions such as accepting other employment or not returning from leave, dissatisfaction with workload, one retirement, and nine performance-related separations.

#### **9.10 Monthly Whistleblower Log (July-August)**

Betsy Monahan presented the Whistleblower Log for July–August 2025. A total of 15 complaints were submitted or referred by DDS, of which 10 were closed and 5 remain active. She explained that the updated DDS-required format now identifies the type of reporter (if known), specifies the type of individual or organization the complaint is against, and records the duration of the investigation once closed. Two new items were added that were either amendments or related to prior complaints. An annual whistleblower report covering FY 2024–2025 will be presented at the next meeting.

#### **9.11 Annual Reporting of Program Closures**

Arshalous Garlanian presented the Annual Program Closure Report, noting 39 program closures during the year. Most closures were due to provider relocations or personal reasons, with some providers continuing services in other catchment areas.

#### **9.12 Semi-Annual Reporting of CIE/PIP**

Arshalous Garlanian reviewed the Semi-Annual Reporting of CIE/PIP. CIE incentive payments showed increases compared to the prior year across 30-day, 6-month, and 12-month benchmarks.

For the Paid Internship Program, there are currently 676 active authorizations, with 273 carried over from the prior year and 403 new authorizations. Of these, 552 have been paid. Year-to-date, North LA has reimbursed over \$3.4 million in wages and benefits for PIP participants, surpassing FY 2024 totals. A total of 462 unique consumers are participating in FY 2025, compared to 380 in the prior year.

Arshalous Garlanian highlighted that North LA is among the top regional centers statewide in expanding these employment programs. The recent hiring of one employment specialist has significantly improved outreach and collaboration with providers and the community, contributing to these successes.

#### **9.13 Semi-Annual Review of Performance Contract Metrics**

Angela Pao-Johnson reported that there were no new updates to present, as the most recent performance contract data had already been reviewed publicly in June. Two meetings were held the previous day regarding ongoing performance contract activities, but no new data has been provided by DDS.

Lety Garcia commended Angela Pao-Johnson for her strong presentation at the recent public meeting, noting her effective representation of North LA despite not feeling well.

#### **10. CENTER OPERATIONS**

Angela Pao-Johnson shared updates and highlights with the committee. She reported meeting with Congressman Whiteside (District 27) to discuss federal advocacy efforts, including the Long-Term Care Workforce Support Act and Medicaid work requirement exemptions. She also noted Congressman Whiteside may participate in a future NLACRC podcast.

Angela Pao-Johnson highlighted staffing progress, reporting that Antelope Valley staffing improved from 68.84% of open requisitions in August 2024 to 88.48% in July 2025, marking a 20% increase.

Legislative updates included Assembly Bill 2423, which requires DDS to update provider rates every two years, though funding is not guaranteed, and Assembly Bill 1147, which revises grievance procedures to streamline complaint avenues and ensure better resolution for individuals.

Angela Pao-Johnson also addressed Individual Program Plan (IPP) surveys, noting the goal is a 15% return rate with 85% satisfaction. Current participation is only 1.68%, and she encouraged improvement. Evelyn McOmie confirmed that survey access is available via a QR code on the IPP signature page and outlined upcoming staff training and outreach efforts to increase awareness and completion.

Additional updates included recognition of Tri-Counties Regional Center's partnership with Public Pixels, which produced educational videos and consumer-led projects on home and community-based services. NLACRC hopes to partner in future initiatives. Angela also highlighted community outreach, including participation in Assemblywoman Pilar Schiavo's Youth and Family Festival in Santa Clarita.

#### **11. BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEMS/ACTION ITEMS**

- Board Support will update the Master Calendar to add an EFC meeting in July for the following fiscal year and keep the June meeting on the calendar as an option.
- Board Support will reach out to Megan Mitchell about board coaching.
- Board Support will reach out to board members about forming a workgroup after the September board meeting for the ED Evaluation year 2 vendor.
- Committee members will further consider the appropriate next steps for the ED Evaluation year 2 vendor.
- Board Support will send out an email to the full board to form a workgroup to address the line item commentary and review the board policies draft after the September 10<sup>th</sup> board meeting.
- Contract Amendment – Brilliant Corners PL2186-999 to be added to the September board meeting agenda.
- Board Support will reach out to the committee members after the board meeting on September 10<sup>th</sup> to form a workgroup after the September board meeting to develop the committee priorities, informed by previous audit questions and aligned with retreat outcomes and fiscal year goals.
- Sharmila Brunjes will double-check governance procedures regarding whether the board should vote on eliminating the critical calendar.
- Board support will add voting on the critical calendar to the September board meeting agenda.
- Flyers for the Family Expos will be distributed.

#### **12. ANNOUNCEMENTS / PUBLIC INPUT / INFORMATION ITEMS**



Evelyn McOmie announced two upcoming Family Expos: Antelope Valley on September 27, 2025. San Fernando Valley on October 12, 2025 at Cal State Northridge.

Both events will feature vendors, community-based organizations, panel presentations, a dance for individuals served, and a parent lounge.

George Alvarado shared that he has been working with the San Diego Regional Center and ARCA on the Blue Envelope Program, aimed at supporting the community.

Juan Hernandez clarified that his earlier comments were intended to help keep the meeting on schedule, not to restrict discussion. He emphasized respect for open dialogue but noted concerns about excessively long meetings.

Sharmila Brunjes acknowledged the importance of balancing open discussion with efficiency, citing DDS feedback on long meetings. She encouraged ongoing transparency and collaboration.

George Alvarado briefly displayed materials related to his Blue Envelope work, which will be shared more fully once finalized.

**13. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Executive Finance Committee will be November 20, 2025 at 6:05 p.m.

**14. ADJOURNMENT**

**It was agreed that there was no further business to transact; the meeting closed at 8:02 p.m.**

**DISCLAIMER**

The above minutes 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.



Submitted by:  
Lindsay Granger  
Executive Administrative Assistant

**Action Items**

- Sharmila Brunjes will **verify procedures and prior decisions** (with counsel as needed) and, if appropriate, **place an item on the September Board agenda** to determine whether to retire the critical calendar and use a reviewed (non-voting) hard-deadlines document.
- Add a **note/asterisk** to the deadlines document to memorialize that ED Evaluation and Negotiating Committee milestones must be included in future cycles once timelines are set.
- No vote taken on the deadlines document at this meeting.

**Action Item:**

The item was deferred.  
Megan Mitchell will take  
over the contracting

NLACRC Executive Finance Committee  
Meeting Minutes

process, review vendor proposals, and present options to the full Board, ideally by September 2025 or, if delayed, by November 2025

**Action Item:**

- Adjust next year's calendar to ensure the Executive Finance Committee meets at the end of July, two weeks prior to the August Board meeting, rather than at the end of June.

**Action Items:**

- A work group will be convened after the September 10 Board elections to review the Board Audit document and committee priorities.
- The work group will develop recommendations for a revised audit or evaluation process tailored to the Executive Finance Committee's current structure and responsibilities.

**ACTION:** Board Support will make the necessary corrections to the Board Master calendar.