

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Consumer Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes (Via Zoom)
September 4, 2025

Present: Juan Hernandez, Jennifer Koster, Bill Abramson, George Alvarado, Bill Abramson, Elena Tiffany– **Committee Members**

Leslie Rosas, Erica Rodriguez, Whitney Jarquin - **Guests**

Santos Rodriguez, Jose Rodriguez, Evelyn McOmie, Chris Whitlock, Lindsay Granger – **Staff**

Absent: Pam Aiona, Destry Walker

1. Call to Order & Introductions

- A. Committee Chair and Board of Trustees Vice President, Juan Hernandez called the meeting to order at 5:16 pm.

2. Agenda

An amendment was made to the agenda to include the OCRA Presentation on Where to Live before Committee Business.

M/S/C (Jennifer Koster/George Alvarado) motioned to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

3. Public Input

There was no public input.

4. Consent Items

- A. Approval of Minutes from August 6, 2025 Meeting

M/S/C (Juan Hernandez/Bill Abrahamson) motioned to accept the minutes from the August 6, 2025 meeting. Motion carried.

Elena Tiffany abstained.

5. Action Items

- A. Vote to Elect Committee Chair for Fiscal Year 2025-26

Jose Rodriguez presented the election for the Consumer Advisory Committee Chair for fiscal year 2025-26. Nominations from the floor included: Juan Hernandez, George Alvarado, and Elena Tiffany.

Jose Rodriguez opened the discussion by inviting members interested in serving as Chair for FY 2025–2026 to nominate themselves. Members were instructed to submit nominations to Lindsay Granger, Board Support.

Elena Tiffany, Juan Hernandez, and George Alvarado each expressed interest in being nominated for Chair. Bill Abramson declined due to schedule conflicts. Jennifer was present but did not nominate herself.

The group discussed how to conduct the vote. Options included a verbal “call-out” vote, a private Microsoft Forms vote, or typing votes in the Zoom chat. After discussion, the committee agreed to use the chat method for clarity and ease of counting.

To simplify the process, candidates were assigned numbers as follows:

- 1 – Elena Tiffany
- 2 – Juan Hernandez
- 3 – George Alvarado

Voting was then prepared to proceed using these assigned numbers in the chat.

The committee also agreed that votes would be sent privately to Lindsay Granger for confidentiality. Members confirmed the candidate numbering before beginning the vote. Bill Abrahamson suggested allowing brief speeches, but the group decided to proceed directly to voting due to time constraints and an upcoming presentation.

Votes were submitted privately to Lindsay. Jennifer Koster confirmed her vote verbally and via chat, selecting candidate number 2 (Juan Hernandez). The initial vote resulted in a tie between Juan Hernandez and George Alvarado. A runoff vote was held between those two candidates, with members voting again—this time using names instead of numbers for clarity.

After the runoff vote, Lindsay announced that a majority had been reached and that Juan Hernandez would continue to serve as Chair. Members congratulated Juan Hernandez on his re-election.

Following the Chair election, the group proceeded to vote for Alternate Chair. Juan Hernandez opened the nominations, and George Alvarado, Jennifer Koster, and Elena Tiffany each volunteered. Members were instructed to send their votes privately to Board Support by typing the candidate’s name in the

chat.

After votes were submitted and confirmed, Board Support announced that Elena Tiffany received the majority vote and would serve as Alternate Chair. The group congratulated Elena Tiffany on her election.

ACTION: The committee list will be updated to reflect Elena Tiffany as the alternate chair for the Consumer Advisory Committee.

B. Vote on Changing Meeting Date & Time

Juan Hernandez opened discussion regarding the official meeting day and time, noting the need for a formal vote. Members discussed maintaining the first Thursdays of the month at 5:00 p.m. as the new standing meeting time.

Members expressed general agreement with this schedule. The group agreed that, if needed, they could adjust the January meeting date at the November session to accommodate any conflicts. After confirming no major objections, Juan Hernandez requested a formal vote.

The motion to approve Thursdays at 5:00 p.m. as the regular meeting time was unanimously supported by all members present.

M/S/C (Juan Hernandez/Jennifer Koster) motioned to approve having the CAC meetings on the first Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried.

6. Committee Business

Before discussing Committee Business, Whitney Jarquin, Assistant Clients Rights Advocate and Erica Rodriguez, Clients Rights Advocate, gave a presentation on OCRA's Leading Your Own Meeting.

A. Discuss Topics for Upcoming CAC Open Conversations

Chris Whitlock proposed aligning the Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC)'s open discussion topics with the training calendar to create more meaningful and focused dialogue. He suggested that before each scheduled training, the group could meet to discuss related issues and develop questions to share with presenters in advance, allowing presenters to better tailor their materials and responses.

Juan Hernandez, Jose Rodriguez, Elena Tiffany, and Bill Abramson discussed how this approach could work in practice. Jose Rodriguez expressed concern that alternating between discussion and presentation months might reduce the

number of presentations the committee could hold each year. Elena Tiffany clarified that the intention was not to eliminate presentations but to use discussions to help shape and focus upcoming presentations.

Juan Hernandez noted that while there is an understanding that each meeting should include a presentation, this is not a requirement in the bylaws. The group agreed to pilot Chris Whitlock's proposed approach to see how it functions and make adjustments if necessary.

Chris Whitlock emphasized that this format would allow CAC members to have a stronger voice and more ownership over meeting content, potentially leading to deeper follow-up discussions or future trainings. The committee discussed potential topics, including In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) and pet care, particularly as it relates to service animals.

Lindsay Granger provided clarification on the training calendar, noting that the committee will be dark in October due to the Board's approved schedule, with a training presentation planned for November and no meetings in December. January will be the next available month for open discussion.

After further discussion, the committee agreed that **Transportation** will be the next open discussion topic to take place at the next available meeting without a scheduled presentation.

ACTION: Chris Whitlock will begin working on putting together the open conversation topic on Transportation for the January CAC meeting.

B. Upcoming Site Visits

Juan Hernandez and Jose Rodriguez provided an update on CAC vendor site visits. Recent visits to two Valley Village facilities in Winnetka were well received.

Jose Rodriguez shared that the next site visit will be to Valley Village in Sunland, tentatively planned for November, pending confirmation. Jose Rodriguez also mentioned that TASK has expressed interest in hosting a visit and will be reaching out to coordinate the date. Attendance will be optional for CAC members, depending on individual availability and location convenience.

Elena Tiffany noted that Sunland is a difficult area for her to reach, and Jose Rodriguez said he would work with the Public Information and Board Support teams to explore transportation or assistance options if needed.

The committee was reminded that October will be dark per the Board's schedule. The next CAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 6,

from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. A presentation for that meeting is still pending confirmation, and members will be notified once details are finalized.

Jose Rodriguez will confirm the November Sunland visit date with Valley Village, reach out to TASK to coordinate a visit, and circulate the proposed dates to the CAC. Board Support and the Public Information team will assist with any logistical needs, and members should look out for email updates regarding upcoming site visits and presentations.

C. CAC Upcoming Training Calendar

Jose Rodriguez reported that the training for the current meeting was changed from “Where to Live” to “Leading Your Meeting.” He shared that the new presentation was well-received and provided helpful guidance on preparing for meetings such as Individual Program Plan (IPP) meetings. Jose Rodriguez explained that the “Where to Live” topic had already been covered under “Living in the Community,” and much of the information would have been repetitive.

For November, the upcoming training will be “Being My Own Boss,” presented by OCRA, focusing on micro-enterprises and how to start a small business.

For December, the committee will hold an informal holiday meeting.

From January through May, there are currently no scheduled trainings. Lindsay Granger confirmed that January will feature the first open discussion topic on Transportation, aligning with the committee’s new discussion-based approach.

Jose Rodriguez added that he contacted the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) to coordinate future presentations based on topics that committee members expressed interest in. He is waiting for their response and will update the group once availability is confirmed.

7. **Action Items**

- Once details are finalized for upcoming site visits, an email will be sent to CAC members to identify who would like to participate via Zoom.
- The next confirmed training is “Being My Own Boss” (OCRA) in November. Jose Rodriguez will follow up on the potential October training.
- The open discussion topic on Transportation will be added to the January agenda. The CAC meeting schedule will officially change to the first Thursday of each month from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.

8. Announcements/Information/Public Input

Jose Rodriguez and Santos Rodriguez announced the “Inclusion in Action” workshop on October 7 at the San Fernando office with Zoom access and required registration. Lindsay Granger will share flyers in the chat and by email. Jose Rodriguez highlighted several community events: a Pacoima Community Resource & Back-to-School Fair (registration only needed for backpacks); the Jewish LA Special Needs Trust & Services Adult Disability Resource Fair on September 14 at 1300 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles (registration required); a Housing Resource Fair at the California Endowment in Downtown Los Angeles (10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.); Assemblymember Nury Martinez’s LIDA Community Health Fair on October 18 at Van Nuys & Woodman (Walgreens); and a Fall Senior Health Fair on October 25 (10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.) at the Wilkinson Center. Jose Rodriguez will email a consolidated packet of all event flyers.

The committee was informed about NLACRC’s Empower Expo: Resource Fair for All Abilities—September 27 in Lancaster and October 12 at CSUN—featuring vendors, HCBS-themed information, on-site surveys, an afternoon dance for adults (18+) and a parent lounge. In response to accessibility feedback from Juan Hernandez and Elena Tiffany about QR-only registration, it was noted that clickable links will be provided by email, and some third-party flyers may not originate from NLACRC.

During public input, Chris Whitlock announced an upcoming Legislative Virtual Town Hall this fall. CAC members will vote on discussion topics via a short survey (to be sent with Board Support), with potential participants including Congressional and State Assembly members. Proposed themes include housing, medical/Medi-Cal, public transportation, and workforce development. The committee expressed support for this approach.

Additional public input: George Alvarado shared he is forming an **e-bike club** and is seeking members; Juan Hernandez expressed interest. Bill Abramson departed early and requested all materials by email. The chair proceeded to adjourn after confirming there were no further comments.

8. Adjournment

Juan Hernandez adjourned the meeting at 6:33 pm

Submitted by:
Lindsay Granger
Executive Administrative Assistant