

**NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL CENTER (NLACRC)  
9200 OAKDALE AVENUE, SUITE 100  
CHATSWORTH, CA 91311**

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
ZOOM  
FEBRUARY 11, 2026 6:00 P.M.**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:**

Sharmila Brunjes (President), Juan Hernandez (Vice President), Anna Hurst (Treasurer), Curtis Wang (Secretary), Leticia Garcia (ARCA Rep), Alex Kopilevich (VAC Chair), George Alvarado, Cathy Blin, Nicholas Abrahms, Jacquie Colton, Jason Taketa, Jeremy Sunderland, Laura Monge, Jennifer Koster

**ABSENT:**

**STAFF:**

Angela Pao-Johnson - Executive Director, Evelyn McOmie – Deputy Director, Vini Montague – Chief Financial Officer, Silvia Renteria-Haro, Donna Rensch, Sarah Yap, Arezo Abedi, Lindsay Granger, Megan Mitchell, Sheila King

**GUESTS:**

Xochitl Gonzalez – DDS, Jaqueline Gaytan – DDS, Marianita

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**1. INTRODUCTIONS AND CALL TO ORDER**

Vice President Juan Hernandez, asked for a volunteer to read the opening statement. Alex Kopilevich volunteered and proceeded to read NLACRC’s Mission and Vision statements. Alex also reminded attendees to state their name when making or seconding a motion to assist staff with accurate minute-taking.

Alex reviewed meeting guidelines, noting that public comment at the beginning of the meeting is reserved for agenda items only, with general public input scheduled at the conclusion of the meeting. Alex also referenced the NLACRC Board of Trustees Civility Code, reminding attendees to engage respectfully and support open and inclusive discussion. Following these remarks, the meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

**2. IMPACT STORY FROM INDIVIDUAL SERVED**

Angela Pao-Johnson shared a video from the parent, Samuel, from individual served Sydney.

**3. BOARD MEMBER ATTENDANCE/QUORUM**

Board members were confirmed in attendance on Zoom.

**4. AGENDA – APPROVAL**

**On a motion made by George Alvarado, seconded by Board Secretary Curtis Wang, it was resolved to approve the agenda. Motion carried.**

**5. PUBLIC INPUT & COMMENTS—RESERVED FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

There was no public input.

**6. CONSENT ITEMS**

Juan Hernandez listed the consent items as approval of the Board of Trustees meeting minutes from January 14, 2026. Juan Hernandez asked if there was any discussion.

**On a motion made by George Alvarado, seconded by Curtis Wang, it was resolved to approve the meeting minutes from the January 14, 2026, board meeting. Motion carried.**

**7. CLOSED SESSION**

Juan Hernandez announced the Board would move into closed session.

**On a motion made by George Alvarado, seconded by Curtis Wang, board entered closed session at 6:08 p.m. Motion carried.**

During closed session a motion was made about real estate negotiations.

Another motion was made about personnel.

**Absent objection the board exited closed session at 7:15 p.m. Motion carried.**

**8. ACTION ITEMS**

**8.1 Approval of Amended Board Budget**

Juan Hernandez introduced the action item regarding approval of the amended Board Budget. Vini Montague presented the proposed revisions, noting that the changes were highlighted in red and had previously been reviewed by the Executive Finance Committee (EFC), which recommended the item be brought to the Board for approval.

Vini explained that the revision included de-allocating **\$100,000** from the legal services budget, as legal counsel would no longer attend all Board and committee meetings. A remaining **\$42,000** would be retained for legal consultation as needed. Additional adjustments were also proposed to reallocate funds between budget line items to address current and anticipated needs.

Board President Sharmila Brunjes clarified that the item had already been moved forward by the Executive Finance Committee, so a second was not required.

**On a motion made by George Alvarado, it was resolved to approve the amended board budget. As this came from the Executive Finance Committee, only a motion was required. Motion carried.**

**8.2 Approval of POS CPP Startup Contract**

a. **Homes & Hope, LLC – PL2603-999**

Vini Montague, Chief Financial Officer, presented a Purchase of Services startup funding contract for Homes and Hope, noting that the item had previously been reviewed by the Executive Finance Committee and moved forward to the Board for approval.

The contract supports a multi-family housing development in Palmdale consisting of 160 units. The developer will dedicate 11 units for low-income individuals served by regional centers, including three one-bedroom units and eight two-bedroom units. The contract provides up to \$1.4 million in funding for the units under a 55-year agreement.

**On a motion made by George Alvarado, seconded by Curtis Wang, it was resolved to approve the Purchase of Services contract for Homes and Hope, LLC – PL2603-999. Motion carried.**

b. **Brilliant Corners – PL2186-999**

Vini Montague presented a third amendment to the Brilliant Corners contract, noting that the item had not been presented to the Executive Finance Committee due to timing, as DDS approval of the funding increase was received on January 29, 2026.

Vini explained that the amendment increases the maximum funding amount by \$14,480 to support additional, unanticipated renovations, including installation of a handrail, construction of a pony wall, removal of a fireplace, installation of a fence topper to restrict access to a power pole, and installation of a second delayed egress gate. The amendment revises the maximum contract amount to \$1,276,950.

**On a motion made by Curtis Wang, seconded by Jeremy Sunderland, it was resolved to approve the Brilliant Corners – PL2186-999 contract. Motion carried.**

Laura Monge abstained.

**8.3 Approval of Operations Contract – Newmark**

Juan Hernandez introduced the action item regarding approval of an operations contract with Newmark, NLACRC's commercial real estate broker. Vini Montague explained that NLACRC currently has a \$82,300 contract with Newmark for workplace strategy services and is proposing a second contract for construction project management services in the amount of \$177,500. The combined total of both contracts would be \$259,800.

Vini Montague noted that the contract had been reviewed by the Executive Finance Committee, which recommended it to the Board for approval. The proposed agreement is a one-year contract covering November 1, 2025 through October 31, 2026.

**On a motion made by Jeremy Sunderland, it was resolved to approve the operations contract with Newmark. As this came from the Executive Finance Committee, only a motion was required. Motion carried.**

**8.4 Approval of Laptop Purchases for NLACRC Operations**

Juan Hernandez introduced the action item regarding approval of laptop purchases for NLACRC operations. Vini Montague presented the proposal, explaining that the item was brought directly to the Board due to timing and anticipated price increases in computer

equipment. Vini Montague also noted that recent legal guidance indicates that large equipment purchases made through purchase orders should be presented to the Board for approval.

Vini Montague reported that NLACRC currently has approximately 750 laptops that are four years or older, which exceeds the recommended replacement cycle and has already resulted in compatibility and support issues. Due to anticipated shortages in memory components and increased demand driven by artificial intelligence infrastructure, industry experts expect laptop prices to increase by 15–20% or more. To address aging equipment and avoid anticipated price increases, staff proposed purchasing 750 Lenovo ThinkPad laptops through vendor CPAC for \$1,674,676.88. CPAC would also provide additional services, including imaging and asset tagging of the laptops prior to deployment.

Angela Pao-Johnson provided additional context regarding the vendor selection and contract structure. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that while staff considered contracting directly with Lenovo, doing so would likely have resulted in only a one-year warranty. Angela Pao-Johnson noted that purchasing through CPAC provides a three-year warranty, along with pre-configured laptops that include required software and organizational specifications. Angela Pao-Johnson also noted that IT evaluated comparable laptops from other manufacturers, including Dell, but determined that Lenovo better met NLACRC's operational needs and pricing considerations.

Board members discussed pricing, vendor selection, warranty terms, and comparisons with other regional centers. Vini Montague confirmed that the purchase falls within existing budget parameters.

**On a motion made by Curtis Wang, seconded by Jennifer Koster, it was resolved to approve the laptop purchases for NLACRC Operations. Motion carried.**

**Abstain: Alex Kopilevich, George Alvarado, and Laura Monge abstain.**

## **8.5 Approval and Adoption of Updated Board Policies**

Juan Hernandez introduced the action item regarding approval and adoption of updated Board policies. Sharmila Brunjes explained that the 14 policies included in the Board packet were updated through collaboration between legal counsel and the Board during four policy workgroup meetings held in the fourth quarter of 2025.

Sharmila Brunjes noted that the policies were originally reviewed with the intention of making the language more accessible to the community; however, legal counsel advised maintaining formal policy language to ensure clarity and transparency. As a result, the Board moved forward with submitting the policies in their current form to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) for review. Once DDS completes its review, any required revisions will be made and the policies will return to the Board for final approval before being posted publicly on the NLACRC website. Sharmila Brunjes also noted that nine policies had previously been submitted to DDS, and approximately 20 policies in total will eventually return to the Board for final review and posting. Sharmila Brunjes emphasized the importance of completing the process promptly to support the Board's required training schedule.

Lety Garcia seconded the motion and requested that the Board receive a comprehensive list of policies that were converted to guidelines and procedures, as well as those that were eliminated, for transparency. Lety Garcia also asked about the Board Recruitment Policy referenced in the training policy. Angela Pao-Johnson confirmed that staff could provide the requested lists at the next Board meeting. Sharmila Brunjes clarified that the Board Recruitment Policy had already been submitted to DDS as part of the earlier group of policies.

**With no further discussion, on a motion made by Sharmila Brunjes, seconded by Lety Garcia, it was resolved to approve the updated board policies to send to DDS. Motion carried.**

ACTION: Staff will provide the board of trustees with a list of policies.

## **9. BOARD BUSINESS**

### **9.1 Employee Satisfaction Survey Results**

Juan Hernandez introduced the informational item regarding the Employee Satisfaction Survey. Angela Pao-Johnson presented the results of the survey, which was conducted in October 2025 using the third-party platform WorkTango. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that the survey included 53 questions, with 51 questions consistent with the 2024 survey to allow for year-over-year comparison. Angela Pao-Johnson also noted that 34% of employees participated in the survey.

Angela Pao-Johnson reported that all 14 survey factor areas showed improvement from 2024. Angela Pao-Johnson highlighted notable gains in action (+12.6%), senior leadership (+16.7%), and team collaboration (+13.8%). Additional improvements were reported in career growth (61% favorability, +10.4%), direct manager (78% favorability, +5%), diversity, equity, and inclusion (76% favorability, +4.3%), compensation and benefits (32% favorability, +8.2%), recognition (57% favorability, +10.8%), trust and safety (71% favorability, +6.9%), learning and development (68% favorability, +7.6%), enablement (68% favorability, +5%), company outlook (64% favorability, +10.5%), and goals and alignment (81% favorability, +5.2%).

During Board discussion, Jennifer Koster asked about employee retention efforts and whether educational support remains available to staff. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that NLACRC continues to support retention through longevity pay, training opportunities, supervisor responsiveness, culture-building efforts, and quarterly staff meetings across all office locations. Angela Pao-Johnson also noted that while the prior tuition reimbursement program is no longer available due to funding limitations, staff may still access 40 hours of paid education time annually for work-related learning opportunities.

Angela Pao-Johnson further shared that Executive Leadership Team members regularly visit all office locations to meet with employees, provide updates on organizational initiatives, and gather direct feedback. Angela Pao-Johnson also noted that NLACRC is exploring additional legislative engagement opportunities, including a proposed “Policies and Pastry” format to connect with elected officials on issues affecting the organization and the community.

Anna Hurst and Lety Garcia commended Angela Pao-Johnson and staff for the positive survey results and recognized the significant work undertaken to improve employee culture, engagement, and responsiveness to staff feedback. Angela Pao-Johnson thanked the leadership team and staff for their continued efforts and emphasized the importance of listening sessions and ongoing improvement.

In response to a follow-up question from Lety Garcia, Angela Pao-Johnson stated that the Individual and Family Survey will be presented at the next Board meeting by Ami Sullivan.

### **9.2 Board Training Logistics**

Juan Hernandez introduced the item regarding Board Training Logistics, and Jane Harrington of Leading Resources addressed the Board. Jane Harrington introduced herself and explained

that Leading Resources supports boards in the areas of leadership, governance, strategic planning, and board effectiveness, including work with other regional centers.

Jane Harrington outlined the upcoming Board development process, which will begin with an anonymous Board self-assessment to gather feedback on Board effectiveness and identify areas where members may want additional support or training. Jane Harrington explained that the assessment results will be followed by individual virtual interviews with Board members to further discuss Board experience, training needs, and opportunities for improvement.

Jane Harrington stated that the information gathered through the assessment and interviews will be used to develop a Board training plan for the coming year, including recommended training topics and areas of focus. Jane Harrington also noted that one-on-one coaching opportunities will be available to Board members to provide individualized support related to engagement, participation, decision-making, conflict resolution, and understanding Board roles and responsibilities.

Jane Harrington advised that Board members would be receiving an email shortly with additional information, with the goal of launching the assessment in February. Jane Harrington then concluded the presentation and thanked the Board for its service.

### **9.3 Board Retreat**

Sharmila Brunjes thanked Jane Harrington for the upcoming Board coaching and governance support and expressed enthusiasm about collaborating with Leading Resources. Sharmila Brunjes then informed the Board that the annual Board Retreat is scheduled for May 2026, and Board Support will soon organize a workgroup to begin planning the retreat.

Sharmila Brunjes explained that the retreat typically provides an opportunity for focused training, leadership development, and team building for the Board. Sharmila Brunjes also noted that the Fiscal Year 2024–2025 retreat had been postponed and held in September 2025, and that the Board is now returning to its regular retreat schedule by holding the next retreat in May.

Sharmila Brunjes stated that the retreat planning workgroup will also review the Board's current committee structure, meeting schedule, and overall workload, and consider whether adjustments to the Board calendar may be beneficial as the Board plans for the next fiscal year beginning in July.

Sharmila Brunjes encouraged Board members to participate in the planning workgroup and noted that Board Support will email all members with information and scheduling options for participation.

Before concluding, Sharmila Brunjes thanked Juan Hernandez for presiding over the meeting and acknowledged the effort required to lead the meeting on short notice.

## **10. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Juan Hernandez introduced the Executive Director's Report, and Angela Pao-Johnson highlighted several organizational updates and accomplishments. Angela Pao-Johnson reported significant improvements in recruitment efficiency, noting that the average time from application submission to accepted offer had improved from 717 days to 75 days overall, with service coordinator recruitment reduced to 51 days. Angela Pao-Johnson noted that staff have improved candidate communication, established timelines for each stage of the hiring process, and are approaching the industry standard of 45 days for organizations of similar size.

Angela Pao-Johnson also recognized the Lanterman Intake Department for achieving 100% compliance with intake timelines during a recent reporting period, compared to a statewide average of 61.5%, and commended the department for its sustained high performance.

Angela Pao-Johnson then provided updates on several DDS and proposed trailer bill items, including upcoming changes related to remote services, the Self-Determination Program, the Life Outcomes Improvement System (LOIS), regional center oversight, board composition and training requirements, contract approval thresholds, grievance procedures, and employment services alignment. Angela Pao-Johnson clarified during Board discussion that the Self-Determination Program will continue and is not being phased out. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that the funding ending after this fiscal year applies specifically to nonprofit training funds for Local Volunteer Advisory Committees, not to the Self-Determination Program itself, and confirmed that Local Volunteer Advisory Committees and other committees, such as the Consumer Advisory Committee and Executive Advisory Committee, will continue.

Angela Pao-Johnson reported that NLACRC currently has 932 filled positions and is serving approximately 41,400 individuals. Angela Pao-Johnson also highlighted recent community outreach activities, including attendance at the Armenian Parent Circle of Support holiday event, where approximately 23 families participated. Angela Pao-Johnson described the event as a meaningful opportunity to connect with families and individuals served.

In addition, outreach staff shared information regarding the Blue Mama Workshop, which focused on applying positive psychology principles to support parents, reduce stress, and increase awareness of child development and Early Start services. Staff noted that the workshop also strengthened community partnerships and expanded outreach to families with young children.

Angela Pao-Johnson concluded the report by noting upcoming events for Board awareness. Following the report, the Board confirmed there were no further questions, and the meeting moved to public comment, during which no public comments were received.

## **11. PUBLIC INPUT & COMMENTS**

During public comment, Laura Monge expressed appreciation for the work of the Board, Executive Director Angela Pao-Johnson, and Board Support staff. Laura Monge shared a concern regarding the limited programs and resources available for individuals ages 22 and older in the Antelope Valley, and encouraged the organization to consider strategies to increase awareness and expand services for this age group. Angela Pao-Johnson acknowledged the comment and noted that the feedback would be taken into consideration.

Lety Garcia added that NLACRC recently hired an Aging Specialist and suggested inviting the staff member to a future Board meeting to present on available resources and plans for supporting adults with developmental disabilities, particularly individuals age 22 and older.

Jon Francis, a member of the Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (LVAC), thanked the Board and NLACRC leadership for the opportunity to provide comments and expressed appreciation for the efforts being made to support the community. Jon Francis encouraged continued collaboration among Board members, leadership, and stakeholders in addressing issues impacting individuals served and their families.

Jon Francis also referenced the proposed change discussed during the Executive Director's report regarding the State Council on Developmental Disabilities potentially becoming the primary provider for Self-Determination Program orientations. Jon Francis asked how this

transition might affect individuals who currently receive orientation or support through NLACRC and whether there could be any negative impacts during the transition process. Jon Francis concluded by thanking the Board and leadership for their work and engagement.

An NLACRC staff member shared appreciation for the Board and Executive Director Angela Pao-Johnson, noting significant improvements in staff morale and organizational culture over the past several years. The staff member highlighted the positive impact of leadership in the Antelope Valley office, including opportunities for direct engagement with leadership through forums and meetings, and expressed gratitude for the continued efforts to support staff and strengthen the workplace environment.

Jennifer Koster expressed appreciation to Executive Director Angela Pao-Johnson, Board Support staff, and the broader NLACRC team for their efforts in supporting the organization and its work. Jennifer Koster also asked whether funding for training programs for nonprofit organizations, such as those previously provided to support training initiatives, might be reconsidered if funding becomes available in the future.

Angela Pao-Johnson responded that advocating for the return of such funding is something the organization can continue to support through ongoing advocacy efforts.

## **12. SELF-DETERMINATION PROGRAM (SDP) REPORT**

Juan Hernandez provided a brief update on the SDLVAC Liaison Report, noting that recent meetings have been productive. Juan Hernandez highlighted key discussion points from the committee, while noting that the full report is included in the Board packet.

Juan Hernandez shared that committee members raised concerns regarding the potential impact of proposed budget reductions and discussed the possibility of drafting a letter to the Governor to oppose potential budget cuts affecting the program.

Juan Hernandez also noted that the committee expressed interest in receiving additional information to better understand the issue and its potential impact. It was reported that additional information will be presented at a future meeting to provide further clarification.

Silvia Renteria-Haro presented the Self-Determination Program (SDP) Implementation Report. As of February 1, there were 707 individuals participating in the Self-Determination Program, with 20 new transitions into the program during the reporting period.

Silvia Renteria-Haro also reported continued interest in the program, noting that 21 individuals attended the orientation in English and one individual attended the orientation in Spanish during the reporting period. Efforts are ongoing to increase participation in Spanish-language orientations.

Year-to-date in 2026, there have been 38 transitions into the program. Participation by office location includes 435 individuals in the San Fernando Valley, 98 in the Antelope Valley, and 174 in the Santa Clarita Valley. Silvia Renteria-Haro clarified that transitions refer to individuals who have completed the process and formally entered the Self-Determination Program.

The next SDP meeting was noted to be scheduled for February 19th.

## **13. ITEMS 14-20**

The Board received the following committee reports for information:

- Association of Regional Center Agencies presented by Lety Garcia.

Lety Garcia reported on the January ARCA meeting, which included a presentation from San Andreas Regional Center on developing a dementia-capable service system for adults with developmental disabilities. The presentation highlighted residential programs designed to support individuals with dementia. Lety Garcia also noted that NLACRC operates a similar memory care home in Northridge (Dolly House) in partnership with AARC.

Lety Garcia shared additional updates, including discussion of the Governor's budget, DDS efforts to hire an employment specialist to expand competitive integrated employment opportunities, and ongoing fiscal compliance reviews of service providers as part of DDS performance measures.

Lety Garcia also reported that Eden Rosales has been appointed as the new Self-Determination Program Ombudsman and that DDS will begin seeking community feedback on potential updates to the Self-Determination Program, including orientation improvements and Financial Management Service (FMS) standards.

Lety Garcia noted that ARCA Grassroots Day will take place March 2–3, with NLACRC representatives participating, and that the next ARCA meeting is scheduled for March 19 in Sacramento.

- Consumer Advisory Committee presented by Juan Hernandez

Juan Hernandez reported that the Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) held an open discussion focused on online safety and scam prevention. The committee discussed the need for additional information and education on topics such as identity theft and online safety. Juan Hernandez noted that CAC leadership will explore bringing a future presentation or training to provide further education on these issues.

- Executive Finance Committee presented by Sharmila Brunjes and Anna Hurst.

Sharmila Brunjes reported that the Executive Finance Committee reviewed several items during its recent meeting, including the proposed Board budget update, the startup contract with Homes and Hope, and the OPS contract approval, many of which were brought forward for discussion at the Board meeting. Sharmila Brunjes also noted that the committee requested the Employee Satisfaction Survey results be presented to the full Board. Chief Financial Officer Vinnie provided updates on financial reports, audit status, and the DDS contract. Sheila King provided an update regarding the Whistleblower hotline, and the committee was informed that the Strategic Plan has officially launched. Sharmila Brunjes noted that meeting materials are available on the NLACRC website and that the next Executive Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for February 26 at 5:00 p.m.

- Community Relations Committee presented by Jeremy Sunderland.

Evelyn McOmie reported that the Community Relations Committee met on January 26. The committee discussed opportunities to increase board participation in community outreach and engagement activities. Evelyn McOmie shared that a schedule of upcoming outreach opportunities with community support groups will be circulated to the Board. These events, which run from February through May, will provide Board members with opportunities to connect with the community, promote awareness of the Board's role, and support board recruitment efforts. Lindsay Granger

will distribute an email with the available dates and event details, and Board members will be invited to sign up to attend. The committee recommended that two to three Board members attend each event when possible.

- Nominating Committee presented by Curtis Wang.

Curtis Wang shared that the Nominating Committee has been conducting interviews of the potential board candidates.

- Post-Retirement Medical Trust Committee presented by Sharmila Brunjes.

Sharmila Brunjes reported that the last meeting was postponed.

The next PRMT Committee meeting is scheduled for February 19, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

- Vendor Advisory Committee presented by Alex Kopilevich.

Alex Kopilevich reported that the Vendor Advisory Committee met on January 8, 2026. The committee reviewed upcoming member term expirations, noting that four VAC positions are currently open. The application deadline closed on January 15, and 12 applications were received. The committee will review the applications at its next meeting on January 9 at 9:30 a.m., after which selected applicants will be invited to participate in interviews conducted in a hybrid format. Alex Kopilevich also noted that the upcoming meeting will be held at the Santa Clarita office with a hybrid participation option.

As reports were presented, no observations or comments were noted.

**14. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

**15. ANNOUNCEMENTS / INFORMATION**

**16. NEXT MEETING**

The next Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 11, 2026, at 6:00 p.m., to be held on Zoom.

**17. ADJOURNMENT**

**Absent objection the meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.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.