

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Executive Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
April 30, 2026

Present: Board of Trustees President Sharmila Brunjes, Vice President Juan Hernandez, Board Treasurer Anna Hurst, Board Secretary Curtis Wang, – Committee Members

Executive Director Angela Pao-Johnson, Deputy Director Evelyn McOmie, Chief Financial Officer Vini Montague, Director of Clinical Services Dr. Carlo DeAntonio, Human Resources Director Karen Waters, Executive Administrative Assistant Lindsay Granger, Sheila King, Controller Justice Agonoy – Staff Members

Guests: Heather Sims – KH Consulting Group, Valeria Soto, Xochitl Gonzalez – DDS

Absent: Board Treasurer Anna Hurst, Laura Monge, VAC Representative Jaklen Keshishyan

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

2. **COMMITTEE MEMBER ATTENDANCE**

3. **AGENDA**

Absent objection the April 30, 2026, meeting agenda was approved. Motion carried.

4. **PUBLIC INPUT – AGENDA ITEMS**

Clarification was provided regarding public comment. Public input at the beginning of the meeting is limited to agenda items, with an additional opportunity for general public comment scheduled at the end of the meeting.

There was no public input regarding the agenda.

5. **CONSENT ITEMS**

- A. Approval of Minutes of the February 26, 2026, Executive Finance Committee Meeting
- B. Approval of Minutes of the March 26, 2026, Executive Finance Committee Meeting

Absent objection the minutes of the February 26, 2026, Executive Finance Committee Meeting and the minutes of the March 26, 2026, Executive Finance Committee Meeting were approved. Motion carried.

6. **ACTION ITEMS**

6.1 Approval of Purchase of Services Startup Contracts
A. FY2025-2026 CPP/CRDP Startup Projects, Various Vendors
B. FY2025-2026 CPP/CRDP Startup Project #2526-9, Housing Access Services

Chief Financial Officer, Vini Montague, presented two Purchase of Service startup funding contract action items for Board consideration. Vini Montague explained that the first request involved three startup projects funded through Fiscal Year 2025–2026 allocations that had already received DDS approval, totaling \$800,000. The projects included Nora Living EBSH Palmdale, an Enhanced Behavioral Supports Home (EBSH) for male adults funded at \$250,000; Nora Living EBSH Lancaster, a co-ed Enhanced Behavioral Supports Home funded at \$300,000; and Congregate Connect, a specialized residential facility focused on substance abuse treatment funded at \$250,000.

During discussion, Lety Garcia asked how participants would be selected for the residential rehabilitation and substance abuse treatment program. Vini Montague explained that referrals and placements would occur through the Individual Program Plan (IPP) planning process based on identified substance abuse support needs. Lety Garcia confirmed understanding that individuals with identified substance abuse concerns would be referred to the program for treatment and recovery support.

Vini Montague then presented the second startup funding request, which involved a DDS-approved partnership project with Tri-Counties Regional Center to develop a web-based roommate matching program for individuals seeking independent living arrangements. Vini Montague explained that the program is intended to help regional center consumers safely and securely identify compatible peers who are also seeking roommates for independent living situations. DDS allocated \$50,000 in startup funding for the project. Vini Montague noted that an initial Request for Proposal (RFP) was posted in October 2025, but the RFP had to be reissued due to a lack of submissions. The second submission period closed on March 29, 2026, and the selection committee, which included representatives from Tri-Counties Regional Center, was in the process of selecting a provider. Vini Montague also noted that the funds for the project must be encumbered by June 30, 2026.

On a motion made by Curtis Wang, seconded by Lety Garcia, it was resolved to approve the FY2025-2026 CPP/CRDP Startup Projects, Various Vendors. Motion carried.

On a motion made by Lety Garcia, seconded by Curtis Wang, it was resolved to approve the FY2025-2026 CPP/CRDP Startup Project #2526-9, Housing Access Services. Motion carried.

6.2 Approval of ARCA Dues FY2026-2027

Vini Montague presented the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) dues invoice for Board consideration. Vini Montague reported that the total dues amount for North Los Angeles County Regional Center would be \$174,038.31, representing a 5.02% increase from the prior fiscal year. Vini Montague directed the committee to additional information included in the meeting packet outlining ARCA's functions and the benefits provided to regional centers. Vini Montague explained that ARCA supports regional centers through statewide coordination efforts, legislative advocacy, and collaborative activities among regional centers throughout California. Vini Montague requested Executive Committee approval to recommend the ARCA dues payment to the full Board for final approval.

Lety Garcia requested clarification regarding whether the 5.02% increase was specific to North Los Angeles County Regional Center or if the same percentage increase applied to all regional centers statewide. Angela Pao-Johnson stated that, to the best of her understanding, the percentage increase was consistent across regional centers, although the total dues amounts varied by agency size and classification. Vini Montague added that ARCA groups regional centers into different tiers based on size, including small, mid-sized, and large regional centers, and confirmed that North Los Angeles County Regional Center falls within the large regional center category.

Lety Garcia referenced the significant 50% dues increase implemented across all regional centers in 2024 and explained that she wanted clarification regarding whether the recent 4% increase from the previous year and the current 5.02% increase were similarly standardized statewide. Lety Garcia noted that she had not yet heard discussion regarding the dues increase through ARCA Executive Committee discussions and therefore wanted confirmation regarding how the increases were being applied. Angela Pao-Johnson stated that staff would verify the information before the conclusion of the meeting.

Vini Montague continued reviewing the information and reiterated that the dues structure differed based on regional center size categories. Juan Hernandez also asked whether all regional centers were being assessed different dues amounts rather than identical payments. Lety Garcia explained that, depending on the year and ARCA structure, sometimes increases are consistent statewide while other times they may vary. Angela Pao-Johnson later confirmed that the 5.02% increase was in fact applied consistently across all regional centers, although each regional center's actual dues amount differed based on its assigned tier and total assessment. Sharmila Brunjes summarized that all regional centers were subject to the same percentage increase, but the dollar amounts differed according to each regional center's existing dues level.

Before the vote, Sharmila Brunjes clarified that the Executive Finance Committee was voting to recommend approval of the ARCA dues payment to the full Board and that final approval authority rested with the Board of Trustees.

On a motion made by Juan Hernandez, seconded by Lety Garcia, it was resolved to approve the ARCA dues recommendation and forward the item to the full Board for approval. Motion carried.

6.3 Credit Line for FY2026-2027

A. Approval to Authorize an Officer to Secure a Credit Line for FY2026-2027

B. Approval to Authorize an Officer to Make Disbursements and Execute Disbursements Instructions for Credit Line

Vini Montague presented a resolution regarding the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 line of credit and requested Executive Committee approval to recommend the item to the full Board. Vini Montague explained that the current line of credit is set at \$80 million during most of the fiscal year and increases to \$100 million during higher-risk borrowing periods. For FY 2026–2027, staff proposed maintaining the \$80 million line of credit during the core fiscal year and increasing it to \$110 million during July through September and again from March through June, which are the periods when the organization is most likely to need to borrow. Vini Montague explained that the amount was based on historical cash flow needs and would be sufficient to cover approximately one service month if DDS funding or reimbursements were delayed.

During discussion, Lety Garcia asked how the proposed \$110 million amount was determined. Vini Montague explained that the amount provides a sufficient cushion to cover one service month based on historical need. Lety Garcia confirmed that the higher amount would provide additional flexibility in the event DDS funding was delayed. Sharmila Brunjes asked why borrowing risk was higher at the beginning and end of the fiscal year. Vini Montague explained that at the beginning of the fiscal year, there is increased risk if the state budget is not approved on time, which could delay the regional center's cash advance from the state. Once the cash advance is received, DDS typically reimburses regional centers monthly in arrears, reducing borrowing risk during mid-year. Vini Montague further explained that borrowing risk increases again toward the end of the fiscal year when DDS begins offsetting the initial cash advance and partial monthly reimbursements reduce available cash resources. Lety Garcia also asked whether federal funding delays, such as those caused by a government shutdown, could affect reimbursements. Vini Montague confirmed that federal funding delays could potentially create additional risk, further supporting the need for the line of credit.

On a motion made by Jacquie Colton, seconded by Lety Garcia, it was resolved to recommend approval of the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 line of credit to the full Board. Motion carried.

Vini Montague then presented a second board resolution related to the line of credit authorizing designated officers to execute disbursement instructions with City National Bank. In response to a question from Sharmila Brunjes, Vini Montague clarified that the authorization applies to designated officers, including the Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer, or Deputy Director. Curtis Wang made a motion to recommend approval of the authorization to the full Board, and Jacquie Colton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with no opposition or abstentions.

On a motion made by Curtis Wang, seconded by Jacquie Colton, it was resolved to recommend approval of the authorization of an officer to make disbursements and execute disbursement instructions for the credit line. Motion carried.

6.4 Approval to Authorize an Officer to Secure Insurance Coverage for FY2026-2027

Vini Montague also presented a resolution related to insurance coverage for the upcoming fiscal year. Vini Montague explained that the organization's current insurance policies expire on June 30, 2026, and that staff was working with its insurance broker to complete renewal applications and conduct a competitive bidding process with insurance carriers. Final pricing would be provided in June after the broker completed the market review. Vini Montague requested approval to recommend a resolution authorizing the Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer, or Deputy Director to execute insurance binders and purchase insurance coverage for the upcoming fiscal year once pricing was finalized.

On a motion made by Lety Garcia, seconded by Jacquie Colton, it was resolved to recommend approval of the authorization of an officer to secure insurance coverage for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Motion carried.

6.5 Approval to Change Time or Date of EFC May Meeting

The Executive Finance Committee discussed rescheduling its May 2026 meeting from Thursday, May 28, 2026, to Tuesday, May 26, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. to accommodate the Board, Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC), and Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) dinner scheduled for May 28. Sharmila Brunjes explained that the dinner was considered an important opportunity for Board members to meet and engage with VAC and CAC members, noting that the event should take precedence on this occasion because there had been limited opportunities for that interaction. Lindsay Granger clarified that the proposed change would keep the meeting in the same week and at the same time, but move it up by two days.

Lety Garcia asked whether the schedule change was related to the holiday weekend and whether any other Board meetings were planned that same week. Sharmila Brunjes clarified that the change was specifically due to the Board/VAC/CAC dinner and confirmed that there were no other Board meetings scheduled that week that would create a conflict. Sharmila Brunjes further explained that Executive Finance Committee meetings are important because they include committee business and action items that must be reviewed and voted on before being forwarded to the full Board, emphasizing that sufficient attendance was necessary to ensure a quorum and conduct committee business effectively.

On a motion made by Jacquie Colton, seconded by Curtis Wang, it was resolved to reschedule the May Executive Finance Committee meeting from Thursday, May 28, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. to Tuesday, May 26, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried.

7. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

7.1 Strategic Planning Update

Heather Sims, of KH Consulting Group, provided an overview of the strategic planning process and the Board's role in the development of NLACRC's strategic plan. Heather Sims explained that the strategic planning process begins with defining and refining the organization's vision, mission, and values, followed

by environmental scanning, strategic priority development, action planning, implementation, and ongoing monitoring. Heather Sims noted that KH Consulting Group had already completed interviews with internal and external stakeholders, including Board members, leadership, staff, and advisory committee representatives, and reported that consistent themes had emerged across those conversations, helping to identify key focus areas for the strategic plan. Heather Sims stated that the Board strategy session scheduled for May 11 would focus primarily on reviewing and refining draft strategic priorities and providing input on the organization's vision.

Heather Sims further explained that draft strategic priorities had already been developed through a recent staff strategy lab and would be refined with Board input before action planning teams are formed. Heather Sims noted that each strategic priority would have an action planning team made up of staff from across the organization, who would develop goals, objectives, timelines, accountability measures, and implementation steps. Heather Sims also explained that an action planning summit would later provide an opportunity for action planning teams to present draft plans and receive feedback before finalizing implementation plans and metrics. Heather Sims noted that final strategic plans would return to the Board for adoption, after which staff would lead implementation while the Board would provide oversight, monitoring, and guidance.

Heather Sims outlined the Board's role as stewards of the strategic pillars—vision, mission, and values—and emphasized that Board members would help ensure alignment with community needs, provide input on strategic priorities, review action planning outcomes, and monitor implementation progress. Heather Sims also shared that community and stakeholder surveys would be released as part of the process to gather additional feedback and that Board members would be asked to help encourage participation and outreach once the surveys were launched. Heather Sims noted that KH Consulting Group would provide implementation support at the three- and six-month marks after the final strategic plan is adopted.

During discussion, Sharmila Brunjes raised concerns about Board participation in the action planning summit, noting that Board members are volunteers and may not always be available to attend separate planning sessions. Sharmila Brunjes suggested that aligning portions of the process with Board meeting schedules could improve participation. Heather Sims acknowledged the concern and agreed that staff and the consultants would work to identify creative ways to ensure meaningful Board input and participation in the action planning review process.

Lety Garcia asked for clarification regarding when the Board would have opportunities to provide input before priorities and action plans were finalized and whether metrics would be predetermined during the process. Heather Sims explained that the Board's primary input would occur during the May 11 strategy session, where draft strategic priorities and the organization's vision would be reviewed and refined before action planning teams begin their work. Heather Sims further explained that metrics typically develop after draft action plans are created and may require additional meetings and Board input later in the process. Heather Sims also confirmed that surveys would be distributed to gather broader feedback and indicated that a separate public survey link could be created if community responses needed to be collected separately.

Heather Sims concluded the presentation by noting that presentation materials, survey information, and strategic planning resources would be provided to Lindsay Granger for distribution to Board members, including those who were unable to attend the meeting. The committee thanked Heather Sims for the strategic planning update and looked ahead to the May 11 Board strategy session for further discussion and Board engagement in the process.

7.2 Financial Reports

Vini Montague presented the financial report for the February 2026 service month and reported that NLACRC's B4 allocation was approximately \$1.4 billion, with year-to-date expenditures totaling approximately \$864 million. Vini Montague stated that NLACRC was projecting an \$11.5 million deficit in regular Purchase of Services (POS) expenditures and noted that the financial report packet included

additional detail, including allocation breakdowns, monthly expenditure summaries, and financial projections.

Lety Garcia asked whether a hard copy of the financial report was available, noting that it was difficult to review the figures while they were being presented on screen. Sharmila Brunjes explained that the financial report was available through the OnBoard meeting materials and could be viewed more closely there, including options to access and print the report pages.

Lety Garcia asked how NLACRC planned to address the projected deficit in regular POS expenditures. Vini Montague explained that because Purchase of Services funding is an entitlement, DDS is responsible for making regional centers whole when deficits occur. Vini Montague stated that DDS monitors financial projections for all 21 regional centers and may reallocate funding from centers with surpluses to those with deficits. Vini Montague further explained that DDS also typically holds back funds during the fiscal year to address projected shortfalls and that NLACRC anticipated receiving an additional allocation to cover the projected deficit.

Lety Garcia also asked for clarification regarding the administrative spending percentage, and Vini Montague began responding to that question as part of the continued financial report discussion.

No further questions were raised.

7.3 Admin vs. Direct Allocation Report

Vini Montague presented the Administrative Expenditures vs. Direct Expenditures Report and reported that, as of the February 2026 service month, NLACRC's administrative expenditures were at 10.2%. Lety Garcia noted that the percentage appeared lower than in prior reports, observing that administrative expenditures had previously been averaging approximately 12% to 13%. Vini Montague confirmed that the administrative percentage was lower than prior reporting periods.

During the discussion, Sharmila Brunjes shared a reminder from Angela Pao-Johnson that meeting agendas and packet materials are publicly available on the NLACRC website through the calendar by selecting the specific meeting date, allowing Board and committee members, as well as members of the public, to access financial reports and supporting materials.

Sharmila Brunjes and Vini Montague briefly clarified the agenda sequence and confirmed that the committee had completed review of both the Financial Report and the Administrative Expenditures vs. Direct Expenditures Report before moving on to the next financial reporting item.

No further questions were raised.

7.4 Outstanding Authorizations Report

Vini Montague presented the Outstanding Authorizations Report as of March 31, 2026, and explained that the report tracks vendors and authorizations with outstanding items over the course of the month. Vini Montague reported that NLACRC began the month with 65 vendors and 128 outstanding authorizations. During the month, 19 new vendors were added to the report, while 27 outstanding authorizations were resolved.

Vini Montague reported that, by the end of the month, the number of vendors with outstanding authorizations had decreased to 57, with a total of 88 outstanding authorizations remaining on the list, reflecting progress in reducing outstanding items during the reporting period.

Sharmila Brunjes asked whether committee members had any questions regarding the report. No questions were raised, and the committee received the report as presented.

7.5 Introduction of New Human Resources Director

Sharmila Brunjes introduced Karen Waters as NLACRC's new Human Resources Director and welcomed Karen Waters to the Executive Finance Committee meeting. Karen Waters shared that Karen Waters had recently joined NLACRC and would reach the two-week mark in the role the following day.

Karen Waters provided a brief overview of Karen Waters' professional background, describing a career path that began in journalism with a focus on finance reporting, including work at Morningstar and Pensions & Investments. Karen Waters explained that Karen Waters later transitioned into law, serving as a trial attorney before moving into the human resources field. Karen Waters also shared experience working in law firms, for-profit organizations, call center operations supporting major nonprofits, and roles within the autism services community before joining NLACRC.

Karen Waters expressed enthusiasm about joining NLACRC and shared that Karen Waters looked forward to working with the Board and leadership team during this new phase. Sharmila Brunjes welcomed Karen Waters and commented on Karen Waters' unique and diverse career journey. Committee members, including Lety Garcia and Curtis Wang, also welcomed Karen Waters to NLACRC.

7.6 Monthly Whistleblower Log for March 16, 2026-April 15, 2026

Sheila King presented the Whistleblower Log report covering February 16 through March 15. A total of 17 cases were reported during this period, with 3 cases closed and 14 remaining open.

It was noted that the majority of cases are related to service providers. The full report was included in the meeting packet for review.

No questions were raised by members following the presentation.

7.7 Human Resources Report

Sheila King presented the quarterly Human Resources Report and provided staffing and turnover statistics for the first three quarters of the fiscal year. Sheila King reported that in the first quarter, NLACRC had 50 new hires, 16 promotions, and 39 separations, resulting in a turnover rate of 4.36%. In the second quarter, hiring increased to 54 new hires, with 12 promotions and 23 separations, resulting in a turnover rate of 2.31%. In the third quarter, NLACRC reported 57 new hires, 9 promotions, and 26 separations, with a turnover rate of 2.77%.

Sheila King also reviewed separation data by category. In the first quarter, separations included 4 retirements, 17 for personal reasons, and 19 categorized as other. In the second quarter, there were 3 retirements, 19 separations for personal reasons, and 1 categorized as other. In the third quarter, separations included 22 for personal reasons and 4 categorized as other. Sheila King noted that additional detail and subcategories were included in the report packet and could be reviewed further if needed.

Sheila King also noted that the Human Resources Report packet included additional information on authorized positions, open positions, and staffing summaries by position classification. Sharmila Brunjes asked whether there were any questions regarding the report. No questions were raised, and the committee received the Human Resources Report as presented.

7.8 Proposed Committee Assignments for Next Fiscal Year

Sharmila Brunjes reminded Board members to review the annual Board committee membership list and confirm that they were assigned to the committees on which they wished to serve for the upcoming fiscal year. Sharmila Brunjes noted that committee assignments are typically reviewed toward the end of the fiscal year and that Board members generally have until August or September to request changes, with follow-up communication to be sent by email if needed. Sharmila Brunjes also shared that the Nominating Committee would present its recommended slate at the next Board meeting for Board officer positions, including President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and ARCA Representative. Sharmila Brunjes further noted that the Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC) Chair position would transition as Alex Kopilevich was terming out at the end of the fiscal year, and the VAC would determine its own next chair through its internal leadership process.

Lety Garcia raised a question regarding the name of the Community Relations Committee, noting that the committee had previously discussed changing its name to better reflect consumer-related work. Lindsay Granger clarified that under the currently adopted bylaws, the official committee name remains Community Relations Committee. Sharmila Brunjes explained that any formal committee name change would require Board approval because it would involve a bylaw amendment.

Juan Hernandez and Angela Pao-Johnson provided additional context regarding broader regional center system discussions about replacing the term “consumer” with alternative language that better reflects the community served. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that legislation and statewide conversations were underway regarding terminology changes and noted that regional center executive directors wanted community stakeholders, including Consumer Advisory Committees (CACs), families, and individuals served, to provide input on preferred terminology before adopting a systemwide change. Angela Pao-Johnson shared that possible alternatives being discussed included terms such as “client,” “individual served,” or “participant,” and that feedback would continue to be gathered before a final decision is made.

Lety Garcia clarified that the concern was also related to ensuring the committee name accurately reflected the committee’s combined responsibilities following prior committee restructuring. After discussion, Sharmila Brunjes noted that the preference would be to wait until terminology discussions were resolved more broadly across the regional center system before making bylaw amendments, to avoid multiple changes. Sharmila Brunjes also explained that if the Community Relations Committee wished to formally pursue a name change sooner, the committee chairs could bring the item forward for Board consideration at any time.

Lety Garcia also confirmed that committee leadership transitions would occur at the start of the new fiscal year, with new chairs expected for Community Relations and Nominating, while the Executive Finance Committee would continue to be chaired by the Board President. The committee concluded the discussion and moved on to the next agenda item.

7.9 ED Evaluation Workgroup Update

Lety Garcia provided an update on the Executive Director Evaluation Workgroup and reported that the workgroup had been meeting regularly with consultant Ami Sullivan, who has experience working with regional centers throughout the state. Lety Garcia explained that the workgroup was developing a new annual Executive Director evaluation process, which is a Board responsibility required by statute. Lety Garcia shared that the workgroup had made significant progress, including finalizing survey questions and identifying stakeholders who would receive evaluation questionnaires in addition to Board members. Lety Garcia noted that survey participants would include community stakeholders and individuals who interact directly with Angela Pao-Johnson on a regular basis and are in a position to provide meaningful feedback on Executive Director performance. Lety Garcia reported that the first phase of the survey process was scheduled to begin on June 2, with the goal of completing the evaluation process by the end of June and finalizing the overall evaluation before August. Lety Garcia also reminded Board members that the workgroup meets bi-weekly and that meetings are open to Board members who wish to participate.

Angela Pao-Johnson thanked the Board for its work on the evaluation process and shared appreciation for the constructive approach being taken by the workgroup. Angela Pao-Johnson noted that participation in the workgroup discussions had been helpful and expressed appreciation for the Board's effort to create an evaluation process focused on meaningful feedback and professional growth.

7.10 Board Calendar & Activities Workgroup Update

Sharmila Brunjes provided an update on the Board Calendar and Activities Workgroup, reporting that the workgroup had been meeting with the Board coach to develop the agenda and overall structure for the upcoming Board retreat. Sharmila Brunjes explained that the retreat would focus on Board priorities, strategic planning discussions, and overall Board planning for the upcoming fiscal year. Lindsay Granger clarified that the Board retreat was being planned for June 20, 2026. Sharmila Brunjes noted that the selected date was intended to avoid scheduling conflicts during graduation season.

Lety Garcia asked about the location of the Board retreat, and Sharmila Brunjes explained that the workgroup was considering Sanctuary Animal Assisted Therapy in Santa Clarita because it offered both indoor meeting space and outdoor retreat-friendly space. Sharmila Brunjes also shared that the workgroup planned to review the Board planning calendar and critical Board activities to ensure required actions and deadlines were being completed in a timely manner and to recommend updates for the upcoming fiscal year.

Sharmila Brunjes reported that the Board Calendar and Activities Workgroup was also exploring opportunities for additional Board engagement events during the year, similar to the Board/VAC/CAC dinner, to provide informal opportunities for Board members and committee members to connect outside of regular meetings. Sharmila Brunjes noted that the workgroup had been meeting weekly on Fridays but may reduce the meeting frequency as retreat planning moves into the implementation stage.

Lety Garcia asked whether the Board coach's role would include leadership or Board training opportunities beyond retreat planning. Sharmila Brunjes confirmed that the workgroup planned to review the Board's training calendar and coordinate with the Board coach to potentially lead future Board leadership and training sessions, particularly during the Board's regularly scheduled monthly training meetings. The committee received the Board Calendar and Activities Workgroup update and moved on to the next agenda item.

8. CENTER OPERATIONS

Angela Pao-Johnson provided the Center Operations Report and began by highlighting Karen's recent addition to the leadership team. Angela Pao-Johnson shared that although Karen had only been with NLACRC for two weeks, Karen's 16 years of experience and expertise in organizational infrastructure, policy, and process development had already made a positive impact. Angela Pao-Johnson noted that Karen's experience in supporting large organizations and building sustainable systems would help strengthen NLACRC's infrastructure as the organization continues to grow.

Angela Pao-Johnson provided several DDS and legislative updates related to dental access and provider capacity. Angela Pao-Johnson reported that ARCA was sponsoring AB 1670, legislation intended to allow dental providers to bill for desensitization visits to help individuals become familiar with dental environments and reduce barriers to treatment. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that these visits could improve access to care and reduce trauma associated with dental treatment for individuals served. Angela Pao-Johnson also noted that Proposition 56 supplemental payments for Medi-Cal dental providers were scheduled to expire in June, which could result in lower reimbursement rates, fewer providers, and potential access challenges. Angela Pao-Johnson further shared that although AB 341 established support for dental school partnerships and training opportunities, funding had not been attached to the legislation, limiting implementation progress.

Angela Pao-Johnson also reported on progress related to NLACRC's special contract language requirements. Angela Pao-Johnson stated that two requirements remained outstanding, including achieving statutory compliance for service coordinator caseload ratios and meeting Individual Program Plan (IPP) survey benchmarks. Angela Pao-Johnson reviewed current caseload ratios across multiple categories and noted that while progress had been made, NLACRC remained above statutory targets and also above statewide averages in several categories. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that only two regional centers statewide had reached statutory caseload requirements and noted that maintaining those ratios continued to be challenging across the system.

Angela Pao-Johnson provided an update on IPP survey performance, reporting that the Department's requirements include achieving 85% satisfaction across five survey areas and a 15% response rate. Angela Pao-Johnson stated that NLACRC's survey response rate had improved from 2% in 2025 to approximately 8% in 2026, though the center remained below the required threshold. Angela Pao-Johnson noted that satisfaction targets had been met in most survey categories, but satisfaction related to information provided about the Self-Determination Program remained below target at approximately 75%, and staff were working to improve communication and accessibility of that information.

Angela Pao-Johnson shared additional center updates, reporting that NLACRC had 974 filled positions and was serving approximately 42,200 individuals across its three valleys. Angela Pao-Johnson also highlighted recent outreach efforts, including the Inclusion in Action workshop held on April 14, 2026, which had 85 attendees and utilized a hybrid format to increase accessibility. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that the workshops provide families with information about services and connect them with specialists serving specific age groups. Angela Pao-Johnson reported that participant satisfaction for the program was 4.24 out of 5 and noted that the workshops had been well received by attendees.

Angela Pao-Johnson also introduced the upcoming Community Listening Sessions with the Executive Director, which were developed to engage historically underserved communities and better understand service awareness and community needs. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that the listening sessions would begin in June, starting with the Armenian community, and would later expand to Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Armenian, Farsi-speaking, and Filipino communities. Angela Pao-Johnson stated that two sessions per group would be held monthly in the San Fernando Valley and Antelope Valley offices to improve accessibility. Angela Pao-Johnson shared that sessions would be limited to approximately 15 participants to support meaningful discussion and that participant selection would be based on age group, service experience, and representative community participation if interest exceeded available space. Angela Pao-Johnson noted that DEIB staff would support the sessions and that Board members would also be invited to participate.

Lety Garcia commended the outreach efforts and asked what strategies were being considered to help close the gap on caseload ratio compliance. Angela Pao-Johnson responded that improving ratios would depend on continued recruitment and retention efforts. Angela Pao-Johnson shared that NLACRC was building recruitment partnerships with universities, including a new partnership with Cal State Bakersfield similar to the existing partnership with CSUN, to create student internship and hiring pipelines for associate-level positions. Angela Pao-Johnson also reported that recruitment advertising efforts through targeted radio stations serving different communities had generated interest and that staff were continuing to refine outreach to attract qualified applicants.

Angela Pao-Johnson further explained that retention efforts remained a priority and highlighted staff training, employee roundtables, and organizational feedback efforts as important components of building a stable workforce. Angela Pao-Johnson shared that staff feedback had been positive, with employees describing the organization as supportive, innovative, and community-focused, and noted that these efforts, along with Karen's leadership support, would continue to strengthen workforce stability over time. Sharmila Brunjes thanked Angela Pao-Johnson for the report, and no further questions were raised.

9. BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEMS/ACTION ITEMS

- Board Support will add the approved action items to the May board meeting agenda for full board approval.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS / PUBLIC INPUT / INFORMATION ITEMS

There was no public input.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Executive Finance Committee will be May 26, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:48 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—Board Relations Liaison