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

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
HYBRID MEETING – NLACRC CHATSWORTH VALLEY OFFICE/ZOOM
AUGUST 12, 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), Tal Segalovitch (VAC Chair), Puja Trivedi, Kulwant Dosanjh, George Alvarado, Cathy Blin, Nicholas Abrahms, Jacquie Colton, Jeremy Sunderland, Laura Monge, Jennifer Koster

ABSENT:
Sonia Campos, Jason Taketa

STAFF:
Angela Pao-Johnson - Executive Director, Evelyn McOmie – Deputy Director, Vini Montague – Chief Financial Officer, Dr. Carlo DeAntonio – Director, Clinical Services, Silvia Renteria-Haro, Arshalous Garlanian, Donna Rentsch, Sarah Yap, Elisa Hill, Lindsay Granger, Arezo Abedi, Kermit Jackson

GUESTS:
Lori Walker – NLACRC SDLVAC Chair

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1. INTRODUCTIONS AND CALL TO ORDER

Upon confirmation of quorum, the meeting was called to order by President Sharmila Brunjes at 6:05 PM. Opening remarks included a welcome to the new Board of Trustees members, reminders for participants to display their full names, and guidance for Board members to state their names when making or seconding motions to support accurate minute-taking.

The Board reviewed the organization's mission and vision statements, reaffirming its commitment to supporting individuals with developmental disabilities in leading healthy, productive, and inclusive lives. Meeting protocols were also outlined, including public comment procedures—limited to agenda items at the beginning of the meeting, with general public input scheduled later—and adherence to the civility code to ensure respectful and inclusive dialogue.

Housekeeping items included confirmation that Spanish interpretation was available and instructions for Board members to update their display names to include their role and geographic designation.

2. IMPACT STORY FROM INDIVIDUAL SERVED

Executive Director Angela Pao-Johnson shared an impact story featuring *A Bumblebee Can Fly, and So Can I*, a video of a book created, illustrated, and authored by Alona Yorkshire, an NLACRC VAC member.

3. BOARD MEMBER ATTENDANCE/QUORUM

Board members were confirmed in attendance on Zoom. Quorum was confirmed by staff.

4. AGENDA – APPROVAL

Sharmila Brunjes noted one change to the agenda: Consent Item B, regarding a conflict resolution plan for Anna Hurst, was no longer necessary and was removed.

Absent objection, the agenda was approved as amended.

5. PUBLIC INPUT & COMMENTS—RESERVED FOR AGENDA ITEMS

During the public input portion of the meeting, Sharmila Brunjes reminded attendees that comments were limited to agenda items, with a three-minute time limit per speaker.

Lori Walker, Chair of the North LA Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee (SDLAC), provided public comment regarding the Self-Determination Program. Lori Walker shared that the SDLAC incorporated suggestions provided by Sharmila Brunjes into its monthly feedback form, including adding the committee's primary goal, relevant context, and a link to its committee-centered plan. Lori Walker encouraged Board members to review the updated feedback form and support the committee's efforts to improve and streamline implementation of the Self-Determination Program.

No additional public comments on agenda items were received. Kermit indicated that public comment would be provided during the general public comment period at the end of the meeting.

6. CONSENT ITEMS

Board President Sharmila Brunjes presented the consent calendar and noted that all consent items would be approved in one motion unless a Board member or member of the public requested discussion. No requests or objections were made. Sharmila Brunjes noted that Consent Item B had been removed from consideration.

The Board approved the following consent items:

A. Approval of the Board of Trustees meeting minutes from June 10, 2026
B. Conflict Resolution Plan for Jacquie Colton (Trustee)

Sharmila Brunjes asked if there was any discussion.

Absent objection, it was resolved to approve the consent items. Motion carried.

7. ACTION ITEMS

7.1 Approval of ARCA Academy Invoice

Vini Montague presented the $5,000 ARCA Academy sponsorship invoice for approval, noting that $5,250 had been included in the approved Board budget for this purpose. ARCA Academy provides statewide training for regional center board members and will be held in Torrance in September 2026.

M/S/C (Curtis Wang/Jennifer Koster) to approve the ARCA Academy Invoice. Motion carried.

7.2 Approval of Operations Contracts

a. Approval of Microsoft Add-On Renewals

Vini Montague presented a request to amend the previously approved three-year SoftChoice/Microsoft contract to include Microsoft Software Assurance, which had been inadvertently omitted from the original proposal. The additional cost is $19,461.15, increasing the total contract amount from $1,096,221.63 to $1,115,682.78. Vini Montague explained that the coverage supports software licensing, disaster recovery, business continuity, and a secure and compliant technology environment.

M/S/C (Jennifer Koster/Jacquie Colton) to approve the amended three-year contract totaling $1,115,682.78. Motion carried.

b. Approval of Cloudsafe Contract

Vini Montague presented a request to amend the previously approved three-year CloudSafe contract supporting the SANDIS case management application. Additional cloud storage is needed to maximize system performance. The additional cost for the remainder of the three-year term is $29,820, increasing the total contract value from $271,968.48 to $301,788.48.

M/S/C (Jennifer Koster/George Alvarado) to approve the amended contract totaling $301,788.48. Motion carried.

c. Approval of Clearwater Contract

Vini Montague presented a request to amend the existing three-year Clearwater/CTEC Security contract. CTEC provides cybersecurity services, including risk assessments and penetration testing. Based on its risk assessment, CTEC recommended strengthening NLACRC's written policies and procedures. The proposed additional scope of work totals $33,966 and will provide assistance with finalizing policies and procedures, increasing the total contract value to $302,756.

M/S/C (George Alvarado/Curtis Wang) to approve the amended contract totaling $302,756. Motion carried.

7.3 Approval of Updated Board Meeting Schedule

Sharmila Brunjes presented the updated Board meeting schedule, noting that it generally follows the FY 2025–2026 schedule, with some adjustments to committee and meeting dates.

Lety Garcia asked why an Executive Finance Committee meeting was not scheduled prior to the August Board meeting, noting that historically the committee has met before the first Board meeting of the fiscal year and has assisted with preparation for upcoming Board meetings. Sharmila Brunjes explained that an Executive Finance Committee meeting was not needed prior to the August meeting because there were no items requiring committee approval or action and the applicable items were being presented publicly during the Board meeting. Lety Garcia noted that the committee had traditionally met during that timeframe in prior years.

The Board also reviewed scheduling conflicts created by holidays. Because Labor Day falls on the Monday preceding the September Board meeting, the September Board Packet Review will be moved to Tuesday, September 8, the day before the Board meeting. Sharmila Brunjes clarified that the Board Packet Review provides trustees an opportunity to review the packet and obtain clarification prior to the meeting. A potential Board leadership training with the Board's executive coach was also discussed for September.

The Board discussed the November meeting date because the regularly scheduled second Wednesday, November 11, falls on Veterans Day. The Board agreed to move the meeting one week earlier to Wednesday, November 4, rather than later in the month due to its proximity to Thanksgiving. The November Board Packet Review and potential Board Training will accordingly be held on Monday, November 2. It was confirmed that the November 4 Board meeting will be held in person in Santa Clarita.

The Board also clarified that there are no regular public Board meetings in July, October, or December; however, committees may continue to meet during those months according to their respective schedules.

On a motion made by Jennifer Koster, seconded by George Alvarado, it was resolved to approve the updated FY 2026-2027 Board meeting schedule with discussed changes. Motion carried.

7.4 <u>Approval to Send 2025-2026 Board Composition Progress Report to DDS</u>

Angela Pao-Johnson presented the FY 2025–2026 Board Composition Progress Report. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that DDS approved NLACRC's Board composition remediation plan in November 2025 because the Board did not fully reflect the ethnic and geographic composition of the catchment area. DDS requested semiannual progress reports regarding NLACRC's recruitment efforts.

Angela Pao-Johnson reviewed recruitment efforts, including targeted advertising in Spanish-language and community publications, radio advertising, outreach through Hispanic/Latino community-based organizations and the Antelope Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and promotion through Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Recruitment efforts are tracked through campaign engagement, applicant activity, and candidate recruitment outcomes. During the reporting period, NLACRC received 11 Board applications, including three applicants who identified as Hispanic/Latino. As of June 2026, the Board had 14 seated trustees, including four who identified as Hispanic/Latino. Angela Pao-Johnson noted that Board composition requirements continue to shift as membership changes and that additional recruitment is still needed.

Angela Pao-Johnson also provided an update on recruitment activity since June 2026, reporting that NLACRC currently has 10 additional applicants, including several Hispanic/Latino applicants. Applications continue to be reviewed by the Nominating Committee.

Lety Garcia asked whether the progress report had been included in the Board packet and requested that supporting documentation for agenda items be provided in advance to allow trustees sufficient time for review. It was clarified that the report had been provided to Board members with the meeting materials and would also be included with the Board packet posted online.

On a motion made by Jennifer Koster, seconded by George Alvarado, it was resolved to approve the FY 2025-2026 Board Composition Progress Report for submission to DDS. Motion carried.

7.5 Approval of Board Composition Report 2026-2027 and Plan of Correction to Send to DDS

Evelyn McOmie presented the FY 2025–2027 Board Composition Plan recommended by the Nominating Committee for submission to DDS. Evelyn McOmie explained that the plan outlines the steps NLACRC and the Nominating Committee will take to recruit the remaining Hispanic/Latino trustee needed to meet Board composition requirements.

The plan includes continued targeted recruitment efforts and leveraging technology and other recruitment strategies that have demonstrated success. Evelyn McOmie noted that the Nominating Committee has made significant progress, there is current interest from prospective applicants, and an expanded recruitment campaign is underway. The plan is expected to be submitted to DDS by the end of the week.

On a motion made by Kulwant Dosanjh, seconded by Jennifer Koster, it was resolved to approve the FY 2025–2027 Board Composition Plan for submission to DDS. Motion carried.

7.6 Approval to Adopt Mission, Vision, and Values

Angela Pao-Johnson presented NLACRC's proposed mission, vision, and core values developed as part of the strategic planning process led by KH Consulting. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that the process included input from internal and external stakeholders through strategic planning activities and a survey completed by approximately 202 participants. The effort was intended to refresh NLACRC's mission, vision, and values to ensure they continue to reflect the organization and the communities it serves.

The proposed mission is: "NLACRC partners with individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to build an inclusive community where each person is empowered to live the life they choose."

The proposed vision is: "NLACRC envisions a world where individuals with developmental disabilities have equitable opportunities to achieve their best life as valued members of their communities."

The five core values identified through stakeholder feedback are Respect, Inclusivity, Advocacy, Empowerment, and Partnership. Angela Pao-Johnson also presented the tagline, "Empowering Lives. Strengthening Communities."

In response to a question from Juan Hernandez regarding stakeholder engagement, Angela Pao-Johnson explained that multiple opportunities for participation were provided, including strategic planning labs and the stakeholder survey used to finalize the proposed mission, vision, and values.

George Alvarado asked about the design and implementation of the new messaging. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that additional materials could be developed following formal Board approval. Sharmila Brunjes also discussed the possibility of inviting community members to submit designs incorporating the new tagline.

On a motion made by Jennifer Koster, seconded by George Alvarado, it was resolved to formally adopt NLACRC's new mission, vision, and core values. Motion carried.

8. BOARD BUSINESS

8.1 Financial Mini Training

Vini Montague provided a financial mini-training on Board approval requirements for contracts. Vini Montague explained that Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 4625.5 previously required governing boards of regional centers to review and approve contracts of $250,000 or more. Senate Bill 163 amended the statute effective July 14, 2026, increasing the threshold to $350,000. The threshold will increase to $450,000 effective July 1, 2030, and by an additional $50,000 every five years thereafter.

Vini Montague explained that DDS is developing statewide guidance regarding regional center contract review policies. Until that guidance is issued and NLACRC's policy is updated, NLACRC will continue following its existing Board Contract Policy, which requires Board approval of contracts with a fixed amount of $250,000 or more.

Vini Montague clarified that Purchase of Service (POS) contracts with a potential value of $250,000 or more are excluded from the Board approval requirement based on legal guidance and clarification received from DDS. Contract summaries presented for Board consideration include information such as the vendor, purpose, term, total contract amount, payment terms, and the processes used to award the contract and establish the rate. Board members may also request a copy of a contract for review.

Vini Montague reviewed the contract approval process, explaining that contracts are generally presented first to the Executive Finance Committee for review and recommendation before being presented to the full Board. When timing does not allow for prior Executive Finance Committee review, a contract may be presented directly to the Board. Sharmila Brunjes clarified that the Executive Finance Committee may also vote to forward a contract to the full Board for consideration without making a recommendation on whether it should be approved.

No additional questions were raised.

8.2 Strategic Plan Update

Angela Pao-Johnson provided an update on the development of NLACRC's new strategic plan. The strategic priorities and goals were developed through strategic planning labs involving staff from various levels and departments, as well as the Board, with support from KH Consulting.

The four strategic priorities are Consumer, Family, and Community; Vendor Excellence and Service Delivery; Operational Excellence and Innovation; and Workforce and Culture.

The goals under Consumer, Family, and Community include Family and Consumer Empowerment, Equitable Access and Community Engagement, and Strategic Community Partnerships. The goals under Vendor Excellence and Service Delivery include Vendor Development and Capacity, Vendor Quality and Accountability, and Effective and Accountable Service Delivery. The goals under Operational Excellence and Innovation include Transparent Communication and Information Access, Digital Transformation and Data Strategy, and Organizational Performance and Alignment. The goals under Workforce and Culture include Leadership and Workforce Development and Workforce Well-Being, Culture, and Engagement.

Angela Pao-Johnson explained that each goal is supported by more detailed objectives and activities to establish how the goals will be achieved. Examples include expanding consumer and family education and engagement opportunities, strengthening shared decision-making, collaborating with family resource centers and community-based organizations, conducting targeted outreach to underserved communities, expanding vendor capacity and accountability, modernizing technology and data systems, and strengthening employee development and engagement.

The strategic plan is currently in the refinement phase, with goals and objectives being reviewed for feasibility, prioritization, and implementation timelines. The Board will participate in an upcoming session with KH Consulting to review the objectives, provide input, and discuss potential revisions. Subsequent work will focus on establishing metrics, accountability, responsible parties, and implementation timelines.

Community communication and engagement regarding the strategic plan are anticipated from October through December 2026. NLACRC is targeting January 2027 for implementation of the new strategic plan.

8.3 Board Workgroups Update

Sharmila Brunjes provided updates on the Executive Director Evaluation Workgroup and the Calendar and Events Workgroup.

The Executive Director Evaluation Workgroup completed Year Two of the Executive Director performance evaluation process. The evaluation will be discussed during closed session due to its confidential personnel nature. Sharmila Brunjes noted that the workgroup will reconvene after a brief break to begin the Year Three evaluation process and thanked workgroup members for their participation and contributions.

The Calendar and Events Workgroup continues to develop the Board training calendar. Sharmila Brunjes shared that the workgroup is considering a training focused on goals and the priorities identified during the Board Retreat, potentially for September 8, 2026. Six of the nine trainings under consideration are required by DDS, with additional training topics being explored for later in the year.

Sharmila Brunjes noted that both workgroups are ongoing and encouraged Board members to participate. Workgroup meeting information is available through Board Support.

9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Angela Pao-Johnson provided the Executive Director's Report and highlighted recent NLACRC activities, statewide updates, operational data, and upcoming events.

Angela Pao-Johnson reported that the July Legislative Breakfast was attended by more than 200 participants, including six legislative field representatives and Assemblymember Tom Lackey. The event recognized the 60th anniversary of California's first two pilot regional centers, Golden Gate and Lanterman, and included advocacy for the developmental disabilities community and discussion of the past, present, and future of the regional center system.

Angela Pao-Johnson provided an update on the Community Listening Sessions being held with historically underserved communities and thanked Board members for their participation. Sessions have been completed with the Armenian, Black/African American, and Hispanic/Latino communities, with Filipino and Farsi-speaking sessions planned. Following completion of the sessions, NLACRC will review themes and feedback, share findings with the community, and develop proposed actions in response to identified needs.

Angela Pao-Johnson reported that NLACRC met DDS benchmarks for IPP satisfaction and exceeded the statewide survey response rate, with NLACRC's response rate approximately 6–7% compared to a statewide rate below 2%. NLACRC also exceeded the statewide overall satisfaction rate in June and July; however, six consecutive months meeting the benchmark are required.

Angela Pao-Johnson recognized Outreach Language Specialist Cynthia Sanchez for being appointed Co-Chair of the Department of Mental Health Service Area Leadership Team in the Antelope Valley, strengthening NLACRC's partnerships with behavioral health organizations.

Angela Pao-Johnson shared statewide updates, including that DDS has paused further development of the standardized respite assessment tool while evaluating its potential impact on services. Angela Pao-Johnson also discussed development of a new statewide operations funding model intended to replace the outdated core staffing formula. The proposed model considers factors such as catchment area size, geographic costs, workload, organizational structure, technology, training, hardware, software, and positions not adequately funded under the existing formula.

Angela Pao-Johnson provided an update on ARCA Academy, which provides governance training, legislative and policy updates, and education regarding Board roles and responsibilities. NLACRC will also present at ARCA Academy regarding the Board's governance journey and fulfillment of its duties.

Angela Pao-Johnson reported that NLACRC currently has 983 filled positions and serves 43,111 individuals. Quality Assurance completed 117 residential visits, resulting in five corrective action plans and no plans of improvement for non-licensed providers. Social recreation referrals totaled 1,250 in June and 1,257 in July, with intake processing averaging approximately two days and reimbursements averaging seven to ten days.

Angela Pao-Johnson highlighted NLACRC's community outreach efforts, including participation in a Juneteenth celebration with the NAACP in Canyon Country, where the Outreach Team connected with approximately 120 community members. Upcoming opportunities for Board participation were also shared, including the Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee meeting and Disability Rights California Board meeting.

10. PUBLIC INPUT & COMMENTS

Kermit Jackson, NLACRC Service Coordinator, provided public comment regarding staff morale, workload, and operational challenges. Kermit Jackson expressed concern that staff morale has declined and noted that these concerns extend beyond service coordinators to staff in other departments.

Kermit Jackson discussed the impact of social recreation requests on School Age Service Coordinators, citing high caseloads, frequent requests, and the administrative workload associated with processing services. Kermit Jackson stated that workload demands can contribute to delays in completing IPPs and addendums, resulting in frustration for families and staff and contributing to employee turnover.

Board members discussed the concerns raised and clarified that operational solutions are developed by staff and may be brought to the Board when Board action is appropriate. Angela Pao-Johnson clarified that DDS determines the process for social recreation services and acknowledged the concerns regarding workload and the need to identify ways to better support workflow.

Kermit Jackson concluded by recognizing improvements in staffing ratios over recent years and commended Human Resources for recruitment efforts while emphasizing the importance of retaining staff.

Evelyn McOmie announced NLACRC's upcoming Family Expos and encouraged Board members and the community to participate and help spread the word. The San Fernando Valley/Santa Clarita Family Expo will be held September 12, 2026, in Santa Clarita and will include a disco theme and dance for individuals served. The Antelope Valley Family Expo will be held October 24, 2026, at the AV Fairgrounds and Events Center, with a larger venue secured to accommodate the event.

With no additional public comments, the Board proceeded to closed session.

11. CLOSED SESSION

Sharmila Brunjes announced that the Board would move into closed session to discuss legal, personnel, and the Executive Director Performance Evaluation.

Absent objection the Board moved into closed session at 7:35 p.m.

On a motion made by Jeremy Sunderland, seconded by Jennifer Koster, it was resolved to exit closed session at 9:10 p.m.

No other votes were made.

12. SDLVAC LIAISON REPORT AND SELF-DETERMINATION (SDP) IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

No Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee meeting was held. The next meeting is scheduled for August 20, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. online.

Juan Hernandez was thanked for serving as the Board's Self-Determination Program liaison. Jennifer Koster volunteered and was confirmed as the new liaison.

13. ITEMS 13-20

The Board received the following committee reports for information:

- Association of Regional Center Agencies presented by Lety Garcia and Jeremy Sunderland.

  The ARCA report from the final meeting of FY 2025–2026 was included in the meeting packet. Board members were encouraged to review the report.

  ARCA Academy will be held September 25–26, 2026, at Harbor Regional Center in Torrance. Board members were encouraged to attend and contact Lindsay Granger for registration information. Lety Garcia noted that this is the first time the Academy will be held in the Los Angeles area and encouraged participation because of the opportunity to connect with Board members from throughout the state and learn about important governance topics.

  The next ARCA meeting is scheduled for August 21, 2026.

- Consumer Advisory Committee presented by Juan Hernandez

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

- Community Relations Committee presented by Jeremy Sunderland.

- Nominating Committee presented by Curtis Wang.

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

- Vendor Advisory Committee presented by Tal Segalovitch.

The Board acknowledged the committee and liaison reports and proceeded to the next agenda item.

14. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

Board and committee attendance sheets and time reports were reset for the beginning of the fiscal year and were included at the end of the Board packet for review. The Board's acronym reference guide was also included in the packet.

No additional old or new business was presented.

15. ANNOUNCEMENTS / INFORMATION

Evelyn McOmie announced the upcoming NLACRC Family Expos and encouraged Board members and community members to attend and share the event information. The San Fernando Valley/Santa Clarita Family Expo will be held September 12, 2026, in Santa Clarita and will include a dance for individuals served. The Antelope Valley Family Expo will be held October 24, 2026, at the AV Fairgrounds and Events Center in Lancaster.

16. NEXT MEETING

The next Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 9, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. and will be held virtually.

17. ADJOURNMENT

Absent objection the meeting was adjourned at 9:24 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.