



EASTERN LOS ANGELES REGIONAL CENTER
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**ELARC Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
January 12, 2021
Approved as Recorded on February 9, 2021**

Board Members Present:

Richard Helgeson, President
Joe Utar, Treasurer
Youngeng Sun, Secretary
Diane Lassell, Parent
Pat Gomez, Parent
Dr. Linda Lopez, Parent
Marisol Guerrero, CAC Representative
Nestor Nieves, Consumer
Devora Reed, Vice-Chair
Virgilio Orlina, Consumer

Staff Present:

Gloria Wong, Executive Director
Edith Hernandez, Chief of Consumer Services
Lonetta Johns-Yarleque, Associate Chief of
Consumer Services
Elizabeth Harrell, Manager, Community
Services Division
Roxy Ortiz, Information & Training Supervisor
Johnny Trombley, IT Supervisor
Angie Salas, Executive Secretary

Absent:

Bryan Chacon, VAC Representative

Guests: Refer to Sign In Sheet

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DUE TO THE CURRENT HEALTH CRISIS THE BOARD MEETING WAS HELD BY REMOTE PARTICIPATION ONLY

I. Welcome & Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 P.M. by Richard Helgeson, Board President. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the “stay-at-home” order the Board meeting was held remotely. The arrangement consisted of a Zoom Conference/Teleconference line and material was displayed on agency website and available to all visitor participants with a link from the agency website.

Mr. Helgeson welcomed all to the Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center Zoom Board of Directors Meeting.

Roll call was conducted. A quorum was established in order to conduct necessary business.

II. Community Introductions/Opening Round:

The Board members and guests were asked to introduce themselves and were noted on the “Sign-In” sheet.

III. Community Input:

Ms. Gloria Wong made an announcement that sadly, Elton Lui, a former ELARC Board Member who served for two (2) different terms, passed away due to COVID-19 in December 2020. Ms. Wong shared the public obituary. The obituary, noted Mr. Lui’s long standing relation with ELARC.

Nestor Nieves, Board Member, expressed hope in the new Presidential Administration to expedite vaccine distribution to the states in an effort to mitigate COVID-19.

Nancy Mendoza, Foothill Family Early Head Start, shared that the agency continues to provide services to children in their early start program. They also have available services for expectant mothers who may need early head start services. The organization wants to ensure that families have access to services and are aware of available resources.

There were no other announcements or comments.

IV.

**Approval of Board of Directors Meeting Minutes – Motion Required
Attachment #1**

M/S/C (Virgilio Orlina/Pat Gomez) To approve the BOD Meeting Minutes of November 10, 2020 as recorded. Unanimous.

V.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Gloria Wong, Executive Director

A. Purchase of Services (POS) Data Report - Attachment #2

Ms. Wong presented and reviewed information from the "Purchase of Services (POS) Data Report" for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-'20. Ms. Wong indicated that the annually issued report was posted on ELARC's website prior to the required deadline of December 31st. The report analyzes the POS expenditures for all ELARC consumers in FY 2019-'20. There are six (6) critical focus areas analyzed in the report:

1. Annual Expenditures by Ethnicity
2. No Purchase of Services
3. Insurance Related Expenditures
4. Annual Expenditures by Residence Type
5. Annual Expenditures by Language
6. Annual Expenditures for Consumers:
 - A. Living at Home
 - B. Living Out-of-Home

Ms. Wong shared that the "POS" report is the basis for developing a comprehensive analysis of POS expenditure trends and ELARC will be presenting the results at a Public Meeting in March 2021. Ms. Wong noted the unique demographics for the ELARC population:

- Hispanic 70%
- Asian 13%
- White 9.5%
- African-American 1%
- Other 7.5%

The focus of the Community Meeting will be on the POS expenditures for the three (3) largest ethnic groups served by ELARC: Hispanic, Asian and White. The total average annual POS expenditures for each group will be reviewed to determine the differences in expenditures and the related reasons for existing differentials.

Ms. Wong noted that a substantial factor to the differing POS expenditures is the choice of “living at home” versus “living out-of-home”. Ms. Wong reviewed page one (1) of the report entitled “Total Annual Expenditures and Authorized Services by Ethnicity or Race” and contrasted it to pages 56 and 57 of the report entitled “Total Annual Expenditures for Consumers Living at Home and Out-of-Home”. Ms. Wong noted that residential placement for Hispanic and Asian families are historically lower than for other ethnic groups. When isolating “residential” costs and comparing costs for all ethnic groups that are “living at home” the POS average per capita dramatically changes. The differences were compared when reviewing page 1 of the report reflecting “total” expenditures, which includes residential costs, in contrast to page 56 for consumers that are “living at home”. Comparisons were reviewed as follows:

POS Expenditures Per Capita

	Hispanic	Asian	White
“Total”	\$14,259	\$15,428	\$39,355
“Living at Home”	\$9,190	\$10,053	\$12,680

As noted in above table the gap in per capita POS expenditure is substantially reduced when residential costs are factored-out. Future analysis will focus on the POS expenditure variances for consumers “living at home” and the overall “total” cost of POS.

Ms. Wong continued by reviewing sections of the POS report and the differences between “Expenditures” and “Authorized” services and the reasons for the differences in costs. Additionally, Ms. Wong reviewed the “Utilization” rate for authorized services.

In closing Ms. Wong noted that the “POS Data Report” is the essential building block for preparing a comprehensive analysis of ELARC’s POS expenditure trends and how to attain a more equitable distribution of purchase of services funds.

B. ELARC: Service Access Equity (SAE) Equity Proposal - Attachment #3

Ms. Wong presented the recently submitted POS equity grant to DDS. The request is to continue the funding of the project entitled “Reduced Caseload Ratio”. The project has five (5) service coordinators each carrying a caseload ratio of 1:40. There are 200 consumers/families involved in this intense care management approach to work with monolingual families where POS expenditure falls below the per capita averages. The project focus in the application was reviewed:

Project Summary:

Provide ongoing service coordination at a reduced caseload ratio to educate individuals and families about the Regional Center system/services, provide information regarding community resources to impact purchase of services expenditures and promote the ability of advocacy skills. Part of the team will include “Person Centered Coordinators” to provide new staff development and serve as a budge bridge between the reduced caseload project and all other service coordinator staff.

Changes in Per Capita Expenditures

	Fiscal Year		
	'17/18	'18/19	'19/20
Hispanic	113%	217%	940%
Chinese	109%	180%	308%

ELARC’s goal is continue to replicate this success by introducing new families/consumers to this new case management approach.

Mrs. Roxy Ortiz, Information & Training (IT) Supervisor, stated that there are two (2) Person Centered Practices (PCP) Coordinators dedicated to working with families coming in from “Intake” and walking them through the process of understanding the Regional Center, what is an IPP, the relationship between the service coordinator and the consumer/family. In addition, the PCP Coordinator offer case consultation to all Regional Center service coordinators which includes individual consultation on person centered planning and practices; individual consultation on seeking community resources whether generic or vendored and connecting those services based on the family needs.

The role of the PCP Coordinators is being modified in this application cycle by having them carry a caseload of twenty (20) each thereby expanding the number of consumers served in the project. They will continue their support role to all service coordinators as a means of promoting service access and equity throughout the agency.

It was noted that equity funds are also available to organizations referred to as “Community Based Organizations” (CBO’s). Twelve (12) CBO’s that submitted applications and identified ELARC as a partner. The running theme for most projects includes: outreach, parent education and training. It is expected that DDS will announce grant awards by the end of January 2021.

Nestor Nieves, Board Member, asked if the situation with reduced caseloads has changed due to COVID-19, he feels that many families will lose contact because they are not familiar with technology and how to access resources.

Mrs. Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services, assured Mr. Nieves that ELARC has increased its outreach to consumers/families during the COVID-19 pandemic. She noted that service coordinators are reaching out to their entire caseload on a continuous manner, whether by phone or email to ensure their well being and that there are no gap in services.

C. COVID-19 Surveillance Tracker - Attachment #4, #5, #6, #7, #8 and #9

Ms. Wong stated that since our last Board meeting in November 2020 there has been a substantial increase in COVID-19 cases, as has been case in the community at large.

Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services, reviewed the COVID-19 Surveillance graphs. She indicated that the numbers continue to grow in every capacity. ELARC has an “On Call” Supervisor that is assigned every two (2) weeks to address and answer urgent calls after hours regular operating hours. In addition to the “On Call” Supervisor assigned, Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services and Lonetta Johns-Yarleque, Associate Chief of Consumer Services also provide support after hours. Due to the holidays there was a substantial increase in the number of calls. Due to the overwhelming demand we have revamped the agency after hour plan. In addition to the three (3) On call Supervisors there are now four (4) additional Supervisors that are on call 24/7 for a total of seven (7) “On Call” Supervisors available to provide support on an after hour basis.

Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels stated that calls come in at various hours after ELARC has closed for the day. For example they received a call at 10:00pm where everyone had tested positive for COVID-19 at a residential facility and everyone in the facility including staff members needed to be removed from the residential facility for isolation purposes. Consumers needed to be relocated which then required staffing arrangements to be put into place in very quick order.

Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels shared another example where when an entire family tested positive for COVID-19 on Christmas Eve. ELARC mobilized supports for consumer. This is just an example to provide what type of activities can transpire at any given moment. This past weekend 2 individuals needed to be placed in a surge sight that is located in the San Gabriel Pomona Regional Center area.

Ms. Hernandez-Daniels fielded numerous inquiries from the audience. Additionally, comments of appreciation and gratitude for the support being offered by the Regional Center was expressed.

Ms. Hernandez-Daniels proceeded in her review of the COVID-19 surveillance graphs and shared the following information:

Consumers - Attachment #5

- As of 12/16/20 there were 257 individuals that have tested positive and 7 deaths out of 12, 433 consumers served by ELARC
- As of 01/12/21 there were 433 individuals that have tested positive and 16 deaths out of the 12,433 consumers served by ELARC.

Service Providers and ELARC Employees - Attachment #8

- As of 12/16/20 there were 98 providers that tested positive for COVID-19
- As of 01/12/21 there were 130 providers that tested positive for COVID-19
- As of 12/19/20 there we 10 ELARC Staff that have tested positive for COVID-19
- As of 01/12/21 there are 22 ELARC Staff that have tested positive for COVID-19

Surge Capacity: Resources

Elizabeth Harrell, Manager, Community Services Division, reported that “Surge Capacity” practices were developed in March of 2020 and continues to be a critical focus area. The last surge has amped up all of our efforts to have these resources in place quickly. ELARC turned to their provider community and they responded to the need. When Surge Capacity is talked about we are referring to locations, beds, possibly facilities and staff. Staff who are willing to work with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to COVID-19. Unfortunately staffing resources were dwindling because staff where testing positive for COVID-19 and in addition you have a percentage of staff that do not want to work with someone whose tested positive for COVID-19, which has proven to be a major challenge. We are conducting outreach to our provider community and neighboring Regional Centers. Statewide staffing agencies have been vendored to expand our pool of resources. ELARC does not have a surge facility in their catchment area but we partner with neighboring Regional Centers.

Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels shared that the local Regional Centers have used sites that include “Motel 6” and the “Double Tree” hotel. Ongoing calls with DDS continue to happen to discuss surge site resources and staffing that may be available that we are not aware of. We are working together as a community to identify supports on a continuous basis.

PPE/Supplies: Distribution update

Roxy Ortiz, Information and Training (IT), Supervisor, reported that ELARC continues to provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to the individuals we serve, their families, and the provider community. If PPE is needed please contact the assigned service coordinator or if you are a provider you may contact your community services specialist to make a request.

Ms. Ortiz indicated that we have the following PPE's available for distribution:

- Surgical/disposable masks
- Gloves
- Gowns
- Face shields
- Hand sanitizers
- N95 masks
- Wipes

ELARC's PPE distribution date is every Wednesday from 10:00am – 4:00pm. Please contact your assigned service coordinator or community services specialist to make an appointment to pick up PPE supplies.

Mrs. Ortiz reported that as of last week the following have been distributed to the community, service providers, and to consumers and their families:

- Surgical masks 27,000
- N95 mask 18,000
- Gloves 52,500
- Gowns 6,000

Ms. Ortiz reported that there were over 108,000 PPE that have been distributed.

An inquiry was made as to whether PPE's are supplied to families without transportation means. Ms. Ortiz stated that ELARC has transportation providers available to deliver the PPE to consumer and families. Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels added that the families need to contact their service coordinator for that arrangement to be made.

ARCA: Vaccine Prioritization Correspondence - Attachment #9

Ms. Wong shared a letter dated November 29, 2020 provided by the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) advocating the importance of including individuals with developmental disabilities in receiving the vaccine in the current phase. The seven (7) Los Angeles Regional Centers, including ELARC, have been in communication with CDC Lead Public Health Advisor, Laurel Fowler, to advance the prioritization of family members, service providers and Regional Center staff under the current vaccine phase "Tier 1A". Approval was received today that all the aforementioned categories will be eligible for the vaccinations under "health-care-worker" category. ELARC will quickly be issuing notices and certification letters so that eligible individuals can swiftly proceed in the scheduling of their appointments. Additional good news was shared that "IHSS" workers are also approved for the vaccine, the notification is posted on ELARC website. Ms. Wong stressed that the focus is now to develop a strong campaign to advocate for consumer vaccination.

Numerous questions were posed as to next steps in this process and audience was advised that over the next few days the details will be made available and the communication channels will be activated to keep everyone informed. Audience was encouraged to check ELARC's website with frequency to be kept up to date.

D. Alternative Non-Residential Services Update

Liz Harrell, Manager of Consumer Services, gave an update on "Alternative Services". She offered a brief background on the purpose of this new service category which was established with a DDS directive issued on August 31, 2020. The intent of the directive is allow Regional Centers to back fill the void created in service arrangements pre COVID-19. "Alternative Services" is meant to offer a continuation to services and supports that adheres to the COVID-19 guidelines. The result is that Regional Centers remote learning and support to consumers is done on a one on one basis.

Presently, DDS has released new rates for providers under this category. The rates were released on December 2, 2020 and are in effect as of January 1, 2021. ELARC is conducting weekly meetings with providers to ensure that we clarify and maintain an open line of communication with providers who are delivering services under this category.

**E. DDS Directives: Extensions / Modifications
Attachment #10, #11, #12 and #13**

Attachment #10

A directive from the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) dated December 23, 2020 in reference to overtime pay for participants directed respite services. This directive became effective December 1, 2020.

Attachment #11

A directive from DDS dated December 23, 2020 that includes seven (7) previously released directives and they are all being extended.

Attachment #12

A directive from DDS dated December 18, 2020 in reference to Self-Determination. A waiver of the budget for the financial management services.

Attachment #13

A directive from DDS dated December 1, 2020 in reference to multiple time extensions to previous directives.

The following directives were issued past the mailing of the Board Packet and were posted as "Handout" material for the audience.

Handout #1

A directive from DDS dated January 8, 2021 in reference to Rate for Supported Living Services (SLS) during quarantine and/or isolation.

Handout #2

A directive from DDS dated January 4, 2021 in reference to monthly rates for transportation and group supported employment for alternative nonresidential services.

Handout #3

A directive from DDS dated January 4, 2021 in reference to guidance regarding reporting requirement for alternative nonresidential services. There is an attachment of what the reporting or questionnaire is about.

Mrs. Harrell, reported that transportation and group supported employment providers who are providing alternative nonresidential services do not have a monthly rate and DDS has extended it. It will not be in effect until March 2021.

F. Self-Determination Update (SD) - Attachment #14

Mrs. Harrell announced that the next meeting for the Self-Determination (SD) Local Advisory Committee (LAC) will be on January 19, 2021. She reported on past meeting discussion on how to use special funds allocated to the LAC. The funds are exclusively awarded to the LAC who will have the authority to approve all projects. For the fiscal year 2019-'20 there were \$65,000 made available to the LAC. Several project concepts were discussed which includes working with a consultant from Hill and Sanderson Associates to roll out and guide the implementation for service coordinators and facilitators. For 2020-'21 there is \$89,000 available to guide the implementation of SD, this will be a point of discussion for the LAC in future meetings. Organizations are now approaching the LAC with potential proposals to consider These organizations have experience in either implementing or training on self-determination, which includes Disability Voices United (DVU) which has put together a proposal to the LAC for training.

Roxy Ortiz, Information and Training Supervisor, reported that ELARC will be working closely with the LAC and contractor Helen Sanderson to fine tune the proposal for establishing the learning communities.

G. Budget Update - Attachment #15

A. Fiscal Year 20-21'

1. Purchase of Services Expenditure Projection (PEP) Summary

Purchase of Services Expenditure Projection (PEP) Summary report was submitted to DDS by the deadline of January 10, 2021. Ms. Wong reported that there is a \$17,786,708 million dollar deficit projected for POS. The projected significant deficit is attributable to two (2) primary factors:

- 1) COVID-19 related expense increases in POS due to unique services and supports required.
- 2) ELARC has received only one allocation to date under the current contract.

Ms. Wong explained that typically Regional Centers would have received the second and third contract amendment at this juncture which would be the opportunity to address the projected deficit. It is uncertain as to when DDS will issue the next contract amendment and allocate remaining funds for POS and OPS. Ms. Wong noted that as a point of comparison, last year ELARC received a total of seven (7) contract amendments as compared to the current fiscal year with only five (5) months remaining and having received only one contract amendment/allocation adjustment, to date.

2. Consumer "Annual Statement of Services Provided" Correspondence

The attached correspondence is sent annually to consumer/families outlining services funded on their behalf for the previous fiscal year. Ms. Wong announced that there was a mailing error on some of the letters resulting in a delay. Letters will be reissued soon.

Ms. Hernandez-Daniels, added that annually a contractor sends out a notice with the annual statement. The error was in regards to the address. The contractor extracts the information from ELARC's database. They made the error of not picking up one of the address fields which is the physical address and street. This did not happen to all notices but to a large number. The notices with error were returned to the Regional Center and we are in the process of re-mailing them to consumers/families.

3. Operations (OPS)

The Budget Performance Report reflects the allocation to the operations budget. Currently there is a surplus of \$300,00.

B. Fiscal Year 2021-'22

As of last week the Governor released the preliminary budget for fiscal year 2021-'22. The preliminary review is positive as there are no cuts proposed to POS or OPS for Regional Centers. Ms. Wong reminded all that this early stage of the proposed budget will undergo many other reviews until the Governor issues his final budget in May. The path is long but at this initial stage it's a promising start. More detail analysis of the budget will be conducted over the next few weeks and more details will be reported at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Wong stated that through ARCA the system will once again attempt to advocate for additional OPS funding to meet the Regional required caseload ratios. ELARC as of March 2021 was in need of hiring twenty two (22) service coordinators to comply with this requirement, since that time the number has risen to twenty five (25). This will be the focus for ELARC's grassroots effort.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) - (Marisol Guerrero)

Marisol Guerrero, CAC Representative, will continue providing the CAC report until elections for the Chair and Vice-Chair position are held.

The next Consumer Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday January 19, 2021, from 4pm - 6pm. The meeting will be conducted as a "Go To Meeting". The topic will be on emergency preparedness. Elections for the CAC Chair and Vice-Chair position will be conducted at the upcoming meeting.

Ms. Guerrero shared that the last meeting was on November 17, 2020 and the topic of the meeting was on employment options. The guest speaker was George De La Loza, ELARC Employment Specialist.

B. Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC) - (Bryan Chacon)

No report as Mr. Chacon was not in attendance.

C. Finance/Personnel Committee (Joe Utar/Richard Helgeson) - Motion Required

Mr. Helgeson reported that the Finance/Personnel Committee met with the Independent Auditors in December 2020. It was a very positive meeting.

1. WINDES, Inc.: Presentation Material

WINDES, Inc. results of the June 30, 2020 Audit sets forth the rules for the audit and the accounting policies to be used. In conclusion this report it was a very smooth audit. WINDES, Inc. had no disagreements with management, no discrepancies noted regarding overpayments, underpayments, or missing monies. They were in agreement with everything. Mr. Helgeson noted that this goes to the credit of all of the financial staff at ELARC.

2. Independent Auditor's Preliminary Draft Report Fiscal year 2019-'20

This report is the heart of the audit as it includes the actual financial statements. The most important information are the notes that are located in page 22 – page 26. They found that there are no material weaknesses in our controls and that we are in compliance with all of the federal program requirements. Page 26 goes through it in more detail:

- ✓ Material weakness identified No
- ✓ Significant deficiencies None
- ✓ Non-Compliance No
- ✓ Does the auditee qualify as a low risk auditee Yes

Mr. Helgeson reports that it is a clean audit that resulting in an unmodified opinion which means the financial statements are accurate.

Ms. Wong concurred with Board President, Richard Helgeson, that at the heart of this positive audit report is an experienced financial division with tremendous knowledge and expertise.

M/S/C (Devora Reed/Pat Gomez) To approve the Preliminary Draft Report

VIII. Miscellaneous Announcements

There being no further business to discuss the general board meeting was adjourned.

XI. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss the general board meeting was adjourned at 8:10 P.M. Unanimous

M/S/C (Richard Helgeson/Virgilio Orlina)

Respectfully Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Yougeng Sun', written in a cursive style.

Yougeng Sun,
Secretary, ELARC Board of Directors

Recorded by: Angie Salas,
Executive Secretary