



EASTERN LOS ANGELES REGIONAL CENTER
1000 S. Fremont Ave. • P.O. Box 7916 • Alhambra, CA 91802-7916
(626) 299-4700 • FAX (626) 281-0730

**ELARC Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
February 09, 2021
Approved as Recorded March 09, 2021**

Board Members Present:

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

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:

Yougeng Sun, Secretary (Absent)

Guests: Refer to Sign In Sheet

.....
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 6:03 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:

Nancy Mendoza, Foothill Family Early Head Start, shared that the agency continues to provide services to children in their early start program. They currently have open enrollment for children from the age 0-3 years old. The organization will begin to offer in-home visits once the COVID-19 numbers decline.

There were no other announcements or comments.

IV.

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

M/S/C (Devora Reed/Pat Gomez) To approve the BOD Meeting Minutes of January 12, 2021 as recorded. Unanimous.

V.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT
Gloria Wong, Executive Director
A. Performance Contract - Attachment #2, #3 and #4**

Ms. Wong shared the correspondence from the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) dated January 5, 2021 which approved the recently submitted ELARC 2021 performance contract.

Additionally, Ms. Wong reviewed the statewide data report for the 2020 Performance Contract and contrasted ELARC’s results to the statewide average percentages. This data will be used in the development of the “Year-End Performance Contract Report” for calendar year 2020. The final report will be issued sometime in the Spring of 2021.

Ms. Wong referenced the “2019 Year-End Performance Contract Report” and shared that the same format will be used when the 2020 summary report is released.

B. DDS Directives - Attachment #5 and #6

Attachment #5

A directive issued by DDS on January 29, 2021 was reviewed. The directive has four major components and the Department is directing Regional Centers to increase case management activities to ensure the well-being of consumers/families due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The four focus areas in the directive were discussed as follows:

1) **Consumer & Family Contacts**

Contact to be made within 30 days to ensure the health and safety of consumers/families and to identify services and supports needed, including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

2) **Hospital Contacts**

For any consumer hospitalized as a result of COVID-19 Regional Centers are to maintain contact with pertinent parties and assist with discharge plans as needed.

3) **Testing and Vaccination Plan**

Within 30 days from directive issue date, Regional Centers are to submit a brief and succinct plan that addresses how ELARC will inform it's community on available testing and vaccination locations and options.

4) **Regional Center Relief**

Requests by individual Regional Centers are to be submitted to DDS when their authorization is needed to provide prioritization of workload relief.

Ms. Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services, reported that service coordinators are continuing their efforts to contact families on an individual basis to check on consumer well being and ensuring that necessary supports and services are in place. This contact serves as an opportunity to assist families with the scheduling of vaccinations and informing families in the various locations available for testing and vaccination sites in their community.

Ms. Hernandez-Daniels reported that as of January 1, 2021 there have been 15 consumers hospitalized due to COVID-19. ELARC staff has been involved in the hospital discharge plans for these consumers in order to ensure that the necessary services are in place at time of discharge.

Israel Ibañez, representing “Inclusion Services”, shared that consumers being served by his agency have received the monthly check-in calls from their service coordinators. He expressed his appreciation for ELARC’s oversight and the close monitoring of consumers in order to ensure their health and safety.

Liz Harrell, Community Services Manager, reported on the testing and vaccination component of the directive. The first point of contact for families is the Service Coordinators. Mrs. Harrell shared that daily updates will be made to ELARC’s website to ensure the most up-to-date information. Mrs. Harrell reported that ELARC has contracted with the former director of the Pasadena Public Health who will be assisting ELARC on contacting vaccination sites and exploring the possibility of carve-out appointments for families/consumers. ELARC is also partnering with the California Testing Taskforce to develop access for testing within our community. In addition, ELARC is conducting weekly meetings with vendors to ensure that we clarify and maintain an open line of communication with providers on the vaccination front.

Ms. Wong stated that a formal ELARC “testing and vaccination” plan will be submitted to DDS by the deadline of February 28th. The final report will be shared and discussed at the March Board Meeting. Ms. Wong announced that one of the two federal vaccination sites will be located in ELARC’s catchment area at Cal State University Los Angeles. This will be a great benefit to our entire community.

Dr. Linda Lopez, Board Member, shared that she was happy to hear the great news that the site will be at Cal State University Los Angeles. She inquired if there is a possibility to arrange for a carve-out appointment arrangement. Liz Harrell stated we are looking into the possibility of a dedicated appointment arrangement for families/consumers. More details will be shared at the March meeting.

Attachment #6

A directive from the Department dated January 27, 2021 in reference to reporting requirements for alternative non-residential services was reviewed.

Elizabeth Harrell, Community Services Manager, reported that this service category was created as many providers were impacted by COVID-19 and were not able to provide traditional services. As a way of background, Ms. Harrell stated that as the Governor declared a State of Emergency non-residential service providers were allowed to bill for absences. Due to the emergency they continued to get paid even though clients were not attending their programs because of the temporary emergency. 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 to 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 can offer remote learning and support to consumers on a one on one basis. The purpose of “Alternative Services” is guided by three (3) critical components as follows:

- **Part 1:** Services to be delivered as a result of the needs of the consumer, the people we serve whose lives have been changed due to the pandemic.
- **Part 2:** To sustain the service delivery system. All the providers are needed and we need to sustain their operation/business.
- **Part 3:** To continue to secure the federal dollars. The federal dollars need to flow through our service delivery system.

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.

The following directive was issued past the mailing deadline for the Board Packet and was posted as a “Handout” prior to the February Board meeting.

Handout #1

A directive from DDS dated February 3, 2021 referencing Financial Management Services (FMS) for Self-Determination (SD) services.

The directive addresses Self-Determination (SD) and the program budget restrictions on payments for “Financial Management Services” (FMS). As of October 1, 2020 the SD participant has the flexibility to repurpose funds for FMS fees for different and/or additional services during the COVID-19 State of Emergency. The spending plan will need to be adjusted to reflect where the repurposed FMS fees will be used.

Ms. Wong stressed that it’s critical for families to communicate with their service coordinators on how those funds are to be reallocated. Service coordinators will be reaching out to all Self-Determination participants on their caseload to revise the plan according to the families/consumers direction.

C. COVID-19 Surveillance Tacker

Ms. Wong indicated that ELARC reports daily to DDS on the COVID-19 status for consumers, service providers and Regional Center personnel. The "Surveillance Tracker" statistics were converted into a graph and reviewed.

Handout #3

Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services, reviewed the COVID-19 Surveillance graphs. She reported that as of February 2, 2021 there are 12, 447 individuals served by ELARC. As of February 2, 2021 there were 575 individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 which is 5% of the individuals that we serve.

The second column speaks to the individuals who tested negative which is a total of eight (8). As of February 1, 2021 there have been 20 deaths. The COVID-19 positive results for service provider staff is one hundred forty-six (146) and for Regional Center staff is twenty-two (22).

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.

Surge Capacity refers to locations, beds, possible facilities and staff 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 were testing positive for COVID-19 and in addition you have staff that do not want to work with someone whose tested positive for COVID-19.

Currently there are 10 staffing agencies in place and some have multiple offices available. There is a site with beds under development. A service provider with a home in the City of Rosemead is converting their site and will have a capacity for two (2) initially. Additionally, we continue to partner with neighboring Regional Centers on Surge Resources.

Personal Protective Equipment (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, the provider community, and to surge sites.

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

- Surgical masks 35,400
- N95 mask 18,910
- Gloves 54,660
- Gowns 6,554
- Face Shields 3,537
- Sanitizer (4 oz./16 oz./1 gal.) 1,650

Ms. Ortiz reported that in total there were 119,891 PPE supplies that were distributed to our community.

ELARC’s PPE distribution is conducted on Wednesday from 10:00am – 4:00pm. Please contact your assigned service coordinator or community services specialist to place your order and to make an appointment to pick up PPE supplies.

Vaccine Prioritization Correspondence - Attachment #7, #8, #9 and #10

Attachment #7

Ms. Wong shared an ELARC letter that was developed for families verifying that they were considered to be “Health Care” workers and therefore qualify for the COVID-19 vaccine.

Attachment #8

This letter was issued by the Department of Developmental Services and is shared with families to take to their appointments.

Attachment #9

A letter generated for our service provider community confirming that their employees are considered health care services personnel and are eligible for the vaccination.

Handout #6

Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels reviewed the newly crafted letter for family members which verifies that an individual is considered to be a “Health Care” worker. Reasons for the reissuance of the letter were presented.

- Website crashed and reissuing with a new website was necessary
- Change in criteria.
- Recent clarification received from the California Department of Public Health where certain families/consumers were no longer eligible which included individuals with the diagnosis of Autism and Early Start consumers. As a result the letter needed to be revised. In addition, families were turned away because the letter contained no clarification from the California Department of Public Health, and some vaccination sites were being a stricter than other sites and declining to vaccinate. As a result, we began to provide letters on special watermark paper to authenticate the verification of vaccine eligibility and to minimize difficulties at time of appointments.

Dr. Linda Lopez, Board Member, shared that receiving this letter was very helpful for her and her family. She thanked everyone for all of their hard work and support.

The audience participants also shared positive comments on the process.

Attachment #10

Ms. Wong shared the document that outlined the efforts of a coalition of advocates to include individuals with developmental disabilities in the current vaccination cycle. Partnering in this effort includes: Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA), Disability Voices United (DVU), Disability Rights California (DRC) and the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Handout #5

Advocacy efforts as outlined above proved to be successful as Governor Newsom pledged a vaccine priority for people with developmental disabilities on February 9, 2021, as part of a news announcement.

D. Self-Determination Update (SD) - Attachment #11

Ms. Wong announced that the next meeting for the Self-Determination (SD) Local Advisory Committee (LAC) will be on April 20, 2021.

Attachment #11

Mrs. Harrell reviewed specific milestones for the ninety-two (92) Self-Determination participants. Graph was reviewed showing participants progress as follows:

- Successfully Transitioned 36%
- Person Center Plan Completed (up 16%) 30%
- FMS Obtained by Participants 38%
- IPP Completed and Signed 39%
- Spending Plan Completed 38%
- Individual Budget Certified 42%
- SD Participation that Completed the Orientation 95%

Ms. Harrell reported that these are milestones in the transition from traditional case management to Self-Determination. The Service Coordinator is involved in all steps of the process. We are gearing up for what will be the opening of Self-Determination in July 2021 to all interested families/consumers. The LAC meeting held on January 19, 2021 focused on the implementation funds that are set aside specifically for decision making and management by the Advisory Committee. For the fiscal year 2019-'20 there was \$65,000 made available to the LAC. For fiscal year 2021-'22 there is \$89,000 available to guide the implementation of SD. Organizations are now approaching the LAC with proposals to consider.

Ms. Wong stressed that Self-Determination is a voluntary option for families/consumers. Regional Center will be operating two (2) forms of case management: traditional service coordination and the Self-Determination option.

Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels reported that Liz Ornelas, ELARC Supervisor, is working on revising the current graph to offer more detail information. ELARC is working on enhancing team support to Service Coordinators and to identify barriers.

E. Budget Update

A. Fiscal Year 2020-21'

1. Purchase of Services Expenditure Projection (PEP) Summary

Purchase of Services Expenditure Projection (PEP) Summary report was not ready for distribution as it is not due to DDS until 2-10-21. Ms. Wong stated that a preliminary analysis projects a deficit of about \$2.3 million in POS.

2. Operations (OPS)

Handout #2

The Budget Performance Report reflects the allocation to the operations budget. Currently there is a projected surplus of \$436,000. Ms. Wong shared that new staff hiring and the addition of a new unit to "Consumer Services" division will allow for relief to the current service coordinator caseload ratio.

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 at this stage as there are no cuts proposed to POS or OPS for Regional Centers.

There are a few new positions proposed, namely an "Emergency Manager" to solely handle emergency preparedness for Regional Centers, (ie) fires, earthquakes and pandemics.

Ms. Wong reminded everyone that we are in the early stages of budget development and much can change from now until the passage of the final budget in June 2021. The Governor's release of an updated budget proposal in May 2021 will assess whether revenue projections in January were accurate or whether a revenue shortfall will dictate major adjustments to the preliminary January 2021 budget proposal.

Roxy Ortiz, Information and Training Supervisor, stated that current efforts are underway to plan for a virtual "Grassroot Day" event which will serve to advocate for families, consumers and service providers to play a role in the upcoming budget process.

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, March 16, 2021 from 4pm - 6pm. The meeting will be conducted as a "Go To Meeting". The topic will be on the Importance of "Person Centered Services". The last meeting was held on January 19, 2021. There was not quorum to hold the elections for the CAC Chair and Vice-Chair position. The election will be held at the next CAC meeting.

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

Bryan Chacon, Board Member, reported that the VAC was held on January 28, 2021. Alternative Services rates and guidance on how to go through the process was announced and explained in detail. Vaccination Town Hall Meeting was discussed. Additionally, HCBS presentation was held by Lizette Villa, Community Services Specialist, and Ms. Villa discussed preparation for the virtual onset assessment. Discussion was based on how to prepare and what you need to know for the assessment in detail.

Attachment #12

Mr. Chacon reported on the "Code of Ethics & Business Conduct". ELARC and the VAC developed a code of ethics for conduct of business providers and presented it to the Board for approval.

This has been a work in progress for some time but it has been completed and reviewed by the VAC. The document is about the mission and purpose of the VAC, the "Code of Conduct" is to ensure that all of ELARC vendors and service providers act with honesty, integrity, and transparency in all of their interactions with people with developmental disability, their families, and our community partners. ELARC promotes and models a working environment that values and respects vendors' integrity. The ELARC and the VAC Code of Ethics and Business Conduct for Service Providers document covers:

- Mission and Purpose
- Inclusiveness and Diversity

- Conflict of Interest
- Acceptance of Business Courtesies and Gifts
- ELARC's Whistleblower Policy
- ELARC's Zero Tolerance Policy

The document sums all of the above subjects and provides all of the necessary links so that service providers are able to view.

Mr. Chacon shared that Mrs. Harrell has been very helpful in developing this form and working with leadership. The plan is to include this in the new vendor application orientation. Training will be held in June 2021 on this topic. This is a living document that we will continue to be updated to ensure that everyone will be held accountable to the requirements. This was voted on and passed. Additionally, this being election year 2021 the VAC is gearing up for nominations in April 2021 for Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Anyone working as a service provider and who is interested needs to reach out to Bryan Chacon.

All meetings are held virtually every 4th Thursday of the Month from 10:00am – 11:30am. Everyone is encouraged to sign up for the newsletter as all of the meeting material and links needed are provided.

The next VAC meeting will be held on February 25, 2021.

M/S/C (Virgilio Orlina/Joe Utar) To approve Attachment #12 as recorded. Unanimous.

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

There was no meeting of the Board Finance/Personnel Committee.

VIII. Miscellaneous Announcements

Next Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 6:00pm.

XI. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss the general board meeting was adjourned at 7:49 P.M. Unanimous

M/S/C (Bryan Chacon/Virgilio Orlina. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'S' followed by a long horizontal stroke that ends in a small loop.

Yougeng Sun,
Secretary, ELARC Board of Directors

Recorded by: Angie Salas,
Executive Secretary