



EASTERN LOS ANGELES REGIONAL CENTER
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**ELARC Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2024
Approved as Recorded on March 12, 2024**

Board Members Present:

Dr. Linda Lopez, President
Yougeng Sun, Vice-Chair

Richard Helgeson, Treasurer

Marisol Guerrero, CAC Chair Consumer

Joel Moreno, VAC Representative

Theresa Chen, Parent
Pat Gomez, Parent
Terry Munoz, Parent
Dalia Mendoza, Consumer

Staff Present:

Gloria Wong, Executive Director

Edith Hernandez-Daniels,
Chief of Consumer Services

Judy Perez,
Associate Chief of Consumer Services

Elizabeth Harrell, Community Services
Manager

Roxy Ortiz, Community Development &
Training Supervisor

Johnny Trombley, IT Supervisor

Angie Salas, Executive Secretary

Absent:

Devora Navera-Reed, Secretary
Alex Wu, Consumer

Guests: Refer to Sign in Sheet

I. Welcome & Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 P.M. by Dr. Lopez. The meeting 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.

Dr. Lopez 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:

Comments from the community were addressed.

**IV. Approval of Board of Directors Meeting
Motion Required - ATT #1**

M/S/C (Terry Munoz/Richard Helgeson) To approve the BOD Meeting Minutes of January 9, 2024 as recorded. Unanimous.

V. Executive Director’s Report

**1. 2023-'24 Service Access & Equity Grants Denial Letter
ATT - #2, #3 and #4**

ATT #2

Gloria Wong, Executive Director, provided background information on Service Access & Equity Grants. Ms. Wong discussed DDS correspondence dated January 19, 2024 regarding the “2023-'24 Service Access & Equity Grant – Outcome” letter. Ms. Wong reported the correspondence speaks to the denial of the two (2) proposals submitted to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS).

ATT #3

Ms. Wong shared the proposal submitted to DDS for the, “Mental Health Supports” position, which was denied. This specialized position was assigned to Ivanna Ayala, Mental Health Specialist, who was fully dedicated to connecting with:

- The Mental Health Community
- Developing Resources
- Conducting Parent Groups
- Gathering Input Received from the Community

Ms. Wong reported the “Mental Health Supports” position as being a critical position and although it was denied by DDS ELARC will be blending the responsibilities of “Community Service Specialist” and continuing with some special projects under the “Mental Health Specialist” position.

Elizabeth Harrell, Community Services Manager, reiterated that Ivanna Ayala will remain as a Community Services/Mental Health Specialist. The resource development projects assigned to her relate to mental health. The projects completed within the year, by Ms. Ayala as the “Mental Health Specialist” includes:

- 35 mental health consultations provided to:
 - Service Coordinators
 - Individuals and families
- Partnership with L.A. County Mental Health
 - Ongoing 7 week workshop series
- Collaboration with ELARC Autism Specialist
 - Certified 59 ELARC staff as “Mental Health First Aide”, a nationwide program that social service employees learn the risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns. To immediately address, asses and get resources in place.
- Case management staff participated in “Psychiatric Advance Directive” training.
 - Will be offered to service coordinators and community members

- Finalized mental health screening tool
 - Will assist ELARC service coordinators to establish mental health baseline and track changes.
 - Serve as a referral form as ELARC is in partnership with Easter Seals for coordination of Equitable Mental Health Care.
- Developed a 23 page directory that will be posted on ELARC’s website that will continuously updated
- Two (2) mental health resources developed under CalHope:
 - BrightLife Kids
 - soLuna
- Mental Health Committee made up of ELARC service coordinators from the agency
 - They will be providing training to all ELARC staff

Mrs. Harrell, shared some of the proposed new activities in the grant that was denied:

- Mental Health and Wellness Fair
- Listening Session
- Ongoing Training and Workgroups
- Wellness and Workforce

Mrs. Harrell, shared that some of these efforts will be incorporated into the blended responsibilities of the position “Community Services Mental Health Specialist”.

ATT #4

Ms. Wong offered some background information on the second proposals that was denied, “INSPIRE – Inter-Agency Network Supporting & Preparing Individuals to Reach their Educational & Employment Goals”.

Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services, shared it was unfortunate that the proposal was denied however staff efforts will continue to:

- Provide opportunities to develop careers Micro-Enterprise Pathway to ELARC’s consumers
- Provide training and opportunities to
 - service coordinators, service providers, community, school districts, etc.
- Speaking with Legislatures
- Working with employers and businesses to create work opportunities
- Advisory Committee will continue its function
- Coordinating Local Partnership Agreements and Career Initiatives will be pursued

Ms. Wong reiterated the denials from DDS will not dampen the efforts towards advancing Mental Health Supports and advancing employment opportunities for individuals served by ELARC.

Comments from the Community were addressed.

**2. Self-Determination Program (SDP)
Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (LVAC)
ATT #5, #6, #7 and ATT #8**

ATT #5

Ms. Wong referenced the LVAC January 16, 2024 meeting minutes providing an update on numerous focus areas.

ATT #6

Judy Perez, Associate Chief of Consumer Services, reported on the SDP “Progress Report” and the current number of consumers in the SDP and the various stages of progress:

- 55 Individuals that are currently active in the Self-Determination Program
- 52 Successfully transitioned over to SDP
- 27 Completed Person Center Plan
- 52 Obtained Fiscal Management Service (FMS)
- 52 Completed and signed IPP’s
- 52 Spending plans completed
- 53 Individual budgets certified
- 55 SD Participants completed orientation for SDP

Mrs. Perez reported that as of January 2024 188 SD participants in the SDP have transitioned since the open enrollment phase began in July 2021. Mrs. Perez shared there are Self-Determination service coordinators who specialize in and provide case management to only Self-Determination participants and families. The SD service coordinators have a reduced caseload of 40 and are fluent in Spanish, Cantonese and Vietnamese. ELARC has a team that are subject matter experts that concentrate their efforts with participants and families who are wanting to transition to the SD program. The team consists of two (2) Transition Liaisons who offer training to case management staff. Mrs. Perez shared Self-Determination program information available on ELARC website.

ATT #7

Roxy Ortiz, Community Development and Training Supervisor, provided a brief summary of the January 16, 2024 LVAC meeting. Areas of discussion were:

- Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-'24 LVAC funds
- Discussing proposals submitted by LVAC members
- DDS Directives for the months of November and December of 2023

Elizabeth Harrell, Manager of Community Services, made reference to the “099” vendorization category which offers general support in the transition to the SDP.

ATT #8

Ms. Wong went over the calendar for the Self-Determination Program (SDP) Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (LVAC) meeting schedule for 2024.

Comments from the community were addressed.

**3. Budget Update
ATT #9, #10, #11, #12 and #13**

Handout #2

Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 – '24 Purchase of Services Data Report Update

Ms. Wong made reference to the Purchase of Services (POS) Report which is due February 10, 2024 to DDS which indicates a projected deficit of **(\$1,743,877)**.

Budget Performance Report: Operations

Handout #1

Ms. Wong, reviewed the Operations Budget Performance Report for Fiscal Year 2023 - '24. It reflects a surplus of \$839,631.

ATT #9

Ms. Wong, provided background information on the recent E-1 Allocation which was signed by Dr. Linda Lopez, Board President.

Comments from the community were addressed.

2024 - '25 Governor's Preliminary Budget: January 10, 2024

1) Budget Highlights

- \$15.3 Billion Total Funds
- Net Increase \$1.6 Billion = 11.7%

2) Budget Shortfall

- Governor's Projection = \$37.9 Billion
- Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) = \$68 Billion

3) Proposed Policy Cuts to Regional Centers

- \$1 billion cut to delay service providers Rate Model Implementation to July 1, 2025
- \$10 million delay to FY 2026 - '27 "Pre-School Inclusion" grant programs
- \$9.8 million one-time fund reduction for UFSM/CERMS assessment
- \$7.2 million expiration of one time funded positions: Participant Choice Specialists (PCS)
- \$36 million reduction of the one-time funding for "Coordinated Family Support Services"

4) Proposed Increases of Regional Centers

- \$22.9 million increase in “Social Recreation and Camping”
- \$14.9 million increase in “DSP workforce Training and Development”

5) Master Plan (MP) for Developmental Services

INTENT

To outline shared goals of developing a system that is person-centered, equity focused and data-driven while maximizing the effectiveness of recent investments to improve outcomes for consumers.

- ✓ DDS to develop a MP to improve the experience of individuals and families receiving services
- ✓ DDS will establish a “task force” to serve as the workgroup to inform the development of the MP with a focus on reviewing data and information and to make recommendations that emphasize
 - Quality
 - Equity
 - Outcomes
 - Improve Regional Center Accountability

6) Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) Position Letter Pending will focus on the following points:

- A) Establish and maintain sustainable funding for current and future trends
- B) Address Workforce capacity challenges
- C) Align policies and available supports with “California’s Employment First Policy”
- D) Support community inclusion and participation through accessible transportation

- E) Apply innovative technology to improve the lives of individual served
- F) Hold community resources accountable to supporting individuals served
- G) Proactively prepare for the changing service needs of individuals served across their lifespans

Ms. Wong provided background information on Grass Roots Day and ELARC's delegation. The 21 Regional Center delegations will be meeting in Sacramento to speak on the issues of concerns and address the detrimental effects of the proposed cuts in the Governor's Preliminary Budget.

ATT #12

Ms. Wong, went over the California's State Budget Process.

ATT #13

Ms. Wong, discussed The Budget: Remind me? document.

Comments from the community were addressed.

VI.

**Consumer Services Report
Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services**

Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services, shared that due to time constraints she will defer her report on AB 2083 System of Care to the April meeting.

No comments from the community.

VII. Committee Reports

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

Last CAC meeting was held Tuesday - February 13, 2024. Topic was on Office of Client's Rights and Advocacy (OCRA) Voting Rights presentation. Topics of discussion were as follows:

- How to Check if you are registered to vote: <https://www.lavote.gov>
- Accessibility of voting locations (All voting locations are handicapped accessible or have curbside voting)
- Can someone help you complete the vote casting process, (Yes as long as it is not your boss or a union representative)

CAC prepared for the upcoming meeting scheduled for March 19, 2024 from 4pm to 6pm. Specials guests will be Gloria Wong, ELARC Executive Director. Ms. Wong will present on the Governor's preliminary budget.

On the Consumer Advocates desk:

1. Preparation for Grassroots Day
2. CAC Outreach efforts
3. Primary Election notice for No Party Preference Voters

For the time being the CAC meetings will remain on "Zoom". Next CAC meeting is scheduled for March 19, 2024 from 4pm to 6pm.

B. Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC) - (Joel Moreno)

Joel Moreno, VAC Representative, reported the Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC) met on January 25, 2024.

Mr. Moreno provided the following updates:

- ELARC planning on virtual fairs in 2024
- The VAC began to hold hybrid (in-person and by Zoom) meetings

- Training provided by ELARC Liz Rodgers, Autism Specialist/Certified PCT Mentor Trainer

The next hybrid VAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday ~ February 22, 2024 from 10am to 11:30am.

C. Finance/Personnel Committee (Richard Helgeson/Terry Munoz)

Mr. Richard Helgeson, Board Treasurer, reported the audit report was a positive and clean report. There were no significances nor weaknesses in their audit review.

Mr. Helgeson briefly went over the following reports:

- 1) Financial Statements - **ATT #14**
 - Statements reflect an unmodified report
- 2) Report to the Board of Directors - **ATT #15**
 - Identifies ground rules
- 3) Management Comments Letter - **ATT #16**
 - Identified minor suggestion for management

Terry Munoz, Board Member, reiterated due to the interest in time congratulated Ms. Gloria Wong and ELARC staff on the excellent work being done.

VIII. Miscellaneous Announcements

Comments from the community were addressed.

Next Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 6:00pm.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss the motion was made to adjourn the Board of Directors meeting at 8:02pm and move into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter - Unanimous.

M/S/C (Richard Helgeson/Devora Reed). Unanimous.

Reference to Executive Session.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Devora Reed,

Secretary, ELARC Board of Directors

Recorded by: Angie Salas,
Executive Secretary