



**EASTERN LOS ANGELES REGIONAL CENTER**

1000 S. Fremont Ave. • P.O. Box 7916 • Alhambra, CA 91802-7916  
(626) 299-4700 • FAX (626) 281-1163

**ELARC Board of Directors Meeting**  
**February 14, 2017**  
***Approved March 14, 2017***

**Present:**

Anthony De La Rosa  
Robert Hazard  
Felicitas Navera  
Terry Munoz  
Diane Lasell  
Nestor Nieves  
Joe Utar  
Virgilio Orlina  
Jose Reyes

**Staff Present:**

Gloria Wong, Executive Director  
Rosalie Estrada.  
Executive Secretary

**Absent:**

Lida Chavez  
Elias Fonseca  
Tony Borrego

**Guests:**

Refer to Sign-In Sheet

**I. Welcome & Roll Call**

The ELARC Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm. by Anthony De La Rosa, President. A quorum was present to conduct necessary business.

**II. Introduction/Opening Round**

Introductions of the board members and of the audience were conducted.

**III. Community Input**

Mr. Richard Helgeson, parent, addressed the Board, stating there is a new representative for the 25th District, Assemblyman Holden, who is very supportive of developmental disabilities. He urged board members to begin writing letters to their legislators asking for their support to the developmental disabilities system noting that letters make a difference. Emphasis should be made particularly on AB 279 which addresses rate reform for developmental services.

#### **IV. Approval of Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

##### **A. Minutes of January 10, 2017**

Minor corrections were made on pages 3 and 5.

***M/S/C (Terry Munoz/Felicitas Navera) To approve the Minutes of January 10, 2017 as corrected. Unanimous.***

#### **V. Executive Director's Report**

##### **A. Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA)**

###### **1. Leadership Transition Announcement**

Reference was made to Attachment #2.

Gloria Wong announced Eileen Richey will be leaving her position as ARCA Executive Director effective February 24, 2017 in order to focus on family commitments. She has been Executive Director for approximately seven years. Amy Westling, formerly the Associate Director of ARCA has been named the Interim Director of the agency. Amy has a rich background with the developmental disabilities system and has been employed with ARCA since 2012. Announcement of Ms. Richey's resignation has been circulated and DDS has been made aware of the change in transition. Additionally, pertinent legislative staffers have been notified of the pending transition. This is a crucial time when budget hearings are starting with significant agenda issues that will impact the regional center system.

The ARCA Board of Directors has formed a Search Committee and is actively recruiting a new Executive Director for ARCA.

###### **2. Fiscal Year 2016/17 Strategic Plan**

Gloria Wong reviewed Attachment #3, ARCA Draft Strategic Plan which focuses on three broad categories: (1) Inclusive Communities; (2) Funding and Sustainability; (3) Essentials of the Lanterman Act. The specifics of the plan were reviewed and discussed.

###### **3. Federal Information & Updates**

###### **(a) Federal Issues Update:**

The change in administration at the federal level has created a tremendous amount of uncertainty regarding future funding for States. California is highly dependent on federal funding streams that are now in question. The Regional Center system alone

receives approximately 49% of its budget through a variety of federal programs (i.e.) Medicaid Waiver, SPA (State Plan Amendment), 1915(i) etc. Items that are vulnerable to the loss of federal funds include the following:

1. Affordable Care Act (ACA): Congress is struggling with repeal and replace versions of the current ACA. The California legislature has gone on record that if ACA is repealed without any replacement California will absorb the cost of lost revenues. The estimated cost for California ranges from \$15 to \$20 billion dollars. The impact of this change in policy will have a devastating financial impact on such programs such as (i.e.) regional centers, education, etc.

2. Additionally two other potential federal policy shifts that are apt to have a substantial financial impact on California.

(a) Sanctuary Cities: California with a number of proclaimed sanctuary cities is likely to lose federal funding at levels uncertain at this time.

(b) Medicaid: The current targeted funding streams of Medicaid is under potential jeopardy by changing program specific funding to block grants. Historically block grants translate to reduced funding levels and a redistribution of the reduced funds by the state legislature.

(c) Local Level Update

Assembly Bill 279 - Developmental Disabilities: Regional Centers – AB 279 extends authority to the Department of Developmental Services and Regional Centers to adjust rates of providers to comply with legally binding local mandates and minimum wage levels across the state. AB 279 was introduced by Assembly member Chris Holden. Ms. Wong reported several regional centers in Los Angeles County met with representatives from Assemblyman Chris Holden’s office, including ELARC. The representatives were asking for background information and seeking input on priority issues for the regional center system. It was noted that Assemblyman Holden has familiarity with the Regional Center system by personal experience.

AB 279 will need to be supported especially during the legislative visits during this year.

Ms. Wong reported the Governor has not been in support of any state funding above the minimum wage.

3. Other Updates

Ms. Wong announced two presentations scheduled for March 14<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

(a) DDS has created a “Regional Center Oversight Dashboard” which is posted on their website. It contains important and significant information regarding

Regional Center's performance contract, purchase of services data, fair hearings and complaints statistics. A review of this centralized public information will be presented and reviewed.

(b) ARCA "DC Currents: Federal Information & Updates"

ARCA has updated a section on their website as a centralized update on actions and topics at the federal level that are likely to impact the regional system. Review and access to this report will be presented. Access to the report is also available through a link on the ELARC Website.

**B. Budget Update**

1. Fiscal Year 2016-'17

(a) POS: Sufficiency of Allocation Report (SOAR)

ELARC is currently projecting a surplus of \$70,231 to \$2,2116,449.

There is currently a deficit statewide of \$30 million. Ms. Wong reported for last fiscal year, 2015-'16 ELARC has a surplus of \$183,000.

(b) OPS: Budget Performance Report

In operations there is a surplus of approximately \$500,000. Recruitment efforts of service coordinators remains active with the ongoing goal of reducing caseload ratios. To date ELARC has hired approximately 20 service coordinators. Balance of funds are being used in the hiring of additional service coordinators and expansion space to accommodate new hires..

2. Governor's Budget FY 2017-'18

(a) Budget Analysis

For fiscal year 2016-17 an adjustment was made, DDS underestimated on the growth of consumers. The November estimate increases the January 31, 2017 caseload to 303,447, an increase of 837 consumers.

In Purchase of Services there was a \$37 million decrease to be used towards the Developmental Center budget deficit.

Operations: There was a \$2.0 million increase to reflect updated caseload which had been underestimated.

The remainder of the January release is in reference to FY 2017-2018.

- Caseload: projecting a 4.56% increase in consumer growth
- POS: an increase of 6.3%
  
- Minimum Wage: \$7.5 million increase for a full-year funding for the minimum wage only for the State rate
- ABX Funding: \$114.3 million increase
- Operations: a \$23.3 million increase based on caseload growth

There were no restoration adjustments for previous cuts.

(b) ARCA Position Letter

A copy of the letter to the Senate Budget Subcommittee #3 on Health and Human Services and to the Assembly Committee on Budget, Subcommittee #1 on Health and Human Services was shared with the Board.

3. Budget Hearings Update

Hearings are underway in both the Senate and Assembly Budget Committees and Sub-Committees. Budget items are being held open, decisions are not being made at this time. The Governor will be releasing an updated budget early part of May which will update projected revenue used in the January 2017 preliminary budget.

4. Grassroots Day Event: April 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>

The Grassroots Day event is scheduled for April 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> in Sacramento. Board members who would like to participate should contact Rosalie Estrada as soon as possible in order to make necessary travel arrangements.

**C. Self-Determination**

1. Federal Application Status

Senate Bill 468 requires DDS to implement a statewide Self-Determination Program (SDP), subject to federal approval. DDS submitted an application for federal funding to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) on December 31, 2014 for approval of implementing Self-Determination in California. In response to changes requested by CMS, DDS once again resubmitted the HCBS Waiver application on September 29, 2015. This resulted in over 190 recommendations for clarifications and changes to the submitted application. As a result of the high number of outstanding issues the application was taken “off-the-clock” and all negotiations have been on an informal basis with CMS to resolve the open issues. DDS has complied with all requests for information and plans to respond to CMS’ recent questions by the end of February 2017. At this time It is uncertain how the new administration will affect the SDP.

Ms. Wong reported the most controversial item is the fiscal management agency. SB 468 requires that self-determination participants be required to engage the services

of a fiscal management agency and pay for it from the approved budget. As the budget is to be based on previous 12 months of POS expenditures, CMS is taking exception to this policy because it would result in an erosion of a budget that never included this expense in its historical spending. It is a valid point that regional centers have advanced and agree with the CMS position that the budget should be augmented for this newly mandated expense.

#### **D. POS Equity Projects Update**

As a result of AB X2-1 the Legislature made funds available to the twenty-one regional centers for projects/proposals to reduce POS variances among the various ethnic groups. ELARC has established a specialized unit with five service coordinators who will be carrying a reduced caseload (1:40). Four of the caseloads will be for Hispanic families and the fifth caseload will include Asian families.

Additionally there will be two positions that will be Person Centered Planning Coordinators, one will be Chinese-speaking and the other Spanish-Speaking.

ELARC is in the process of identifying the 200 cases and the transfer of staff to the new unit. A more detailed report will be presented at March 14<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

#### **E. POS Annual Expenditure Report**

Regional Centers are required to conduct community meetings and discuss the results of the POS Data report. The meetings are scheduled for March 20, 2017 in Alhambra and the Asian/CPAD parent group will host a community meeting on March 25, 2017 in San Gabriel from 10:00AM to 12:00PM. The meeting for the Hispanic families will be hosted by Fiesta Educative on March 28, 2017 from 10:00 AM to 12:00PM. Flyers were distributed.

Robert Hazard, Vice-Chairperson, inquired if ELARC has scheduled information meetings on CalAble. It was reported there were two sessions in December which will be repeated in the near future.

### **VI Consumer Services Report**

Felipe Hernandez, Chief of Consumer Services was unable to attend meeting this evening. There was no report.

### **VII Committee Reports**

#### **A. Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC)**

Virgilio Orlina, CAC Chair, reported the first meeting of the new year was held on January 17<sup>th</sup> in the ELARC Boardroom and via video conference at the Whittier Office

from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The meeting was well attended.

The main topic was on Social Security Income and Benefits and was presented by Ms. Jackie Dai, Clients' Rights Advocate of the Office of Client's Rights Advocacy. Ms. Dai conducted a PowerPoint presentation and there was discussion on Public Benefits basics for regional center consumers. Ms. Dai explained how to apply and what are the benefits of SSI and SSDI. The consumers and support groups participated actively in asking questions about SSI and benefits.

During the CAC meeting Gloria Wong, Executive Director updated the consumers on the status of the budget and the Self-Determination program.

Jesse Padilla reported on the DDS/CAC and the ARCA/CAC meetings he attended recently where there were a variety of topics and issues presented and discussed.

Virgilio also reported the CAC had a Planning/Debriefing meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup> with Jesse Padilla, Mr. Gerard Torres, Supervisor, Whittier Office. There was discussion about what made the January CAC meeting go well and how it could be better, and what didn't work at the meeting and to be more proactive in enforcing the stay on topic mode. They also planned for the next CAC meeting to start the reading of the CAC Mission Statement along with the ground rules and facilitation statements. There will also be discussion on how to start an Advocacy Subcommittee to bring more people into the CAC. Jesse Padilla will make an in person outreach presentation about the CAC meetings at the Almansor Center in South Pasadena on February 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am and at the Choix Vocational Services on South Atlantic Blvd. in Los Angeles on February 24<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm.

The next CAC meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2017. The topic will be Abuse and Bullying and the speaker will be Ms. Melody Goodman from the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. Additionally Ms. Lara Linnemann, ELARC Service Coordinator, will be presenting on Multifaith..

## **B. Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC)**

Jose Ruiz, VAC representative, reported the VAC met on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Frances Jacobs, Manager, Community Services/ELARC, shared with the VAC there is a meeting scheduled for February 23<sup>rd</sup> about emergency operations. The vendors must all have an emergency plan in place. Additionally, Elizabeth Harrell, Supervisor, participates in the VAC meetings and began last November in getting the vendors to provide samples of their emergency operations plan.

Jose announced there is a Community Resource Fair scheduled for April 27<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm in Santa Fe Springs. The event is open to regional centers, staff, parents and consumers. Information is posted on the ELARC website. Many of the vendors will be participating, and there is currently waiting list of interested vendors

who cannot attend due to capacity limits.

Cristina Ontiveros, Community Services Specialist, is the new liaison for HCBS. She presented on the new rules and regulations, and how it is affecting all the service providers. All vendors must comply with the new regulations by March 2019.

An annual emergency preparedness expo is scheduled on April 19<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm at San Gabriel Pomona Regional Center. This will be their third year and it has been quite successful. Additional information on this event is located on the ELARC website.

Jose also reported the VAC is focusing on getting more vendors to participate and also trying to get vendors who serve infants and children. Currently the participating vendors are mainly for adult services, residential, ILS, Supported Employment.

A training on "Active Shooter" is being scheduled sometime in March.

Anthony De La Rosa, Board President, indicated he was happy to hear that emergency preparedness is a focus point for the VAC. Mr. De La Rosa shared that he heads the emergency preparedness division at his place of employment. He offered his services as a point of reference if needed. He noted when developing an emergency operation plan typically the EOP addresses the crisis and how to mitigate the crisis. What's missing in most emergency operations plans is the continuity aspect.. After you address and mitigate the crisis, how do you continue staying in business, how to you continue providing services to consumers. These are items which should be incorporated in the emergency operation plan.

### **C. Finance/Personnel Committee**

There was no meeting of the Finance/Personnel Committee. The financial reports from the last independent audit were sent via mail to all board members.

### **VIII Miscellaneous Announcements**

Julie Eby-McKenzie, Community Program Specialist with the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (L.A. Office) reported she conducted an information session last week for the South Pasadena parent support group. The meeting was held at the home of Terry Munoz, board member. She reported the session was well attended and there was standing-room only. There were 27 parents, 7 babysitters and approximately 20 children.

Julie reported she and staff from the State Council are available to go out into the community to present on various topics. A training is scheduled on February 15<sup>th</sup> at New Horizons in North Hills. The topics are SSI Eligibility and the Appeal Process, Work Incentives for SSI Recipients and the ABLE Act. The training is free but



interested individuals must RSVP as space is limited.

## **IX Adjourment**

***M/S/C (Terry Munoz/Felicitas Navera) To adjourn the meeting at 7:16 pm.  
Unanimous.***

## **X. Executive Session**

An Executive Session was called to order at 7:21 pm. to discuss a personnel matter.

There being no further business to discuss the Executive Session was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

***M/S/C (Felicitas Navera/Diane Lasell) To adjourn the Executive Session at 7:35 pm.***

Respectfully submitted,

*Felicitas Navera*

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Felicitas Navera, Secretary  
ELARC Board of Directors

Recorded by: Rosalie M. Estrada, Executive Secretary