



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES COMMISSION FOR PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

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MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Location #1: Exposition Park District
3833 S. Vermont Avenue, 3rd Floor - Conference Room B
Los Angeles, CA 90037

Location #2: ElHessen Home Office
9433 Ives Street
Bellflower, CA 90706

Location: #3: Porter Ranch Library
11371 Tampa Ave
Porter Ranch, CA 91326

Please note this is a summary of the meeting not a “verbatim” transcription.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / ESTABLISH A QUORUM/ COUNTYWIDE LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Adele Andrade-Stadler, Chairperson

Meeting was called to order at 10:18 a.m. Commissioners ElHessen and Kalaydjian attended the meeting from an alternate location under the Brown Act Teleconferencing rules. A quorum was established at 10:18 a.m. The Chair read the Countywide Land Acknowledgement statement.

Roll Call/Commissioners Present:

Adele Andrade-Stadler (Chair)	Veronica Lewis
Sue ElHessen, Ed.D. (Vice Chair)	Pollyanna Lee
Yvonne Chan, Ed.D.	Dynasty Taylor
Sam Joo	Booker Pearson
Mihran Kalaydjian	Andrew Yam

Commissioners Absent:

Joe Brown	Michael Flood
Joni Byun	Summer McBride

Commission Staff:

La France Toliver
Stacia Gurr-Osborn

Introduction of Guests

Jackie Contreras, Ph.D., DPSS
Carrie Miller, Ph.D., PIAB

2.0 REVIEW AND APPROVE MARCH 21, 2024, MEETING MINUTES

Sue ElHessen, Ed.D., Vice Chairperson

The Chair called for a motion to approve the March 21, 2024, minutes. Commissioner Chan approved, and Commissioner Kalaydjian seconded the motion. The Chair called for the vote by roll call and the minutes were approved by unanimous vote as follows:

Adele Andrade-Stadler (Chair) - Aye
Sue ElHessen, Ed.D. (Vice Chair) - Aye
Yvonne Chan, Ed.D. - Aye
Sam Joo - Aye
Mihran Kalaydjian - Aye

Veronica Lewis - Aye
Pollyanna Lee - Aye
Dynasty Taylor - Aye
Booker Pearson - Aye
Andrew Yam - Aye

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT (Non-Agenda Items) / (Agenda Items)

Adele Andrade-Stadler, Chairperson

Non-Agenda Item – Alvin Maragani, Stanford LEAP. Mr. Maragani expressed concerns about public employees' treatment of clients at DPSS. Based on his experience employees seem unwilling to help clients resolve their issues. He made the following suggestion for actions that could improve both client and employee experiences. (1) A mandatory survey about the client's experience with the worker after an interaction would be appreciated. Just like how rating systems work or surveys work in other industries, I feel like incorporating a short survey or rating system for the worker, and maybe also even for the client of the worker; (2) To create a policy that immediately removes chaotic and disrespectful individuals in the Department building to encourage safety and provide a less stressful environment for both clients and workers alike; and lastly, (3) Implementing the live chat feature on the BenefitsCal website and having dedicated responders for chat may help avoid long lines in person reduce worker stress and promote quicker resolution of case issues.

4.0 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jackie Contreras, Ph.D., Director

Dr. Contreras provided an update:

The Board made the following Proclamations throughout LA County for April 2024: **Child Abuse Prevention Month** - recognizing the professionals and volunteers who work tirelessly to promote the safety, joy and well-being of children and families. **Arts Month** - recognizing the value of arts and culture and the contributions of artists, arts administrators, arts organizations, culture bearers, and arts educators throughout the County, reaffirming the County's commitment to promoting the arts, cultural equity, and inclusion. **County Volunteer Month** - encouraging residents to learn about volunteer opportunities with County Departments and register as volunteers through the County's

online volunteer platform via <https://volunteer.lacounty.gov/>. **Fair Housing Month** - recognizing the value and importance of the rights guaranteed under Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Act) and its amendments and commit to the furtherance of the Act's goals and ideals throughout the year. **Community Development Month** - recognizing the accomplishments of the past 50 years of the Community Development Block Grant Program in the County through local communities, neighborhoods, and the lives of low and moderate-income residents with a variety of economic development, public service, recreation, and housing rehabilitation programs. **Armenian History Month** - and April 24, 2024, as **Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day** instructing the Chief Executive Officer to work with all County Departments to promote events and educational materials related to the Armenian Genocide and utilize Department websites and social media platforms to share information and generate awareness. In addition, the Board has also proclaimed: April 10, as **Dolores Huerta Day** - beginning in 2024 and consequently in future years; encouraging Angelenos to celebrate the many contributions of Dolores Huerta by inquiring about her work, and volunteering in causes she valued. April 17, as **Cambodian Genocide Remembrance Day** in honor of those killed in the genocide, the survivors, and their descendants, for their courage and contributions to the County. April 11 through 17, as **Black Maternal Health Week** and April 16, as **The Day of the Black Infant** instructing all County Departments to stand in solidarity with the County African American Infant and Maternal Mortality (AAIMM) Initiative and its Community Partners in eliminating racism and bias in health care and related services and resources; encourage residents to learn about available services and resources. April 19, as **Home Visiting Day 2024**, encouraging all residents to recognize the incredibly positive impact that home visiting can have on child development, parenting, and overall health outcomes. April 22, as **Earth Day** demonstrating our commitment to protecting the health of our planet; and encourage all County residents to participate in "Earth Day" programs and activities to promote understanding of environmental protection and the need to create a healthier future for all our communities. April 21 through 27, as **National Crime Victims' Rights Week** - promoting and highlighting, in high-usage languages, on the County's website, "National Crime Victims' Rights Week" events, an in-person/online panel discussion with the District Attorney's Crime Victims Advisory Board focusing on "solutions to filling gaps in victim service delivery," including County staff who work with victims and survivors of crime, and other events hosted or supported by other County departments. April 22 through 26, as **National Youth Violence Prevention Week** encouraging County residents and community partners to engage in youth violence prevention programs to make schools and neighborhoods safer. April 22 through 27, as **Reentry Week** directing the CEO, through its County Communications Branch, to promote the Justice, Care, and Opportunities Department's and other department's week events on the County website, including in high-usage languages.

California Food Assistance Program (CFAP) Expansion

AB 135, the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Human Services Omnibus Trailer Bill, initiated an expansion of CFAP by allocating funds to begin automation and implementation of CFAP eligibility to non-citizens who are excluded from CalFresh based solely on their immigration status. In 2022, the Governor and the Legislature passed a budget that included funding to expand the state-funded nutrition benefit program to serve additional non-citizen Californians, age 55 or older, who are ineligible to receive federal CalFresh benefits based solely on their immigration status.

Currently, California provides State-funded CalFresh food benefits through the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP) for eligible non-citizens who do not qualify for Federally funded CalFresh benefits. However, many non-citizens, including undocumented individuals, remain ineligible to receive benefits through CalFresh or CFAP. CFAP eligibility will expand to non-citizens aged 55 or older, regardless of their immigration status. A household member may choose to opt out of the CFAP expansion at Intake and Renewal only before the determination of eligibility is made. They may request to be added to the CalFresh household at any time. Their participation is optional. Applicants may apply beginning September 1, 2025, and, if found eligible under the CFAP expansion policy, they will be denied for September 2025 and approved for benefits effective October 2025.

Customer Service Center (CSC) Quarterly Update

I wanted to give an additional report to bring you up to date with our CSC quarterly reporting since our reporting was behind since we transitioned to Amazon Connect.

CSC (January 2024 – March 2024)

	January	February	March
Calls Received by EWs	707,015	634,254	626,410
Average Wait Time	0:47:58	0:45:30	0:45:39
Average Handle Time	0:17:09	0:17:17	0:17:17
*Non-Serviced Calls	*	*	*

* All customers who reach the high call volume message are offered the option to return to the self-service option or disconnect the call (Non-Service Calls). Once validated, the data will be available from March 14, 2024, moving forward.

Intake Call Centers Applications (January 2024 – March 2024)

	January	February	March
Applications Received (Overall)	170,504	143,711	133,283
Same-Day Disposition Rate by Program (Overall)	57%	53%	56%
*Applications Processed by CSC Intake / %	48,596 / 29%	43,387 / 30%	39,680 / 30%

Housing Subsidies (GR)

I am pleased to announce that the Department resumed the approval of additional housing subsidies effective April 2024, which will allow the Department to approve an additional 300 housing subsidies per month through the end of this FY June 30, 2024. We will also be

receiving an increase in our Measure H funding as well for FY 2024-25. The increase in funding will allow us to issue an additional 1,123 housing subsidies in the next FY.

DPSS Advocates for IHSS Funding at State Capitol

During National Social Work Month, in partnership with SEIU 721, a delegation from our In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program traveled to Sacramento on March 6 to advocate for more statewide funding for IHSS services. The group addressed the Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2 on Human Services, voicing support for a bill to provide “bridge” funding for the administration of IHSS services in the 2024-25 state budget.

DPSS Hosting: Help Everyone Reach Out (HERO) Donation Drive

The DPSS Toy Loan and Volunteer Services Section is hosting the Help Everyone Reach Out (HERO) Project Donation Drive to collect toiletries, socks, and other hygiene products for distribution to community agencies serving homeless individuals. For more information on how to donate, email the DPSS Volunteer Services Program at dpssvolunteers@dpss.lacounty.gov. The deadline to donate is Thursday, May 30.

Follow-up Item: Commissioner Lewis stated that given the number of infant deaths amongst black families, is DPSS doing anything related to maternal health preventative activities, making sure they get their checkups and other medically related activities for expectant mothers and their children? Like a pamphlet. Dr. Contreras responded We have recently expanded through our partnership with Public Health for individuals in the CalWORKs Program. There is currently a Guaranteed Income Program that is looking at maternal health specifically. Those are the things that I am aware of off the top of my head, but there may be more.

Follow-up Item: Commissioner Lewis stated that she noticed from the data provided on the Call Center, there is a significant peak in January on both the calls and the applications. Do you know why there is a huge peak? Dr. Contreras responded we can provide more information on that topic. My understanding is that it all has to do with when a person’s renewal is due and because at different points in time, a number of folks were placed in the January renewal time frame which has peaked during that month. Commissioner Lewis asked if the department could see if there’s a higher portion of people renewing in January. Dr. Contreras stated yes.

Follow-up item: Commissioner Yam stated since you are a part of the prevention services taskforce, at a later point can we get a presentation on the linkage to the Department’s work and maybe hear about it in the Director’s Report? Commissioner Chan also wants to hear more about the prevention taskforce bringing the commission up to date on the initiatives. Dr. Contreras stated she would ask Dr. Hunter to come and share with her. Dr. Hunter is the Executive Director of the taskforce.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

Presentation: Policy Implementation and Alignment Branch Overview (PIAB)
Carrie Miller, Ph.D., Senior Manager
Chief Executive Office

Dr. Miller expressed that she was very excited to be at the meeting and talk a little bit about the PIAB and the work that they're doing in the County; She is very interested in a discussion and hearing the thoughts of commissioners from their perspective. For her, this is a very timely conversation, which she's excited about.

Dr. Miller provided the following update regarding the PIAB:

The mission of PIAB is to coordinate the development, implementation, and alignment of a wide range of Countywide policies and initiatives focused on the Board of Supervisors' highest priorities to create a most effective, just, and equitable L.A. County. PIAB has 65 branch staffing and a budget of \$46.8 million.

There are five units within the PIA Branch.

- The first unit is the *Center for Strategic Partnerships*. This unit focuses on the public/private partnerships that have a focus on real partnerships and figuring out where the alignment and nexus are between where philanthropy is trying to go, what are the visions that they have, what is it that the County is trying to do, and how do we bring those efforts together to find the coordination between those parties? They determine what that effort looks like.
- The *Service Integration Branch* has been around for quite some time. It focuses on coordination and alignment with different projects around the County that look at how we integrate services, coordinate services better, and create more interdepartmental collaboration.
- The *Poverty Alleviation Initiative* partners very closely with DPSS as well as the Department of Economic Opportunity, Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, and others to look at mitigating poverty and what can we do to prevent it.
- The *Anti-Racism Diversity & Inclusion Initiative* focuses on looking at where we can align efforts, educate our workforce around the issues of racism, structural racism, and privilege, look through the different policies that we're implementing, and find ways to break it down; To look at how can we make sure we are not only just ensuring that equity exists, but promoting it across all of the work we do as a County.
- Lastly, the *Chief Information Office* is focused on policy and centered around technology. They are focused on data security, and data sharing across multiple departments. They are looking at how we can make sure that our IT systems are in the 21st century. We're getting close to that, bringing it all along and working together to support the work of the other departments and other initiatives in the County.

The Service Integration Branch manages complex initiatives with multiple County departments and partners to develop solutions for long-standing issues affecting LA County residents. The plan was adopted by the board on March 6th and we're taking a different approach to strategic planning, which I'm very excited about.

The Strategic Plan Vision is a value-driven culture, characterized by extraordinary employee commitment to enrich lives through effective and caring service and empower people through knowledge and information. The mission is to establish superior services through inter-departmental and cross-sector collaboration that measurably improves the quality of life for the people and communities of LA County. Our values are integrity, inclusivity, compassion, customer orientation, and equity.

All County departments participated in the development process of the plan. This plan also incorporates input and feedback from residents and those with lived expertise that was gathered through a variety of community engagement processes led by ARDI, PAI, CSO, JCOD, OCP, OIA, HI, and others. The Plan includes the County's 10 Racial Equity Principles and aligns with the County's strategic initiatives and 9 Board-Directed Priorities are included in the strategic plan's north stars, focus area goals, and strategies.

We have three North Stars which are (1) Make Investments that Transform Lives, (2) Foster, Vibrant and Resilient Communities and (3) Realize Tomorrow's Government Today. This is my favorite because I really think there is so much hope and promise for what we can be doing to change the way we do our business that speaks specifically to how we transform lives and help build resilient and thriving communities.

The Plan's 17 goals intend to drive service delivery to be easy to access and address multiple needs and root causes of complex issues. I won't read them all, but this gives you a sense of the types of the types of outcomes that we are looking to achieve through this plan. These are all the areas where we have strategies that we are hoping to see some type of measurable change in these areas. There are 60 high level countywide strategies drill down on the 17 focus area goals. We have strategies like pregnancy and birth outcomes with prenatal care, which shows what we're trying to hit at the earliest stage possible, working all the way through to how do we modernize our infrastructure.

The Center for Strategic Partnerships helps the County and philanthropy partners to more effectively transform systems, promote equity, and improve the lives of children and families by supporting cross-sector initiatives and fostering a culture of collaboration in alignment with the Prevention and Promotion Committee. One of the things that they're doing is looking at how do they bring philanthropic support to that effort and what that looks like. There are five key efforts that they've outlined that includes: One Roof-Housing Stability, and Guaranteed Income & Benefits Access Reform, Community Health Workers, Mandated Supporters & Community Supports and Youth Development & Mentoring are projects in partnership with DPSS.

Poverty Alleviation Initiative (PAI) is moving to proactively disrupt poverty and taking actions to stop people from sinking into poverty through Community-led projects, Guaranteed Basic Income, Increasing Tax Credit Claims, Improving DPSS Customer Service and Reforming the GR Program. Anti-Racism, Diversity & Inclusion (ARDI) is working on key initiatives to guide govern and increase the County's ongoing commitment to an anti-racism policy agenda. They are looking at how they create equity in public works infrastructure and what that looks like. The Chief Information Office (CIO) provides strategic direction for the effective and secure use of information technology to improve service delivery and achieve County business goals.

The other part of the branch is the concept of creating alignment around these key issues that departments work on. Another concept of the PIAB is creating alignment around key issues the departments are working on. In the last six months, what I've really been trying to do is to get my head around what does that look like? We are in the process of an analysis right now. We're hoping to use the strategic plan to drive the work across the County. Our goal is to create a sustained focus because we know that in years past we created these really cool initiatives and these work groups and committees and we get all excited and like yeah, we're going to do it and we get everybody aligned and the next thing comes along and then we

switch gears and have to go into the next thing. So, one of the things that I am looking at is to come up with a way of creating sustained focus. We know there are other things we will have to work on, but let's stay focused on the things that we have committed to doing and then see them through.

6.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

Adele Andrade-Stadler, Chairperson

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 11:57 a.m.