



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES COMMISSION FOR PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

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COMMISSION STAFF

Executive Director
LA FRANCE TOLIVER

Commission Secretary
TINA PHAN

MEETING MINUTES via TELECONFERENCE

Thursday, September 15, 2022
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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

1.0 CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / ESTABLISH A QUORUM

Adele Andrade-Stadler, Chairperson

Meeting was called to order at 10:36 a.m. A quorum was established.

Roll Call/Commissioners Present:

Adele Andrade-Stadler (Chair)	Michael Flood
Veronica Lewis (Vice)	Pollyanna Lee
Joe Brown	Summer McBride
Yvonne Chan	Booker Pearson
Sue ElHessen	Lori Stein
Raul Estrada	Dynasty Taylor

Commissioners Absent:

Mary Galvan Rosas (U)	Paige Pelonis (E)
Mihran Kalaydjian (E)	

Commission Staff:

La France Toliver
Tina Phan (E)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Jackie Contreras, Ph.D., DPSS	Sheila Early, DPSS
Julia Almanzan, County Counsel	
Nick Ippolito, DPSS	
Noemi Castaneda, LACOE	

2.0 REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES FROM JULY 2022 MEETING

Adele Andrade-Stadler, Chairperson

MOTION: Commissioner Estrada moved to approve the minutes and Commissioner Stein seconded the motion.

CALL FOR VOTE: Minutes were approved by majority vote with one abstention as follows:

Adele Andrade-Stadler - Aye	Summer McBride - Aye
Raul Estrada - Aye	Booker Pearson - Aye
Joe Brown - Aye	Lori Stein - Abstained
Sue ElHessen - Aye	Dynasty Taylor - Aye
Pollyanna Lee - Aye	

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT (Non-Agenda Items)

Adele Andrade-Stadler, Chairperson

There were no written nor verbal comments from the public on Agenda/Non-Agenda Items.

4.0 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jackie Contreras, Ph.D., Acting Director

Dr. Contreras provided updates on the following:

Emergency Allotments: The Federal government continues to issue CalFresh Emergency Allotments. As of September 4, 2022, \$3.2 Billion in CalFresh Emergency Allotment benefits have been issued to individuals/families in LA County. According to State officials, it is unlikely the Public Health Emergency will be lifted prior to early 2023.

County Appointments: Effective August 29, 2022, the Board of Supervisors appointed James Zenner to the position of Director of Military and Veterans Affairs. Effective August 1, 2022, the Board of Supervisors appointed Anthony C. Marrone to serve as the Acting Fire Chief of the Fire Department.

Board Hearing Room: Just last week, the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors announced that the Board Hearing Room will reopen to the public on Tuesday, September 27. Los Angeles County moved from a "medium" to "low" COVID-19 community level on September 1, per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention community rating system.

To ensure the health and safety of those who plan to attend, the following special guidelines will be in place: Masking for all in attendance will be required. Enhanced air filtration equipment has been installed in the Board Hearing Room. Occupancy will be limited to 100 members of the public.

As in-person meetings resume, telephonic comment and remote or online access to specific government services will continue to be available to members of the public. Also, the Board will continue to meet every other week.

Metrolink offers discounted tickets for EBT card holders: Effective September 8, Metrolink began offering a 50% discount on tickets to those who have California Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards. The discount will apply to all Metrolink tickets and passes and riders can use their EBT cards at station machines to purchase tickets. A grant from the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program, administered by Caltrans, is funding the discount program, which will be available for one year or until the grant funds are depleted.

DPSS Appointments: I am pleased to announce that effective September 6, 2022, Michael J. Sylvester was appointed Acting Chief Deputy of Administrative Services for the Department of Public Social Services.

Michael has over 16 years of DPSS experience serving primarily as the Assistant Director over the Bureau of Contract and Technical Services and Chief Information Officer, responsible for DPSS' automation/technology strategy, application development, infrastructure and technical support, and property and strategic space planning. From January 2018 through September 2020, Michael also served as the Assistant Director over the Bureau of Special Operations.

Michael promotes innovation throughout the Department, while establishing and cultivating key collaborations with other organizations at the Federal, State, and local levels. Under his leadership, the Department has achieved numerous awards for innovation and technology advancement. I am confident that with his experience, commitment, and leadership skills, Mr. Sylvester will contribute significantly to our efforts to enhance the lives of the customers and communities we serve.

Joint Task Force Targets EBT Card Fraud in LA County; 16 Arrested: - A recent investigation targeting Electronic Benefit Transfer card fraud in Los Angeles County led to the arrests of 16 suspects and the seizure of hundreds of illegally cloned EBT cards and more than \$100,000 in cash.

These individuals are suspected of creating 339 cloned cards encoded with victim account information and conducting large cash withdrawals from the victims' accounts at ATM machines throughout Los Angeles County and the entire state of California, causing millions of dollars in losses to federal, state, and local taxpayers.

The Task Force worked in conjunction with CDSS, DPSS, and multiple financial institutions led by Bank of America's Global Protective Services Team, to identify the locations in Los Angeles County. Task Force investigators intend to further investigate these suspects and any links to additional suspects and crimes related to this criminal enterprise.

We are working closely with CDSS and local partners to minimize and mitigate any further impact on our customers.

DPSS Social Media Platforms Hit Over 40,000: Thanks to *you* and many more for subscribing, following, and sharing information with those who need it most. Because of you, DPSS has reached over 40,000 followers across our department's social media channels.

The social media platforms, which were launched in 2016, have revolutionized the way the Department shares critical and timely information through photos, graphic visuals, videos, and messaging platforms.

During the COVID-19 health emergency, DPSS followers on social media were especially thankful for posts about Emergency Allotment benefits and Pandemic EBT posts issued by CalFresh Program.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

2022 - 2027 DPSS STRATEGIC PLAN

Nick Ippolito, Assistant Director Bureau of Special Operations

Mr. Ippolito provided updates.

Mr. Ippolito stated he was pleased and excited to share the departments 2022-2027 Strategic Plan that will govern the departments work over the next 5 years. The catch phrase of the strategic plan is "Serving People and Strengthening Communities with CARE." CARE is in caps and is an acronym which describes our values, and we will discuss shortly. The Strategic Plan is a living document that articulates how we will serve our customers holistically; increase economic mobility; address access to and underutilization of our programs; engage and collaborate with community partners and align staff development to these efforts.

For government agencies such as ours (one of the largest in the nation) we learned over the past couple of years through this pandemic how to pivot quickly to meet essential needs of our customers. We had our customers adhering to stay at home orders, kids who could not attend school that had a lot of crisis and stress above and beyond the normal types of stress they experienced every day. The Pandemic accentuated how challenging it is to work and live and raise children in our communities and society. The department wanted to find ways and take what was learned and adjust the approach to be flexible and meet the moment 2 to 5 years and beyond.

Our Vision: Transform lives through economic stability, equity, and inclusion. Our Mission: Together, we connect individuals and families to social services that promote lasting economic mobility and well-being.

Our Values are collaboration, accountability responsiveness and empathy. Our Values spell out the acronym CARE which are our five strategic priorities.

Collaboration - We work with our colleagues as a team, valuing differences in perspective and opinion. We believe that when we embrace our diversity, innovative and sustainable solutions emerge. We work with our customers to ensure they have the support necessary to achieve their goals and long-term well-being. We work with our communities to build structures that support and sustain our customers' growth. We work with our social service partners to ensure our common goals are achieved in an efficient, effective, and sustainable manner.

Accountability - When discrepancies between our values and our actions arise, we address and resolve them. We honor the public's trust through ethical and data-driven decision-making and transparent reporting to ensure fairness and consistency.

Responsiveness - We count on one another to respond to requests and challenges in a timely and supportive manner. We are committed to refining our internal processes and procedures. We are agile in our response to the diverse needs of our customers, eliminating barriers and providing consistent, fair, and effective solutions.

Empathy - We appreciate and celebrate differences, treat our colleagues with respect, and go the extra mile to support one another. We meet our customers where they are, see them in their full humanity, treat them with dignity, and tailor solutions to meet their unique needs.

The first strategic priority is Reimagining Social Services. We are looking at our current services to see how we can realize improve outcomes by helping individuals and families achieve financial and economic well-being by transforming our cash assistance and employment programs to be innovative, proactive, and flexible as possible. To reduce the number of unhoused individuals and families we serve and those at risk of losing their housing and support our seniors and disabled customers holistically.

The second strategic priority is Diversity and Equity. To work deliberately to address access and underutilization of our programs Countywide. Vigorously examine our policies and approach to delivering services and apply principles of anti-racism and equity and effectively utilize customer feedback to enhance our skills in working with diverse populations.

The third strategic priority is Reimagining Administrative Services. To maximize and foster accountability for all public resources. Create an efficient work environment utilizing telework, hoteling and modern office configurations. Continue to use technology to increase access to our services and the achievement of positive outcomes.

The fourth strategic priority is investing in our people. To orient all our staff training to foster cultural responsiveness and cultivate personal and professional growth and humility. Honor achievement and innovation and to create a leadership pipeline.

The fifth strategic priority is communications and engagement. To regularly engage our customers and key stakeholders as to progress in implementing our Strategic Plan. Communicate and Reinforce our Vision, Mission and Values, as well as our Strategic Priorities throughout the Department.

The plan will be soft launched on October 10 to solicit comments and feedback from the public by posting to the DPSS website. We are excited about getting your input as a stakeholder. We will return to the Commission on October 20, to answer questions and hear any additional feedback. The official release of the strategic plan is November 1, 2022.

Commissioner Chan expressed that the plan is very impactful. She would like to know how we are going to communicate effectively with our community partners and interagency leadership.

Commissioner Flood recommended that on Slide 4 second bullet that it be reworded to not say “reduce...and families we serve...” On Slide 5 bullet 3, it would be helpful for commissioners to understand how you effectively utilize customer feedback. As a suggestion could there be a measure or metrics around customer satisfaction and the quality of those services provided. This aspect of the presentation is lacking from the standpoint of a person receiving services from DPSS. As a commission it would be helpful for us to understand better.

Commissioner Estrada would like for the department to keep in mind some families and older participants have challenges with technology/automation.

Dr. Contreras commented that because the DPSS Strategic Plan is a living document she wanted to emphasize that there are so many efforts and initiatives that are incredibly well intended that go on through out the county and one of the roles that she and Mr. Ippolito has is to connect the various dots countywide adapting the strategic plan as we continue moving forward.

6.0 CONTINUED BUSINESS

Vice-Chair Lewis

Ms. Toliver announced 2021-22 Commission Annual Report is due January 31, 2023. Vice Chair Lewis asked if the report could be reviewed by the November meeting. Ms. Toliver stated she will shoot to have a rough draft to the Chair, Vice Chair and Commissioners to begin reviewing by the October meeting.

Ms. Toliver also expressed that the Chair would like to continue the commissions efforts towards adopting families from each supervisorial district for the holiday season. Last year, 5 families were selected, and we had great success. We were able to accomplish this goal through your generous donations. The focus will be on giving to our families; there will not be a holiday luncheon this year.

7.0 COMMISSIONER'S REQUEST FOR FUTURE TOPICS

Follow up: (1) Vice Chair Lewis would like to get a presentation from DPSS on their top five to seven coordination activities with other departments in the execution of services DPSS provides. What are the key cross coordination programs/efforts? What is the purpose, role, and outcome of the collaboration for a future month? (2) Quarterly update from CSC. (3) There has been a recent change in Public Charge law. She would like to understand primarily with the populations we serve if there have been any shifts or changes.

(4) Commissioner Chan would like to hear about the collaboration between DPSS and LACOE with regards to GROW and GAIN.

(5) Commissioner Estrada since the eviction moratorium is lifted, a lot of working families are being evicted. Is there any study being done about the number of families served by DPSS that are being evicted or threatened with eviction, and the effects the moratorium has had on them?

8.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

None.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.