

HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER
Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SDAC)
February Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2026

Opening:

Harbor Self Determination Advisory Committee (SDAC) was called to order at 6:08 PM on Wednesday, March 4, 2026, via Zoom.

Quorum was established.

Committee Members Present:

Deaka McClain – Individual Served, Committee Chair

Miriam Kang – Parent

Maria Elena Walsh – Harbor Regional Center Resource Center, Committee member

Shirlys Gruber – Parent

Mayra Garcia – Parent

Kyungshil Choi – Parent

Harbor Staff Present:

Antoinette Perez – Director

LaWanna Blair – Director

Ricardo Orozco – PCS

Wendy Velazquez – PCS

Kelsey Machado – CSM

Jimmy Silvestre – CSM

Erika Castillo – CSM

Johnny Granados – CSM

Maria Rivas – CSM

Yessica Toscano – CSM

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Maria Magdaleno – CSM

Minerva Prado – CSM

Visitors:

Lucy Paz – Interpreter

Albert Feliciano – SCDD Advocate

Sonni Charness – Guidelight Group

Debra Jorgensen – Guidelight Group

Naomi Hagel – Phoenix Facilitation

Kim Sinclair – ASLA

Preselah Seymore – GT Independence (FMS)

Tina Ewing-Wilson – Disability Voices United

Roslyn Gray – The Garden

Kristianna Moralls

Flerida Meza

Erin Bowers

Marleni Pineda

Michael Noel

Taylor Reynolds

Jasmine

Linda Wind

Ana Martinez

Oina Enciso

Adelayda Sanchez

Adriana Ortiz

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Austyn Perez

Ana Davaa

Alejandra Calderon

Aracely Lopez

Cesilia Ortiz Barajas

Lisa Sorenson

Maria Poblete

Shelia Jones

Katherine Rivas

Heidi Swan

Kenghuy Ung

Yolanda Gomez

Joana Kent

Jenniferr Prindle

Abbreviations:

Harbor: Harbor Regional Center

IF: Independent Facilitator

PCP: Person-Centered Plan

SCDD: State Council on Developmental Disabilities

SDP: Self-Determination Program

DVU: Disability Voices United

FMS: Financial Management Service

DDS: Department of Developmental Services

RFP: Request for Proposal

SDAC: Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee

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OCRA: Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy

ASLA: Autism Society of Los Angeles

CSM: Client Services Manager

Welcome:

Introductions of committee members and guests via the chat. Present committee members have camera on and introduce themselves verbally.

Committee Members Responsibilities and Agreements:

Mission Statement (read aloud by two committee members)

Committee Responsibilities (read aloud by committee member):

- attend meetings regularly and commit to being on time
- be mindful of participants' time by helping keep meetings on track
- listen attentively
- maintain an open mind towards others
- support the actions and efforts of the committee

Committee Agreements (read aloud by Chair):

- We agree to be respectful of each other
- We agree to respect privacy by not sharing any personal information
- We agree to only ask questions and share comments related to the SDP
- During public comments, raise your hand and wait to speak until called
- One comment per person, unless there is time for additional questions or comments
- If your questions were not answered during the meeting, email your Harbor service coordinator or Harbor PCS team

Open Forum / Sharing:

- Cesilia Ortiz Barajas – shared a free resource in the chat
- Preselah Seymore – FMS GT Independence sharing information about the SDP process and educating individuals and families

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- Austyn Perez – PPL FMS shared that have open enrollment. Offer PDS and FMS models, no cap, no waitlist. Shared interest form link in the chat. <https://hubs.ly/Q042tLmm0>
- Olaf Luevano – Ritz FMS sharing no waitlist, all three models are available, also provide PDS. <https://calendly.com/oluevano-ritzfms/30min>
- Taylor Reynolds – Taylor Care services that is a nonprofit advocacy provider in the regional center system
- Tina Ewing-Wilson – DVU shared information and a link <https://sdp-resource-center.org/>
- Adriana Ortiz – does not agree that they changed the public comments to the beginning of the meeting. She would like an explanation as to why it is now happening that way. It is harmful to families since they cannot ask questions during the actual presentation.
- Sandra McElwee – would like a spending plan that does not have to be edited so much and does not require so much work on the service coordinators (SC). Does not want to use Harbor’s spending plan but would prefer if we could use something on excel that does the calculation itself.
- Michele Arsian – have not been able to submit invoices and is having issues when dealing with developing the budget for next year. PCS offered to support and share contact information.
- Debra Jorgensen – shared that roundtables for IFs are beneficial for newer IFs to learn the process.
- Sheila Jones – what is the procedure for new SC’s training regarding SDP.
 - PCS shared information regarding onboarding trainings and ongoing trainings available to SC’s
- How do you file a complaint – you can file a 4731 complaint (if rights have been violated as it relates to services), the other complaint is a whistle blower complaint (relates to illegal or fraud activity).
- Lulu – how can we help SC’s work with the IF and support the family? How can they help and in what way?
- Lulu asked if we Harbor can share the RFP proposal information and how harbor came to their decision
 - Harbor shared that they will look into this and that there was a rubric used that is public information.

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Committee Chair Statewide Updates:

Chair reported the next meeting will take place in April of 2026 and will provide updates accordingly.

- Statewide updates – discussed new trailer bill language and implementation funds.
- Funds are being cut and supportive letters from the SDAC members should be written and sent to DDS with their feedback and advocate for the continued funds. Can also send a letter to Harbor’s board members.
- Vote by committee members to write the letters, Chair called for a motion to move forward at 6:55pm. Committee members are in favor and it has passed.
- Committee member asked how long they have the write and submit the letters.
 - Chair noted that a time frame was not provided.
- Committee member asked if we have people transitioning into SDP before we send the letters and show transparency that we are using the funds.
 - Chair shared that Harbor has been utilizing implementation funds to assist people with transiting into SDP.

Approval of Minutes:

February 4, 2026, minutes were reviewed. Motion to approve the minutes made by two committee member.

Minutes were approved.

Harbor Regional Center Monthly Updates:

- What LVAC is:
 - Oversight of SDP implementation funds
 - Provide recommendations for improvement
 - Share the best practices and training resources
 - Promote equity and community representation
 - Collaborate on use of SDP implementation funds
 - Increase awareness and participation

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- SDP Implementation Funds
 - Harbor shared an update regarding the implementation funds and would like to increase the number of bilingual IFs in the community. Harbor also shared that in the past they have taken the top two applicants and applied the RFP funds to them.
 - Guidelight Group: Fiscal Year 24-25 (421), Fiscal Year 25-26 (458)
 - ASLA: Fiscal Year 24-25 (457), Fiscal Year 25-26 (450)
 - Latino Parent Mentor's LLC: Fiscal Year (457), Fiscal year (457)
 - Asking the committee members for recommendations for the implementation funds.
 - Split the funds for Fiscal Year 24-25 between ASLA and Latino Parent Mentor's LLC
 - Split the funds for Fiscal Year 25-26 between Guidelight Group and Latino Parent Mentor's LLC
 - Two committee members asked questions about the proposals, and shares they are not in agreement with the process that Harbor is doing with the RFP funds.
 - Harbor shared that RFP's were discussed in previous SDAC's in which two committee members volunteered to review and score the proposals. It was also shared that Harbor only received three applicants.
 - Chair called for a vote to split the funds as stated above that support Harbor's decision. .
 - Votes from members: 4 yes and 2 no.
- SDP Resource Fair Flyer
 - April 11, 2026, @ 9am – 12pm Harbor Regional Center Torrance
 - Flyers in multiple languages and interpretation is provided
 - There will be an FMS presentation

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Partner Updates:

- OCRA representative Jamie Zoellner shared updates regarding training for this year's purchase of service data on Thursday, March 19th at 6PM on zoom. Spanish interpretation will be provided. You can enroll by email to ocra.hrc@disabilityrightsca.org
- State Council representative Albert Feliciano excused himself from the meeting early however he noted that there were no updates.
- Guidelight Group representative Debra Jorgensen shared the summary outcomes with Harbor RC grant funds they received.
 - Next steps for implementation funds is to find more multilingual IF to serve the community.
 - Deaka would like more information and provide a mentor program with IFs who have been through the program already
 - Committee member finds it worrisome that they do not see the IF's in the community that they have said graduated from the programs that received the past RFP funds.

SDP Success Story:

- Harbor shared a participant success story highlighting the positive impact of the Self-Determination Program.

Closing:

- Upcoming SDP Orientation
 - March 10, 2026, from 5 PM – 8 PM (English)
 - March 25, 2026, from 1 PM – 4 PM (Spanish)
- Next SDAC Meeting
 - April 1, 2026, from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM via Zoom.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Minutes submitted by: Kelsey Machado (CSM)