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Hospital Supplier Diversity Commission (HSDC) Final Meeting Minutes August 6, 2025

Members Attending: Baljeet Sangha, Chief Executive Officer, Pain and Rehabilitative Consultants Medical Group, HSDC Chair; Chico Manning, System Vice President, Enterprise Supply Chain, PIH Health; Scott Wilkerson, Chief Procurement Officer, Office of the President, University of California (UC) Health; Cameron M. Stewart, Co-Founder, Alcam Medical; Tracy Stanhoff, President & Creative Director, AD PRO, President, American Indian Chamber of Commerce of CA; Theresa A. Martinez, CEO & President, Community Connections, LLC; Jackson Dalton, President, Black Box Safety, Inc.; Lilly Rocha, Member, HONOR LGBT PAC, CEO & Executive Director, Latino Restaurant Association; Tara Lynn Gray, Director, California Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA).

Members Not Attending: Cecil Plummer, Chief Executive Officer, Fastr.ai.

Presenters: Elizabeth Landsberg, Director, Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI); Michael Valle, Deputy Director, HCAI; Denard Uy, Utilization and Disclosures Reporting Section Manager, HCAI; Baljeet Sangha, Pain and Rehabilitative Consultants Medical Group, HSDC Chair; Carmen Rad, Founder, CR&A Custom, Inc.; Danetta Jackson, Chief, Statewide Supplier Diversity Program, CA Department of General Services (DGS); Ernie Flores, Supplier Development Manager, Kaiser Permanente; Donna Ruff, President, Western Regional Minority Development Council (WRMSDC); Marquita Thomas, Founding President and CEO, California Rainbow Chamber; Maria Boykin-Rodriguez, Director of Certification, Women's Business Enterprise Council-West (WBEC); Rebecca Aguilera-Gardiner, CEO, Veterans in Business Network (VIBN).

Public Attendance: 51

Agenda Item # 1: Welcome and Meeting Minutes

Baljeet Sangha, HSDC Chair, welcomed commission members and members of the public to the HSDC meeting. He reviewed the meeting ground rules and agenda, acknowledged the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act requirements, and led a vote to approve the meeting minutes from May 15, 2025.

May 15, 2025, Meeting Minutes:



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Motion made by: Commissioner Chico Manning
Motion seconded by: Commissioner Scott Wilkerson

The vote passed with eight Ayes, zero Nays, and zero Abstentions. Commissioner Lilly Rocha was not present during the vote due to technical errors.

No commission discussion.

No public comment.

Agenda Item # 2: Update on vacant positions within the HSDC

Michael Valle, Deputy Director, HCAI, reported that HCAI is seeking representatives for the Group Purchasing Organizations (GPOs) and the Women Business Enterprise (WBE) vacancies. Director Elizabeth Landsberg, HCAI, noted that the Director Discretion vacancy will be filled after the WBE and GPO positions are filled, allowing HCAI to evaluate and address any remaining representation gaps. The request from HSDC members to extend the GPO application deadline was granted by HCAI.

No commission discussion.

No public comment.

Agenda Item # 3: Department Updates

Elizabeth Landsberg, Director, HCAI, provided department-wide updates, including budget implications for the new fiscal year, and shared several recently launched department programs.

Questions/Comments from the Commission:

Commission members thanked HCAI for prioritizing programs despite budget cuts.

No public comment.

Agenda Item # 4 Deputy Director Updates

Michael Valle, Deputy Director, HCAI, welcomed Matthew Ortiz, Staff Services Manager III, HCAI, who will be taking over functions previously performed by Tara Zimonjic. He shared the expansions of program responsibilities being met with budget limitations, noting that newer programs were hit the hardest, resulting in fewer anticipated



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resources. He recommended commissioners agendaize a discussion on outreach and clearinghouse updates at a future meeting.

Questions/Comments from the Commission:

Commission members noted that this program was developed to align with the [California Public Utilities Commission's General Order 156](#), specifically with utilities funding the Clearinghouse operations. They questioned whether hospitals could similarly finance HCAI's Clearinghouse, and if there were other projected budget reductions that could impact the Commission's work. HCAI suggested that this topic should be included as an agenda item for future discussions on diverse funding sources for the Clearinghouse.

No public comment.

Agenda Item # 5 Hospital Supplier Diversity (HSD) Reporting Program Update

Denard Uy, Utilization and Disclosures Reporting Section Manager, HCAI, presented a review of the changes to reporting requirements per Assembly Bill (AB) 1392. He reported improved participation, sharing statistics on completed 2024 reporting year reports and confirming those reports will be shared in October. He provided an overview of the data review process and the scheduled release of supplier diversity data products. He emphasized available resources, including an updated visualization tool, a pivot table, which was shared with the commission at the May meeting, and the final data set, which is scheduled for release in October. Hospitals were encouraged to update contact information in the HDC system and reach out for technical support when needed.

Questions/Comments from the Commission:

Commissioners inquired about the analysis and data elements for the HSD Reporting Program 2024 data. HCAI confirmed it would follow the same format as previous reporting years. Members thanked HCAI for highlighting the anomaly between spend and total spend and clarified the purpose of the Visualization tool, to which HCAI responded that it is a webpage for viewing exact data and submitted reports, and also noted that the multi-year trend tool uses this data to provide filterable graphs and trend tables. Commissioners asked if nonprofit hospitals submitted voluntary reports. HCAI confirmed that hospitals reporting below the threshold are considered voluntary, and noted it does not track ownership type for those reports. HCAI confirmed it conducts outreach to hospitals with missing reports.



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Public Comment:

A member of the public emphasized the value of the information released in the yearly submitted reports and inquired whether the reports published in September will be made available online, which HCAI confirmed.

Agenda Item # 6: Procurement Strategies Panel

Carmen Rad, owner and founder of CR&A Custom Inc., presented on successes and challenges her diverse printing business experienced navigating the procurement. She noted how her company uses creative solutions and modern technology to meet strict hospital material regulations. She emphasized creativity, intentionality, innovation, and flexibility as key differentiators for diverse businesses.

Danetta Jackson, Chief, CA Department of General Services (DGS), provided an overview on state certification programs, whose mission is to advance the equitable utilization of small and diverse businesses in state procurement. DGS focuses on underserved communities and diverse businesses, both in California and out-of-state. She detailed the benefits and eligibility for the Small and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) Program. The program's information is available in the Cal eProcure system, offering certifications for Small Business, Small Business for Public Works, and DVBE, providing access to exclusive contracts.

Ernie Flores, Kaiser Permanente, shared Kaiser Permanente's evolving approach to procurement, prioritizing small and local diverse businesses to support local communities. He presented the impact spending program, which uses a preventative model based on the understanding that social factors, such as access to livable wages, heavily influence health outcomes. He noted this approach is both mindful of Kaiser Permanente's spend and the spend of its suppliers. He advised Kaiser Permanente fosters economic and community development through outreach, networking, matchmaking, and chamber partnerships.

Questions/Comments from the Commission:

Commissioners praised Kaiser Permanente's mentorship model and suggested it be included in the maturity model discussion of the Voluntary Guidelines. They acknowledged Kaiser Permanente's approach suits advanced hospitals but also stressed the need for strategies for hospitals beginning their supplier diversity programs. Commission members reiterated the need for a supplier clearinghouse to provide opportunities for diverse suppliers.



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Commission members sought practical advice on navigating hospital procurement. Carmen Rad shared her targeted approach, including obtaining multiple certifications, registering on supplier diversity portals, attending conferences, networking, and sharing media about her company with hospitals/businesses.

Commissioners suggested HCAI invite experts to present best practices on how California hospitals are navigating federal challenges while growing and supporting supplier diversity initiatives.

Commissioners emphasized that certification is only the first step in procurement and should be supported through leveraging network partners to build a bridge between certification and success in contracting. They also noted the need for tailored solutions, considering the varying needs of different business categories and the distinct cultures of hospitals and the corporations that own them.

Commissioners thanked Danetta Jackson for her presentation and suggested HCAI invite procurement managers from state departments, such as the California Department of Corrections, Department of State Hospitals, or California Veterans Homes, to share tactical best practices. These three departments were noted for achieving over \$600 million in annual DVBE spend when combined.

Questions/Comments from Guest Speakers:

Donna Ruff, President, Western Regional Minority Development Council (WRMSDC), emphasized the strain on under-sourced, small supplier diversity teams and praised Ernie Flores for being able to develop his team to its current capacity.

Rebecca Aguilera-Gardiner, CEO, Veterans in Business Network (VIBN), noted that DGS DVBE certifications is highly recommended, free for DVBE's, and benefits California's economy. She also highlighted the value of the Small Business Association certification for DVBE's. Donna Ruff concurred, underscoring the credibility these certifications bring to diverse businesses.

Marquita Thomas, Founding President and CEO, California Rainbow Chamber, noted the high volume of certifications can be overwhelming to LGBTQ businesses, requiring dedicated outreach resources. She emphasized the need for additional resources for her organization to effectively conduct necessary outreach to these LGBTQ businesses.

Maria Boykin-Rodriguez, Director of Certification, Women's Business Enterprise Council-West (WBEC-West), shared that they have fourteen regional partners throughout the United States and emphasized their available resources.



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Marquita Thomas noted that hospitals must directly specify their needs for organizations like her to provide effective technical assistance. This allows support organizations to inform diverse businesses and address any barriers they face. She also encouraged leveraging the CPUC Clearinghouse.

Ernie Flores highlighted that diverse businesses can list their certifications in Kaiser Permanente's portal, which is utilized when exploring small and local businesses. He noted that WBEC-West, WRMSDC, and the Southern California Minority Supplier Council as key organizations for supporting diverse business development.

Carmen Rad noted that certification is a first step, but reaching out for assistance when hitting roadblocks can help expand their professional network and provide future opportunities.

Donna Ruff emphasized collaboration across the different diverse business organizations and highlighted that each certifying organization supports all diverse businesses, and noted the importance of an intersectional approach in supplier diversity work.

No public comment.

Agenda Item # 7 Draft Voluntary Guidelines

Morgan Clair, Policy and Governance Supervisor, HCAI, and Baljeet Sangha, HSDC Chair, presented the third version of the Voluntary Guidelines. Key changes to the Supplier Diversity Roadmap section included adding detailed characteristics directly tied to the voluntary guidelines for all level descriptions, a description to help hospitals understand levels achieved, and cumulative levels that build upon previous ones. The commission also finalized the verbiage for Voluntary Guideline # 8.

The commission workshopped the document followed by a motion to approve the entire document.

Questions/Comments from the Commission:

Commission members discussed the implications of each option and considered the different ways that each of them could potentially be interpreted from a hospital perspective to determine the best recommendations for the Voluntary Guidelines.

Public Comment:



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A member of the public thanked the Commission for navigating the current federal landscape and emphasized the importance of this subject since many organizations have already been forced to shift their approach as a result.

Motion made by: Commissioner Tracy Stanhoff

Motion seconded by: Commissioner Theresa Martinez

Following Commission discussion and public comment, the vote passed to approve the document as a whole with nine Ayes, zero Nays, and zero Abstentions.

Agenda Item # 8 Next Meeting Topics

Baljeet Sangha, HSDC Chair, shared the HSDC running list, which tracks Commission priorities and requests.

Questions/Comments from the Commission:

Commissioners discussed and prioritized the following items:

Prioritized Topics:

- Supporting diverse businesses in hospital procurement (e.g. through an ombudsman).
- DEI: Effective Communication and Advocacy event amidst current federal landscape.
- Using the data to tell an accurate story and key metrics.
- Additional diverse business presentations.
- Enhance direct outreach to Native American vendors to improve their procurement contract opportunities.

No public comment.

Agenda Item # 9 Public Comment

A public commenter urged the Commission to collaborate with CPUC to auto-register all vendors from the CPUC Supplier Clearinghouse to the HSDC Clearinghouse, reducing the registration burden on diverse businesses.

Agenda Item # 10 Adjournment



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The meeting was adjourned at 1:34 p.m.