

**LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL
OCTOBER 18, 2012
MEETING SUMMARY**

8:30 A.M.

Holiday Inn South
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

GREETINGS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Sam Beech, Chair of the Council, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She stated there are forms on the table for anyone wishing to address the Council. Time is allowed at the end of the meeting for people to speak for five minutes each. Ms. Beech reminded those present that Council Bylaws do not allow for proxy voting; anyone representing a Council member cannot vote on any issue.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Sandra "Sam" Beech
Susan Berry, OPH/CSHS
Donna Breaux
Brandon Burris, GODA
Pranab Choudhury
Brenda Cosse'
Rocky Fuselier
Reginald Garey
Andrew Merlin
Chasedee Noto
Stephanie Patrick, AC
Bambi Polotzola
Olantha Scott
Phil Wilson, HDC

STAFF PRESENT

Shawn Fleming
Paige Freeman
Robbie Gray
Brandi Jones
Keokah Sanders
Derek White
Sandee Winchell

MEMBERS ABSENT

Lynn Cannon
Mary Elizabeth Christian
Hugh Eley, OAAS
Laura Head
Valerie Hiser
Ruth Kennedy, BHSF
Kay Marcel
Mark Martin, LRS
Heather Mobley

GUESTS PRESENT

Laura Brackin, OCDD
Kris Hebert
Deshae Lott Sadow
Margaret McGarity, GOEA
Erin Smith
Patsy White
Tammy LeBlanc, OAAS
James Sprinkle, FHF
Lynsey Hebert, Transcriptionist
Jeff Sadow, Guest of Deshae Lott Sadow
Jason Durham
Donna Broussard, DOE
Kristen Reed, LaCAN
Christy Cormier, LaTEACH
Dave Lefkowitz, DOE
Stephen Osborn, DOE

SUMMARY OF JULY MEETING

Ms. Beech requested a motion to accept the summary from the July meeting.

Motion passed. Motion to accept the July summary made by Stephanie Patrick. Second by Susan Berry. Passed without objection.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – Sam Beech

Since the July meeting Ms. Beech participated in a conference call with the Act 378 Ad Hoc Committee discussing issues related to Districts and Authorities.

Ms. Beech wrote a letter to Commissioner Rainwater regarding the appropriation of state general funds for Louisiana Rehabilitation Services. This letter was provided to Council members.

Along with Sandee Winchell and Kay Marcel, Ms. Beech met with Laura Brackin and Kathy Kleibert (Secretary Greenstein was unable to attend this quarterly meeting) to discuss the following issues: Closure of the Louisiana Special Education Center operated by the Department of Education by transitioning residents to home and community-based waiver services; allowing waiver recipients to opt out and not be required to enroll in Bayou Health; the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DHH and the local governing entities; and the expansion of criteria for emergency waiver services and a certain percent of all new slots being designated for emergency slots.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DECISIONS

Per the recommendations by the Louisiana Association of Non-profit Organizations, the Executive Committee endorses having a job description for Council mentors. Mentors are encouraged to call their mentee before and after each Council meeting, identify times on the agenda where your mentee might have a point to contribute and sit next to your mentee and encourage them to participate.

The Committee discussed orientation of new members scheduled for January. Ms. Beech encouraged all state representatives and other members to participate.

A decision was made to provide the Arc of Louisiana five hundred dollars to support a training for Direct Support Workers, Support Coordinators, and other professionals that provide services to individuals with disabilities.

Ms. Beech discussed a proposal to change the Council's planning process. In October Council members' ideas would be considered. In January concept proposals from outside entities would be reviewed. A planning committee would be selected made up of parents, self-advocates and state agency representatives. This committee would meet in February or March to develop a draft plan. This plan would be presented for consideration at the April meeting. The full Council would react and amend this plan as needed. In July the plan for 2014 would be ratified.

Motion passed. Motion to accept the revised planning process made by Donna Breaux. Second by Brenda Cosse'. Passed without objection.

Ms. Beech discussed the Council Legislative Action Plan. Council members are encouraged to lead the advocacy efforts in their region along with LaCAN Leaders and LaTEACH Coordinators in visiting legislators, participating in round tables, the state rally and yellow and purple shirt days and taking action when action alerts are issued.

Ms. Beech discussed the 2013 proposed Council Legislative/Advocacy Agenda. The proposed Agenda includes: Funding for 368 NOW slots, restore and protect Individual and Family Support funding, protect the Flexible Family Fund program, increase state match for Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, promote inclusive settings and prevent the formation of segregated schools, encourage Louisiana Department of Education to continue providing professional development, ensure high stakes testing provides options for students with disabilities, and advocate for parent input in teacher evaluations (i.e., student learning targets). Ms. Winchell shared details on the issues related to home and community-based services and Mr. Fleming shared issues related to education items.

Motion passed. Motion to accept the 2013 Legislative/Advocacy Agenda made by Olantha Scott. Second by Chasedee Noto. Passed without objection.

Ms. Beech presented Certificates of Appreciation to Council members whose terms are ending in the next few months. Andrew Merlin, Pranab Choudhury, Olantha Scott, and Donna Breaux were presented their certificates in person.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Sandee Winchell

Ms. Winchell welcomed Lilian Wise who was recently nominated to be a new Council member and introduced Keokah Sanders who joined the Council staff as the new Program Manager.

Council members were asked to refer to the handout titled Louisiana Partnership. Ms. Winchell shared that a plan is being developed as a result of the Early Childhood Education Act (Act 3) of the 2012 legislative session. As the plan is currently written children with disabilities are not included so advocacy is critical to ensure the plan requires early childhood programs to include the youngest kids with disabilities. Talking points were provided that were developed by Tony Ledet, head of the Council's early childcare initiative. The Council will submit official comments and all members are encouraged to respond to the online survey and submit comments between October 30th and November 5th. Details will be contained in an action alert through LaTEACH.

Ms. Winchell next spoke about the Council's legislative action plan and information received from the Louisiana Association of Non-Profit Organizations' (LANO) conference. The message was that Boards should not ask their community of people that they serve to do something that they do not do themselves. The Executive Committee embraced the goal for Council members as leaders of the disability community to set an example for others and have one hundred percent participation in legislative advocacy and grassroots advocacy networks (LaCAN and LaTEACH).

Staff will send out Facts Sheets to the Council members to assist in legislative visits. Following the Legislative Kick Off last Thursday LaCAN Leaders, LaTEACH Coordinators, Families Helping Families Directors and People First are ready to work with Council members on advocacy efforts. They are scheduling visits with legislators now. Council members were encouraged to build relationships with legislators.

The LANO conference also reminded Ms. Winchell to be aware of the vocabulary, terminology and language the Council uses; specifically to avoid using acronyms and talking in a lingo that is not understood by the community at large. She will keep this in mind as facts sheets and articles are developed.

Ms. Winchell shared that on October 1st she and Ms. Marcel participated in another quarterly meeting with DHH leadership: Secretary Greenstein, Kathy Kliebert and Laura Brackin. Ms. Beech was unable to attend due to recuperation from an injury. Discussion points were similar to the previous meetings. Concerns were shared about the Individual and Family Support budgets and the disparity among the Districts and Authorities. DHH agreed to continue to address the Louisiana Special Education Center. DHH will include 200 additional NOW slots in their budget request. Ms. Winchell indicated the Council is waiting for the signed agreement regarding the use of the NOW fund.

A question regarding the Special Education Advisory Panel resulted in discussion that Patsy White is a new member of Special Education Advisory Panel. The Health/Education/Employment Committee developed some recommendations for agenda items.

BUDGET REPORT – Shawn Fleming

Mr. Fleming referred to the two budget reports in the handout. The end of the year report provides a full accounting of last year SFY12 with additional details. He referred to the thirteenth month expenditures that all state agencies experience as a result of invoices coming in after June 30th (the end of the state fiscal year). Council members were encouraged to consider this when they evaluate budgets from other state agencies. Expenditures for current year are on track with no concerns or major issues.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE – Rocky Fuselier

Mr. Fuselier shared results of the Council Membership Committee consisting of himself, Donna Breaux, Stephanie Patrick, Nanette Olivier, and Val Hiser. Fifteen applicants were interviewed and discussed by the committee. Five were self-advocates and ten were parents. Seven were Partners' graduates. Although the Council is losing five parents and one self-advocate the committee made the decision to select two self-advocates and four parents as a result of some really strong self-advocate candidates. A list of committee recommendations was provided in the handout. Rickii Ainey and Monica Simmons are self-advocates and Tracy Brown is a parent from the New Orleans metropolitan area. Jason Durham, Melinda Ganes and Krista Scurria are all parents from the Baton Rouge metropolitan area. Kathy Edmonston, a parent, was also selected as an alternate. The committee was hoping to add a Council position in region three because of the increase in population in that area but they were unable to recruit any qualified applicants from that region. That position will be filled by someone from Ascension Parish, region two, but in close proximity to region three. The three recommendations from the New Orleans area are from Orleans parish, not Jefferson, but the committee felt strongly that these are the three strongest candidates from the New Orleans metropolitan area and it was more important to have the best Council members than adhere to boundary restrictions. The Membership Committee is recommending the Council approve the recommendation of Rickii Ainey, Tracy Brown, Jason Durham, Melinda Ganes and Krista Scurria be nominated as candidates to submit for Governor appointment. Also recommend Kathy Edmonston approved as alternate.

Discussion: Andrew Martin sought confirmation that the committee contacted and interviewed other self-advocate candidates from the New Orleans area. Committee members assured him that these interviews were conducted.

Motion passed. A motion to accept the recommendation from the membership committee of Rickii Ainey, Monica Simmons, Tracy Brown, Jason Durham, Melinda Ganes and Krista Scurria, with Kathy Edmonston as an alternate, as the Council's recommendation to the Governor made by Donna Breaux. Second by Chasedee Noto. Passed without objection.

SELF-DETERMINATION/COMMUNITY INCLUSION/HOUSING COMMITTEE – Donna Breaux

The Self-Determination Committee reviewed and the advocacy objectives for which the committee is responsible. The Committee recommended the following changes to the plan:

- Activity 2.2.1 - Change the target date for this activity to Federal Fiscal Year 2015.
- Activity 2.3.1 - Change the target date to FFY 2015.
- Activity 3.2.1 - The Committee recommends adding a third bullet to read, "Improving the system by soliciting feedback from individual families using or trying to access behavioral health services and sharing that information with the DHH leadership."

- Activity 3.4.1 – Advocate for residents of the Louisiana Special Education Center to be added to the pool of developmental center waiver slots. The recommendation is to document in the plan that this objective has been accomplished.
- Activity 3.4.2 – Change the language to read, “Monitor OCDD activities in reference to informing families of Special Education Center residents about home and community-based options and advocate with DHH leadership regarding this objective.”
- Activity 3.4.3 - Provide information to the Department of Education and BESE on home and community-based services.

The Committee recommended for the Council to approve staff researching the following Council member ideas for consideration in the 2014 plan:

- An initiative on natural supports to develop guidelines and helpful information that would assist families in learning how to incorporate natural supports into their lives.
- A survey to be conducted of recipients of adult protective services.

The Committee also made a request for Mark Thomas to provide the Act 299 Report on improving home and community based services.

The Committee also agreed to review the policy statements for the website and email any feedback to Council staff.

The Committee also reviewed a payment structure for Families Helping Families contract deliverables.

Motion passed. A motion to accept the recommendation from the committee to changes in the plan made by Rocky Fuselier. Second by Stephanie Patrick. Passed without objection.

Motion passed. A motion to approve the recommendation for the two initiatives for staff to research made by Chasedee Noto. Second by Andrew Merlin. Passed without objection.

HEALTH/EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – Bambi Polotzola

The Committee developed strategies to advocate for the Council’s education advocacy agenda items of: Louisiana Department of Education’s (LDE) role in providing professional development regarding students with disabilities; High Stakes/Assessment/Pupil Progression without an alternate assessment (LAA2 is being phased out); and, Parental involvement in determination of Student Learning Targets (COMPASS) for teachers in non-graded subjects. Patsy White will request for the Special Education Advisory Panel to include these items on the agenda to bring attention to these issues to the LDE and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE).

The Committee reviewed the proposal for the inclusive recreation project: Southeast Louisiana's Roux Roux Production Theater for \$27,296. The recommendation is for the Council to conditionally accept the Roux-Roux Production project. The two conditions for acceptance include:

- participants in the production would include people with and without disabilities as equal cast members; and,
- the proportion of people with disabilities should not exceed one third (33%) of all participants.

The Committee recommends for the Council to approve staff researching the following new ideas for consideration in the FFY14 Council Plan:

- training for Community Rehabilitation Professionals (CRPs) that includes trial work experiences to be part of the evaluation and training for supporting people seeking employment;
- training for EarlySteps providers on the Family Driven Model; and,
- transportation options

Motion passed. A motion to approve the recommendation for the conditional approval of the Roux-Roux Production for the Inclusive Recreation Initiative at \$27,296 made by Pranab Choudhry. Second by Chasedee Noto. Passed without objection.

Motion passed. A motion to approve the recommendation for the three initiatives for staff to research to include training for Community Rehabilitation Professionals, training for EarlySteps providers in the family driven model and transportation options made by Brenda Cosse'. Second by Andrew Merlin. Discussion points included transportation options that consider vouchers for taxi services. Passed without objection.

ACT 378 SUB-COMMITTEE – Stephanie Patrick

The Act 378 Sub-Committee reviewed the Individual and Family Support budgets and noted with concern how there was 814,000 dollars unexpended last year.

Disparities in budgets across regions was reviewed revealing significant cuts to these programs for the Districts and Authorities. Council staff are developing information to advocate for equitable services across the state so that accessibility is not based on where you live. OCDD is also looking at a formula to determine equitable budgets for each Region and District.

The Committee also reviewed the Flexible Family Fund program. OCDD is implementing income-based criteria for individuals also receiving waiver services as part of the eligibility requirements. Currently there are 200 vacant slots and OCDD is waiting until the income criteria are implemented prior to offering new slots. It is expected that 55 families will lose the Flexible Family Fund because of the new income standard.

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CENTER (HDC) – Phil Wilson

Dr. Wilson asked the Council to take a few moments in acknowledgement of the loss of Jason Weill who tragically lost his life a couple of weeks ago in an automobile accident. Jason served as a member of the Constituency Advisory Council of the LSU Human Development Center and was always a very delightful person, really a very strong advocate.

Dr. Wilson discussed issues with implementation of employment first practices in Louisiana and the need for more funding to Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) for improved employment services. The LRS determination process requires that for a person to not receive LRS services they must be determined ineligible due to severity of disability. If determined ineligible there are other service options available such as day treatment, sheltered workshop or non-work services. However, data analyzed revealing that in FY2012 only 26 people were determined severely disabled through this process. This brings into question how many other people went straight to day treatment or sheltered workshops who did not go through this process? Dr. Wilson discussed funding implications and opportunities for interagency collaboration to address this issue.

ADVOCACY CENTER (AC) – Stephanie Patrick

Ms. Patrick requested for anyone with problems voting on election day to contact the Advocacy Center. The AC is working hard to ensure polling places are accessible and people are accommodated throughout the voting process. The Advocacy Center is also concerned about cuts to services for kids serviced under Bayou Health. Very young children have had their hours of service cut, mostly involving home nursing services. The process does not seem to be clearly communicated to families about both the decisions and their rights to appeal those decisions. Council members were encouraged to inform people with problems related to their services being cut to contact the Advocacy Center. The Advocacy Center plan for this year is to continue the focus more on systemic advocacy and changes. They are seeking individual cases that are most likely to bring about systemic change for the whole system or for a particular parish or for a particular problem. Council members were requested to submit comments regarding the plan

STATE AGENCY REPORTS

LOUISIANA REHABILITATION SERVICES (LRS) – Ken York for Mark Martin

Mr. York indicated that Mark Martin, LRS Director, was absent due to surgery and that he is recovering nicely. On behalf of the Executive Director of the Louisiana Workforce Commission Mr. York expressed appreciation to the Council and staff for their significant efforts in helping LRS seek additional funding with information provided in the recent LaDDC News article. LWC continues seeking alternative sources for funding match.

LRS recently was awarded a 2.3 million dollar grant from the US Department of Labor to increase capacity of business resolution centers in providing services to everybody. LRS is transitioning from a services model to more of an employment model. Currently LRS is only able to serve order of selection one which are individuals with the most significant disabilities.

This week the Vocational Rehabilitation federal partner is in Louisiana conducting a site monitoring. They have already highlighted the quality of Louisiana employment outcomes as compared to other states. Louisiana does much better in terms of wages, hours of work, and benefits.

Mr. York shared changes to milestone for providers to be reimbursed for supported employment services beginning October First. The milestone for services is changing from day one of work with six months of services and three months (ninety days) of employment to seven days of employment. This should encourage providers to immediately go out and get the person employed and strengthens the model.

OFFICE FOR CITIZENS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (OCDD) – Dr. Laura Brackin

OCDD has been exploring other states' systems with a commitment on transforming Louisiana's system. Dr. Brackin envisions a system that identifies someone's needs and provides support coordination for a range of supports from the time they enter the system instead of people immediately applying for intensive 24-hour services either through an ICF or getting on the waiver waiting list. OCDD is scheduling stakeholder meetings to get input on some key issues to address and guide development of system transformation.

Dr. Brackin shared how OCDD is working on elements for the Districts and Authorities accountability system and one element is to hold them accountable for spending Act 378 funds (i.e., Individual and Family Support service and Flexible Family Fund). OCDD is problem solving ways to redistribute funds anticipated to be remaining across regions.

Dr. Brackin clarified definitions of linked and certified waiver slots. A linked waiver slot is one that has been offered to a specific individual. It remains linked until that person either starts receiving services or decides not to use the slot. A certified slot indicates that an individual has started receiving services. Often OCDD and Medicaid reports have different waiver numbers due to data being collected at different points in time. For the entire legislative session OCDD uses numbers pulled from a single point in time to avoid confusion.

OCDD is completing a pilot of a new Individual Service Plan that will replace the Comprehensive Plan of Care. The Comprehensive Plan of Care is a very, very lengthy document that is very much focused on a medical model. The Individual Service Plan will be more person centered, less time consuming and include an employment aspect to focus on building a quality life for individuals.

OCDD is also reducing the amount of paperwork through use of a checklist for regional offices to establish eligibility requirements that should speed up the process of getting

access to services.

Questions about the status of the Children's Choice Waiver amendments revealed that the changes still must go through rule making which is expected to take a few months.

Dr. Brackin clarified that there have been eighteen to nineteen attrition slots freed up. So even though OCDD needs to cut out fourteen waiver slots a month on average due to the last legislative session there are still a few slots being made available each month. These slots are being filled. Priority is given to move people out of residential (ICF/DD) facilities.

Questions were asked about the process for individuals who were in the OCDD system and having trouble accessing behavioral health services. There is a committee that meets to problem solve issues. Dr. Brackin has been involved with issues for people with dual diagnosis such as kids with autism. She has met and has another meeting scheduled with the head of Magellan to problem solve issues for specific kids. A policy decision on the issue of services for kids with specific diagnoses was developed.

Dr. Brackin explained how the office developed efficiencies to reduce travel time and personnel costs through the use of technology, distance learning and electronic communications.

Dr. Brackin shared information related to direct support professionals performing medical procedures (both complex and noncomplex) and issues related to physician delegation. A law related to physician delegation of medical tasks was passed in 2008 and amended last year. As the system changed from residential to home and community-based services it created issues with whether a physician and nurses are present to administer medications and medical procedures. Due to liability concerns physicians are hesitant to sign off on the physician delegation forms because they do not have direct access to their patient and cannot really watch and see if the procedure is performed safely. According to law anyone administering medication needs to have some medical license. Some continuing problems with the law are that it requires an additional 16 hours of training beyond the 16 hours that the direct service workers receive and one on one supervision by a nurse anytime there is a change in medication. This is very costly to the provider agencies and creates a logistical issue for any medication change, such as an antibiotic, aspirin or anything. By definition medication is anything that is ingested orally or applied topically to improve a health outcome. OCDD is reviewing the sixteen hours initial training to determine how to fit some of the medical training components in and how to adjust other training for people working with individuals with more complex medical needs. This could play into a type of career ladder for direct service workers. The goal is to get as many people trained as quickly as possible and have a system that addresses the high turnover issue of direct support professionals. OCDD is also looking at a number of possible options including online training, course work through the Louisiana community and technical college system, and offering Certified Medication Attendent (CMA) training through the resource centers free of charge for a limited time.

Charter Schools, Private School Scholarships and Course Choice
Stephen Osborn, Assistant Superintendent, Student Programs
David “Lefty” Lefkowitz
La. Department of Education

Stephen Osborn, Assistant Superintendent, Student Programs and David “Lefty” Lefkowitz, Office of Portfolio (School Choice/Course Choice) of the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) provided a presentation on Charter Schools, private school scholarships and course choice.

Mr. Osborn shared changes to the Department and addressed concerns expressed about whether all the options are also available to parents of students with disabilities. The Department has shifted from a lot of different programs being administered by a lot of different people to a model of supporting school districts through five network teams connected based on similar populations and similar communities. Each team has ten people with at least two of these working on special education issues. LDE promotes a blended use of resources to get a more meaningful use of money and to have all team members be an expert to build meaningful relationships with districts. LDE cut a lot of programs and has taken every single dollar and flowed that money back in school districts.

The “Believe and Include” concept is designed to promote the academic achievement of special education students. The department received 49 applications.

Regarding compliance, Mr. Osborn does not believe in rewarding school systems for doing things that are legally required. The priority should be academic performance. Mr. Osborn shared how scores for eighth grade students with disabilities rose from nine percent of students on grade level in 2002 to twenty five percent last year. However, what was concerning is that the achievement gap between students with and without disabilities is about the same. Compliance should be a contractual requirement and focus on promoting academic outcomes for all students.

Mr. Lefkowitz discussed school choice which includes charters, scholarships and Course Choice. Approximately five thousand students were placed in scholarship schools from the almost ten thousand students and families who applied. Course Choice was described as a mini scholarship program in that it is one course at a time. LDE is receiving applications and surprisingly even have proposals for K through 8 as well as high school programs. A large number of applications were from virtual course providers. A number of good applications offer a blended model with some online and some contact with tutors or instructors locally. Council members asked questions about whether charter and private schools need to accept and provide all special education services and that due to the limited services in private schools how the majority of parents, especially parents of children with significant disabilities, do not feel they have the option to leave a school that is clearly failing. Mr. Osborn shared that neither charter nor private schools can deny access to a student with a disability and that LDE set aside a number of spots for the scholarship program specifically for students with disabilities. He thought it was five hundred but will have to get the exact number. As public schools, charter schools operate under the same laws as all public schools.

However, private schools operate under different rules and do not have to meet all of the requirements for services. This was described as putting the trust and power in the hands of the parents and letting the parent decide which is the best school to educate their child. However, there is no law that mandates or requires private schools to provide the same level of accommodation or service as a public school must provide.

There were questions asked regarding how the resources and funding work for students in school choice options programs. Mr. Osborn shared his experiences at the charter schools One New Beginnings in New Orleans with pooling resources together and what would happen if some of the pools of resources were unavailable.

One of the goals is to make sure parents have better, more timely information about the decision they are being asked to make. A question was asked about information related to participating private schools that is no longer available to parents online. LDE is undergoing a website redesign and some links are currently operated through contracts with private entities.

STATE AGENCY REPORTS CONTINUED

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ELDERLY AFFAIRS (GOEA) – Margaret McGarity
Ms. McGarity reported the GOEA report contains 2012 year end numbers. GOEA is redesigning its website and will include 'Louisiana Answers,' a service locator for seniors. The Aging and Disability Resource Centers assist approximately two thousand people each quarter. Currently it is open enrollment for Medicare where people need to make choices on those additional insurances. GOEA is still without an Executive Director.

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF DISABILITY AFFAIRS (GODA) – Brandon Burriss
Mr. Burriss shared changes in the Executive Office recently including Steven Waguespack resigning as Chief of Staff, which was filled with Paul Rainwater. Kristi Nichols then moved from Deputy Chief of Staff to the Commissioner of the Division of Administration. There were six other position shifts.

Mr. Burriss reported improvements to the SNAP program since 2008. When Hurricane Isaac struck there were six disaster sites open on the first day. GODA staff covered five of the six sites to ensure persons with disabilities were served adequately. Mr. Burriss commended his staff for their dedication in working from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. for twenty straight days.

Mr. Burriss shared issues with getting nominations for the Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs appointed, indicating the wait has been eleven months. This makes it difficult to conduct business.

GODA is seeking nominations for the GOLD awards and the number of nominations are drastically down from 120 nominations three years ago to 31 last year and less than 20 so far this year. Regional competitions have replicated the GOLD awards but are not passing their candidates up to GODA.

OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH (OPH) – Dr. Sue Berry

Dr. Berry provided updates from each area, the Block Grant and discussed budget cuts and funding issues. She shared the Council's activity to advocate for Bayou Health policy that ensures people with disabilities have access to adequate health care.

The Children's Special Health Services Family Resource Center at Children's Hospital continues to flourish. This center works in collaboration with Families Helping Families to provide families leaving Children's Hospital with referrals to the services they need

Dr. Berry shared that the transportation system that provides stipends for transportation to medical appointments for children with special health care needs has now expanded state wide. This is in its second year of funding of a three year grant. An assessment will review usage in each region and actual costs to determine how to continue funding when that grant ends.

Care Coordination medical homes were created to increase the capacity of primary care physicians by providing coordination for their patients. Most physicians are unaware of care coordination public services. Children's Special Health Services (CSHS) has worked with every residency program clinic in the state for family practice, medical pediatrics and pediatric residency programs with hopes to expand to private practices through Bayou Health.

Resource information workshops continue to expand and have added the Office of Behavioral Health workshops as well.

CSHS has not received Medicaid or insurance reimbursements for the medical service they provide for many reasons including Bayou Health requirements for pre-authorization for each plan, CSHS changed their provider, and there have been software problems. The Bayou Health process makes it difficult to figure out how to bill and get paid. Unfortunately, claims have been denied leaving a large impact on the CSHS budget.

CSHS has a few vacancies including the Program Manager for birth defects and the Care Coordinator Supervisor.

Dr. Berry anticipates budget cuts from the federal government and the block grant. While CSHS has maintained its core activities it is reaching the point where it is difficult to continue to do everything with a 29 percent budget reduction since 2007. In most of the state CSHS orthopedic and neurology clinics serve hundreds of children and there is not another provider available. Staff in those clinics have been cut every six months. Bayou Health mandates care coordination but CSHS does not get paid for care coordination.

OFFICE OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES (OAAS) – Tammy LeBlanc for Hugh Eley

Ms. LeBlanc reported the latest round of budget decreases caused a delay in offering 350 of the 500 new Community Choices Waiver slots.

Elderly Protective Services and Adult Protective Services have merged in OAAS.

Ms. LeBlanc shared that implementation of the electronic visit verification, which uses a telephone and computer based system that electronically verifies service visits and documents precise times of service, has been delayed due to contractor issues.

House Resolution 166 called for a study group to develop the design for a thorough and complete analysis of funding for long term services and support. The group's recommendations will be proposed in the 2013 legislative session.

There has been discussion of a national effort around the Community First Choice Option as a substitute for the current Long-term Personal Care Services program. This would give Louisiana an extra six percent of federal matching funds, however, it appears no state is going to take advantage of it.

BUREAU OF HEALTH SERVICES FINANCING (BHSF) – Candace Ricard for Ruth Kennedy

Ms. Ricard reported that the federal Medicaid agency (CMS) approved the spend down for the Adult Day Healthcare and Community Choices Waivers. This increases the maximum income that a person can have in order to qualify. Also discussed was the self-direction program that allows people to hire their own staff instead of going through a provider agency. Medicaid is working on allowing an additional 1,600 people into self-direction during this fiscal year. Questions about the acceptance rate of offered adult day health care slots revealed that there is usually about a forty percent acceptance rate.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None to be discussed

NEW BUSINESS

None to be discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members were reminded to complete the meeting evaluation.

Ms. Winchell shared a quote written by Drina Reed. "If you want something you have never had before you have got to do something you have never done before."

The next Council meeting is January 16th – 17th which includes Orientation. Orientation will begin at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 15th.

ADJOURNMENT OF BUSINESS MEETING

Motion passed. Motion to adjourn made by Donna Breaux. Second by Pranab Choudhury. Passed without objection.