

**LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL**  
**January 22, 2009**  
**MEETING**

8:30 A.M.

Baton Rouge Marriott  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

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1. GREETINGS AND INTRODUCTIONS

- A. Lynette Fontenot, Chairperson of the Council, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She stated that Kay Marcel will assist her with the meeting since Donna Breaux is not in attendance. Ms. Fontenot stated there are forms on the table for anyone who would like to address the Council. Time is allowed at the end of the meeting for people to speak for five minutes each. Ms. Fontenot reminded those present that Council Bylaws do not allow for proxy voting; anyone representing a Council member cannot vote on any issue.

B. MEMBERS PRESENT

Jeanne Abadie  
Susan Berry, OPH  
Brandon Burris, GODA  
Lynn Cannon  
Pranab Choudhury  
Mary Elizabeth Christian  
Lynette Fontenot  
Rocky Fuselier  
Laura Head  
Valerie Hiser  
Simone Honore-Chretien  
Kathy Kliebert, OCDD  
Billie Ruth Kvaternik  
Kay Marcel  
Andrew Merlin  
Heather Mobley  
Chasadee Noto  
Nanette Olivier, DOE  
Olantha Scott  
Phil Wilson, HDC

C. MEMBERS ABSENT

Sam Beech  
Donna Breaux  
James Bulot, GOEA  
Melissa Fayard  
Jennifer Kopke, OMH  
Jerry Phillips, BHSF  
Lois Simpson, AC  
Roseland Starks, LRS

D. STAFF PRESENT

Sandee Winchell  
Shawn Fleming  
Robbie Gray  
Kevin Hill  
Paige Freeman

## E. GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE

Dora Chandler – Guest of Lynette Fontenot  
 Sheryl Doga – Guest of Lynette Fontenot  
 Frances Hilburn  
 Martha Whitlock  
 Paige Kelly for Roseland Starks, LRS  
 Ellen Katz for Lois Simpson, AC  
 Kathy Thibodaux  
 Ronald Blereau for James Bulot, GOEA  
 Yvonne Bell – FHF of Acadiana  
 Hugh Eley, OAAS  
 Janet Mora, SICC  
 Emily Kelly – VOA – GBR  
 Kim Brown – VOA – GBR  
 Kahem Mohed, Headstart  
 Patrick Stallion – Arc of Baton Rouge  
 Christie Stephenson – Guest of Billie Ruth Kvaternik

## 2. MINUTES OF OCTOBER MEETING

Ms. Fontenot entertained a motion to accept the minutes from the October meeting. Kay Marcel stated that on page 8 it was reported that Ms. Marcel discussed actions of the Self Determination/Community Inclusion/Housing Committee when it was actually Jeanne Abadie who discussed it. Sandee Winchell stated the voting under New Business needs to be changed to include the two Council members who did not vote in any way to show as abstentions. Ms. Winchell then stated the minutes would be corrected.

Motion Passed - Moved to accept minutes with corrections by Mary Elizabeth Christian. Second by Valerie Hiser. For – 16. Abstention – 1.

## 3. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – Lynette Fontenot

Lynette Fontenot discussed the meetings and activities she has been involved in since the October meeting:

- At the Executive Committee meeting in October, the committee discussed the Office of Mental Health seat on the Council. The committee learned that Jennifer Kopke has a standing conflict with Council meetings and will not be able to attend the meetings. Mental health issues are very important to the Council, but it is also important to have Council members who are able to attend Council meetings. Prior to Ms. Kopke's appointment, the Office of Mental Health representative never attended a full council meeting. The committee discussed the possibility of adding the Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) to the Council. The services OAAS provides also are used by many people with developmental disabilities, but its representative cannot be added to the Council without either increasing the size of the Council

- legislatively to add self advocates and parents, or deleting another state agency representative. The Assistant Secretary of the Office of Aging and Adult Services, Hugh Eley, was contacted to determine his interest and ability to serve on the Council. Mr. Eley said if asked, he would be honored to serve on the Council. The Executive Committee is therefore recommending to the full Council that Hugh Eley's name be submitted to the Governor and that OAAS replace OMH on the Council permanently. This will be voted on during new business.
- On October 27<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Fontenot spoke at Nichols State University for their Disability Awareness Day and hopes that her presentation helped students understand the need to include students with disabilities on and off campus. She thanked Robbie Gray for recommending her to the organizers of this event.
  - Kay Marcel, Linda Ledet (the LaCAN Region 4 Leader) and Ms. Fontenot met with Representative Page Cortez on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. This was the first time they met with him and will need to meet with him again to keep him informed. They also met with Representative Fred Mills on November 5<sup>th</sup>. He was very interested, excited and willing to help the Council in any way.
  - On November 5<sup>th</sup>, they also met with Secretary Levine and his staff and will meet with them on a quarterly basis. DHH gave an update on the state's Long Term Care Reform Plan. They were able to spend some time on the developmental centers' issue and this topic will be continued at a later meeting.
  - On November 13<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Fontenot made her annual trip to Shreveport to talk to the occupational and speech therapy students at the LSU Medical School to show them that individuals with disabilities can succeed and be contributing members of the community.
  - Sam Beech asked Ms. Fontenot to speak to the staff of the Arc of Caddo Bossier while she was in Shreveport. Ms. Beech did a great job putting this event together at such short notice. Ms. Fontenot thanked Ms. Beech for inviting her.
  - On November 17<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Marcel, Ms. Ledet and Ms. Fontenot met with Representative Simone Champagne. She has only been in the legislature for a short time but has been very supportive of the Council and its agenda.
  - On November 18<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Ledet and Ms. Fontenot met with Senator Nick Gautreaux. He is always willing to meet with them and is familiar with the Council's requests and mission. He says he will support the Council and is very supportive of Ms. Fontenot's advocacy efforts.
  - On December 4<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Fontenot spoke at the Inclusive Schools Art awards ceremony. Robbie Gray, Shawn Fleming and the DD Staff did a great job.

- The students' participation was very commendable. Craig Blackburn also spoke. He is such an inspiration to everyone.
- Jared Armstrong invited Ms. Fontenot to be the guest speaker at the St. Charles Connection Christmas Social held in Luling on December 6<sup>th</sup>. She spoke about inclusion. Everyone was very gracious and they had a good time.
  - On December 9<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Marcel, Ms. Ledet and Ms. Fontenot met with Senator Eric Lafleur. They have met with him on several occasions. As usual he was very supportive and Ms. Fontenot has a good rapport with him. They also met with Representative Bernard LeBas.
  - Sandee Winchell and Ms. Fontenot attended the Governor's Disability Awards Ceremony on December 10<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Fontenot thanked Brandon Burris and the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs' staff for a great ceremony.
  - Ms. Winchell, Ms. Marcel and Ms. Fontenot met with Senator Mike Michot on December 17<sup>th</sup>. He is chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and was very attentive and receptive to the Council's message. That same day they met with Natalie Robottom, Director, Governor's Office of Community Programs and James Quinn, Director, Boards and Commissions to discuss waiver services and the consolidation and closure of developmental centers. They stated they would talk to Secretary Levine and others in the Governor's Office about the Council's message.
  - Ms. Winchell and Ms. Fontenot attended the Quarterly stakeholder meeting with DHH on January 6<sup>th</sup>, but Secretary Levine did not attend. Deputy Secretary Sybil Richard, Kathy Kliebert and Office of Aging and Adult Services Assistant Secretary Hugh Eley gave an overview of proposed spending cuts. Cuts to the Medicaid program and other services were discussed. The Resource Allocation Model was also discussed. Ms. Kliebert stated the department is waiting on CMS approval for resource allocation. Other issues discussed included the 2009 Legislative Session. Secretary Levine's staff pledged to get a meeting with Secretary Levine to discuss closure of developmental centers and other DD issues.
  - On January 9<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Winchell and Ms. Fontenot gave the opening address for the Partners in Policymaking program.
  - On January 13<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Fontenot participated in the Ad Hoc committee to discuss the Cash Subsidy Program. Ms. Marcel will report on this under committee reports.
  - On January 15<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Fontenot attended the LaCAN Legislative Round Table event in Lafayette. Several legislators were in attendance. The new legislators asked questions and were very interested in learning more about the Council's issues. Those present were excited and are willing to help.
  - Dora Chandler attended all these meetings and presentations with Ms. Fontenot. She thanked Dora for making it possible for her to be an active advocate.

- Ms. Winchell then announced the mentors for the new Council members as follows:
  - Jay Bulot – Phil Wilson
  - Brandon Burris – Lynette Fontenot
  - Chasadee Noto – Jeanne Abadie
  - Mary Elizabeth Christian – Laura Head
  - Pranab Choudhury – Rocky Fuselier
  - Valerie Hiser – Kay Marcel
  - Olantha Scott – Kathy Kliebert
  - Andrew Merlin – Simone Honore-Chretien

#### 4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Sandee Winchell

Ms. Winchell discussed the following:

- She welcomed the new Council members and thanked the veteran Council members for their assistance with orientation. She also thanked the staff for the preparation of orientation.
- Derek White was welcomed as the new Program Manager for the Council.
- One change from the written report is the substantial cuts in funding in the Council's budget for the current fiscal year. No cuts were made as previously thought, but there will be substantial cuts in the Council's state funds the next fiscal year.
- Ms. Winchell indicated she was hopeful the advocacy efforts on the part of the Council and LaCAN would be effective in the closing and consolidation of some developmental centers across the state.
- The second quarterly meeting with the Department of Health and Hospitals' (DHH) administrative staff was held on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Secretary Levine was not present and the Deputy Secretary, Sybil Richard, was present for around twenty minutes. The Council will continue to work on getting these meetings with Mr. Levine.
- Ms. Winchell attended orientation for the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) for infants and toddlers. She is excited about joining the group and wants to see the group be more proactive in bringing about positive changes in the early intervention system and assume more of an advocacy role.
- The Texas DD Council paid for Ms. Winchell and three other Executive Directors from other states to attend a meeting in Austin on closing Developmental Centers. She shared what Louisiana is doing and came back with new ideas for the Council.
- Ms. Winchell reminded the Council of the Disabilities Rights Rally being held on May 7<sup>th</sup> on the steps of the State Capitol. She reiterated what a big event this is for the Council and partnering advocacy organizations. She also encouraged all Council members to attend.

- Ms. Winchell extended congratulations to LaTEACH and Christy Cormier for successfully advocating for BESE's approval of students taking the LAA2 to be able to earn a high school diploma. This was a huge accomplishment for students with disabilities.
- Lastly, she mentioned a revised copy of the Council policies and procedures for everyone to put in their Council member handbook. The revision stated that a Council member must be present during the voting portion of the meeting to be considered present at the meeting.

## 5. BUDGET REPORT – Shawn Fleming

Shawn Fleming discussed the November budget report included in the Council members' packet and the December budget included in the meeting handouts.

- Mr. Fleming provided a brief explanation of the budget report and defined the major terms. He reported that the Council meetings' expenditures amount does not include all meeting expenditures and not all contract expenditures have been recorded. The Council was spared cuts of \$34,000 in state funds and \$43,000 in federal funds for the current SFY09. The cuts were successfully appealed. However, it is anticipated that there will be cuts in the next year, SFY10.

## 6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### A. Self Determination/Community Inclusion/Housing - Kay Marcel

- Kay Marcel stated the Self Determination Committee began with Laura Brackin of the Arc of Louisiana reporting on two housing projects and the establishment of a housing website which will be completed in a few weeks. The website address is [www.lahousingconnection.com](http://www.lahousingconnection.com) and will address advocacy issues. The Arc is establishing another "Home of Your Own" program modeled after the one in Jefferson Parish where people with disabilities can receive technical support to purchase a home.
- Benita Plaisance reported for People First of Louisiana. Ms. Plaisance stated that Ms. Becky Zito, Executive Director of People First, resigned. The Arc is going to advertise the position and interview applicants they deem qualified. The Board members of People First will make the final decision. People First also made suggested revisions to the Resource Allocation Model due to questions and concerns about shared support hours. The organization is developing their legislative agenda and will soon submit the final copy to the Council. Ms. Plaisance also stated that People First is involved with the planning of the Disability Summit in Lafayette.
- Sandee Winchell discussed the Disability Rights Rally to be held on May 7<sup>th</sup> on the steps of the State Capitol. One planning meeting has been held with several more scheduled. Other agencies and advocacy organizations involved are the Arc of LA, People First, Families Helping Families, LaCAN, the Advocacy Center and the Human Development Center.

- Jeanne Abadie reported that the Emergency Management Disabilities Coalition will be proposing legislation to protect volunteers at Red Cross shelters that provide PCA services from liability concerns.
- The Guardianship Program is being transferred from Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities to Governor's Office of Disability Affairs.
- The End the Wait Campaign is behind schedule but nearing completion with the three facts sheets being ready. Filming is currently taking place and one of our Council members, Andrew Merlin, will be featured in the video. The Council is shooting for release in early spring. The needs of over 9,000 people on the waiting list along with the closure of developmental centers that are no longer needed will be addressed in the campaign.
- Geraldo Rivera aired a TV show on people with developmental disabilities waiting for services and the Council's video contractor produced a video press release to use this opportunity to bring awareness to the waiting list in Louisiana. The news clip was aired on Fox television and numerous people reported seeing Ms. Winchell and the message.
- Committee members suggested transportation, the DSP shortage, and post secondary education as ideas for the FFY 2010 plan to be considered at the April planning meeting.

#### B. HEALTH/EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT – Nanette Olivier

Ms. Olivier discussed the Health/Education/Employment Committee as follows:

- LaTEACH participated in advocacy efforts that helped increase high school diploma options to students passing LAA2 and meeting Carnegie requirements.
- The Employment Provider Training and Employment Consortium with the LSU HDC is on target for the first quarter of the project.
- The Employment Outreach Campaign has commitments from individuals to participate in the Employment Outreach videos and filming should begin soon. Jerry Mayer of Hometown Productions, Inc. is the contractor for video productions. There was a suggestion that the Council partner with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services because of the many resources LRS has available.
- The Inclusive Recreation/PBS project was successful in Ascension Parish and continued in Year 2 by the Ascension Parish Recreation Department. The project in Mandeville has had some challenges; however, the project in Hammond is doing well and the City of Hammond had dedicated funding for next year. Rebecca Mandal-Blasio is the after lunch speaker and will present on the progress of the project.

- At the January BESE meeting, BESE voted on and approved LAA2 as an additional criteria for meeting high school diploma requirements. LAA2 is aligned with GLE (Grade Level Expectations). When students meet requirements of this assessment then they will receive a regular diploma. All but one BESE member voted for the inclusion of LAA2 as a diploma option. However, Superintendent Paul Pastorek is not in favor of BESE's decision. There has been concern that there would be a stall and the rule will not be completed in time for students to graduate this year. It was recommended to the full Council that all Council members speak with BESE and school board members.
- At the recommendation of Kathy Kliebert, the Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs (GACDA) decided to form a subcommittee to develop a plan to sponsor a bill similar to North Carolina legislation for disability awareness curriculum in schools. It was reported that the subcommittee's draft legislation recommends (not requires) that schools implement a disability awareness curriculum. Laura Brackin, the subcommittee chairperson, will send the most updated draft of the legislation for dissemination to the Council. Ms. Brackin will also send the list of activities that the GACDA subcommittee is working on. It was recommended that the Council support this legislation.
- Ideas for Projects/Initiatives to be considered at April planning meeting
  - **Volunteer Emergency Registry and First Responders Outreach/Training**  
This is a two part initiative. First, a registry system through local law enforcement that provides a data base with information about people with developmental disabilities could include a picture, information form, how best to communicate with them, where the person may go if they run away, etc. This information would be accessible to First Responders when called to that residence.
    - Other states have volunteer reporting systems with reported start up costs of about \$50,000.
    - Lake Charles has **911 Plus** that is a voluntary program where individuals can sign up and register their information.
    - There are other programs in Louisiana that teach first responders how to respond when they encounter persons with developmental disabilities.
  - **Library Project**  
Increase literacy access in libraries by providing different types of accessible literacy items. Examples would be books in digitized form to be viewed on computers using a head switch to change pages or textile books. An SOP was sent out with no response last year. The committee agreed to try again.
  - **Service Learning**  
A suggestion made to provide additional funds for building disability awareness in schools (K-12). The average school that receives grant funds gets \$7,000 (granted 3 years in a row).

A discussion followed.

### C. ACT 378 SUB-COMMITTEE – Jeanne Abadie

- Jeanne Abadie discussed the Committee actions:
- The Council expects cuts of \$71,000 of state funds from the SFY10 budget. The committee recommends that the Council cut funds to the Federation of Families and Families Helping Families except for the Region VII center due to their limited funding. The Supported Living Contract is also state funded but wouldn't be cut because this is providing direct services to people living in their own homes.
  - The Family Support Services and Cash Subsidy programs operated by the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) are expending their funds in a timely manner.
  - Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) reported that the Supported Living Program had already been significantly cut. This contract is serving 23 people.
  - The Office of Mental Health (OMH) reported that spending was on track.

### D. CASH SUBSIDY AD HOC – Kay Marcel

- This committee was formed to make a recommendation to the Council on whether or not children with autism should be screened for severity by OCDD when determining eligibility for the cash subsidy. Children with a categorical label of autism from their school system are currently automatically eligible. This issue was raised because of changes from recognizing autism only in children with severe characteristics when the cash subsidy program first began in 1991 to current practices of identifying children with autism along a spectrum with varying degrees of severity. The committee did initially decide that it would be appropriate to screen children with autism to ensure that the severity of their exceptionality meets criteria to receive the subsidy, but subsequently decided to wait before it brought this recommendation to the Council. There are other issues that must be considered, such as children with autism currently receiving the subsidy, other disability categories that are automatically eligible and the screening instrument that will be used. The committee will reconvene to consider these issues before it brings its recommendations to the Council.

## 7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Kay Marcel

Motion Passed. Motion for the Cash Subsidy Ad Hoc Committee to review the entire administrative rule that governs the cash subsidy program and make recommendations for changes to the Council made by Mary Elizabeth Christian. Second by Simone Honore-Chretien. For – 19. Against – 0.

A discussion followed. There are other requirements and procedures contained in the rule that possibly need updating, therefore a review of the rule in its entirety is warranted.

## 8. NEW BUSINESS – Kay Marcel

- The Executive Committee recommended replacing the Office of Mental Health (OMH) on the Council with the Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS).

Motion passed. Motion to replace OMH's seat on the Council with OAAS by Jeanne Abadie. Second by Simone Honore-Chretien.  
For – 18. Against – 0.

Sandee Winchell stated that the Executive Committee considered adding OAAS without the removal of OMH but in order to do that, the size of the Council would have had to increase to maintain the majority of parents and self advocate ratio. It would not have been possible to add OAAS to the Council without legislatively increasing the number of members to the Council.

A discussion followed.

- Recommendation from Act 378 Sub-Committee that the Council will distribute budget cuts in state funds proportionally from the Federation of Families and eight of the nine Families Helping Families regional centers up to a \$7,500 cut. If the total amount of the proportional cut to the FHF Centers exceeds \$7,500 then FHF in Region 7 would be included in determining the percentage of cuts and sustain cuts beyond the original \$7,500.

Motion passed. Motion to accept recommendation from the Act 378 Sub-Committee by Mary Elizabeth Christian. Second by Chasadee Noto. For – 17. Against – 0. Abstain – 2.

A discussion followed.

## 9. COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

### A. ADVOCACY CENTER (AC) – Ellen Katz for Lois Simpson

- Ellen Katz reported on the following:  
She referred to the success stories of the AC in the report. She then opened the floor for questions or discussion of the report. Mary Elizabeth Christian asked if the AC reported on the number of requests for services they receive, what categories they are in, and which ones are accepted or denied. Ms. Katz responded that the AC does a federal report that is required. Dr. Christian then inquired whether the federal report is available to Council members. Ms. Katz will find out and report back to the Council.
- She also mentioned another program the AC is working on. It is called Hurricane Gustav and it is for people who were affected by Gustav and Ike who are assigned case managers who try to locate funding and other community resources for them. The AC is trying to prioritize people with disabilities. The telephone number for general information is 1-877-893-0283. The telephone number for the AC is 1-800-960-7705.

A discussion followed.

## B. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CENTER (HDC) – Phil Wilson

Dr. Wilson reported on the following:

- The HDC has been invited to participate in “Camp Tiger” with the first year medical students. This is a camp for children with developmental disabilities. The purpose is to broaden the experience for both campers and medical students who are volunteering their time and efforts to make this camp a good experience.
- The HDC is hosting an Autism Spectrum Disorder seminar in June. Paul Wayman will be speaking on employment and transition.
- The center will be doing a series of webinars on Autism Spectrum Disorders beginning on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Nanette Olivier stated she will report the information on the Department of Education website and will touch on it on her report. It is free of charge and it will be archived.
- The HDC is looking at some major budget cuts in the coming fiscal year. Dr. Wilson doesn’t feel it will be as bad as initially predicted. He also stated that the Dean is not inclined to move forward with the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) program at this time due to the cuts. There are only 17 BCBAs in Louisiana at this time, most of whom work for universities and therefore do not have the availability for providing direct service to the general population that is needed in Louisiana.

A discussion followed.

## C. LEGISLATIVE REPORTS – Council Members

- Rocky Fuselier met with Representative Dorothy Hill at her home regarding closing developmental centers. Representative Hill was very interested in what he had to say.
- Billie Ruth Kvaternik met with Senator Bob Kostelka. He stated he will support the Council’s issues.
- Pranab Choudhury met with Senator Broome regarding her support of the Council’s agenda on closing developmental centers. She was very receptive to the idea.
- Mary Elizabeth Christian also met with Senator Broome and left some facts sheets with her.
- Kay Marcel stated that she, Lynette Fontenot and Simone Honore-Chretien attended the Region 4 LaCAN Roundtable. The legislators there were Simone Champagne, Joel Robideaux, Bobby Badon, Nancy Landry, Nick Gautreaux and Page Cortez. The Region 4 LaCAN team had a tremendous turnout. Kay shared that there are several regional roundtables scheduled in the upcoming months and encouraged Council members to support those with their attendance and participation.

## 10. STATE AGENCY REPORTS

### A. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF DISABILITY AFFAIRS (GODA)– Brandon Burris

Brandon Burris reported on the following:

- He thanked Sandee Winchell and the Council for the great job they did with the Council orientation. He stated it was fun and entertaining as well as informative.
- Mr. Burris' predecessor had a full time staff of seven and two college workers and now there is a staff of one besides Mr. Burris. The performance indicators have not been changed so the office is still required to operate as having a full staff.
- GODA has taken on the Louisiana Guardianship Program (LGP) as of July 1, 2008. The majority of the contract is with the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) and GODA has the capability to serve up to 125 constituents. The Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs (GACDA) has had a lot of questions and suggestions to improve the LGP. Mr. Burris is going to host a conference call and invite people to provide suggestions and will let the Council know when it is scheduled.
- As far as the budget goes, GODA receives 1/3 of all Accessible Zone parking fines in the state of Louisiana. Because these funds cannot be used for any other purpose, GODA has not received any budget cuts affecting it and do not expect any for SFY10.
- The Governor's Award Ceremony was extremely successful. There were about 285 people in attendance to celebrate the recipients of the nine awards. Several state leaders, including Lt. Governor Mitch Landreau, attended.
- Mr. Burris has finished phase 1 of his "world tour" around the state by visiting each Families Helping Families with the exception of Northshore. Phase 2 will be directed toward local municipality governments, Mayor's Advisory Committees and legislative committees to let them know GODA is available to help.
- The new website is complete and has been submitted for approval. He is expecting it to go live within the next two weeks. GODA's goal is to have a complete statewide calendar. He encouraged the Council to continue to send him events to post on the calendar.
- The GACDA has appointed Donna Breaux as chairperson. The Council has grown to 38 members and the meetings average 55-60 people in attendance. The majority of work will be done in the sub-committees. Representative Scott Simon has taken the lead role on the Legislative sub-committee.

- Mr. Burris mentioned the Art Contest and how much he enjoyed working with Robbie. He stated that the artwork was great and that it was displayed at the Governor's Award Ceremony.
- BESE has a Governor's appointee and Mr. Burris offered to try and set up a meeting with her for members of the Council.

11. COUNCIL MEMBER GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL PICTURES

LUNCH

12. INCLUSIVE RECREATION/POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS – Rebecca Mandal-Blasio, Ph.D. presented on the Ascension Parish Inclusive League (A.P.I.L.) and the expansion of the inclusive recreation initiative to other parishes.

13. STATE AGENCY REPORTS CONT'D:

B. BUREAU OF HEALTH SERVICES FINANCING (BHSF) – Tara DiSandro for Jerry Phillips

Tara DiSandro reported on the following:

- The Residential Options Waiver (ROW) with an expected start date of July 1, 2009 is still in the approval process with CMS.
- Budget cuts, effective February 1, 2009, included a 3.5% rate reduction to service providers. This rate cut does not include all waiver services just select ones. As a result of the cut, some of the slot offers will be frozen. These include the NOW and Supports Waiver which was effective January 1, 2009. The 2,025 new NOW slots are still being offered.

This was followed by further discussion.

C. LOUISIANA REHABILITATION SERVICES (LRS) – Paige Kelly for Roseland Starks

Paige Kelly reported on the following:

- The only change since the written report was submitted is that LRS is anticipating a budget cut. Kay Marcel asked Ms. Kelly to get figures of the anticipated cut from Roseland Starks and report back to the Council.

D. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ELDERLY AFFAIRS (GOEA)- Ronald Blerau for James Bulot

Ronald Blereau reported on the following:

- The Families Caregiver Support Program is a respite program that provides care for an elderly person in a family member's home to allow the family member to work.

- A relatively new thing is a partnership between CMS and the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) which serve as a single point of entry for all Medicaid services. There are nine centers across the state. The way to access these centers is by going online at <http://www.louisianaanswers.com>.
- The Long-Term Ombudsman Program serves people who are elderly and live in congregate settings. The program sends ombudsmen to settle issues between residents and the facility administrators.
- GOEA is working closely with DHH on the Nursing Home Diversion Grant from the Federal Administration on Aging. The grant will try to identify people who are in the process of exhausting their financial resources and assets to get on Medicaid, determine whether they are Medicaid eligible or not, and divert them from going into the system.

A discussion followed.

#### E. OFFICE OF MENTAL HEALTH (OMH) – Jennifer Kopke

A written report was mailed out in the packet prior to the meeting.

#### F. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DOE) – Nanette Olivier

Nanette Olivier reported on the following:

- She referred to a list of specialized contacts within the Department of Education (DOE) in her written report.
- The DOE is developing an electronic resource system to support educators working with children with disabilities as they try to make progress in the general education curriculum. One website, <http://sda.doe.louisiana.gov/AccessGuide>, is the home page of the electronic resource for educators. The second one, <http://sda.doe.louisiana.gov>, provides information that supports school age children who are participating in LAA1. LAA1 is the statewide assessment used for children with significant disabilities. DOE is also in the process of constructing an instructional materials library that consists of sample products educators can use to provide instruction that is aligned to the academic grade level standards for teaching students in LAA1. DOE is making 150,000 copies of the brochure which announces the Access Guide and its features to distribute to every school in the state, Families Helping Families, the Council and other advocates in the education arena.
- In November a task force met regarding how Louisiana could produce a world class special education system. It was a two day meeting and the meeting was facilitated by Dr. Alan Coulter of LSU-HDC. The consultants reviewed data, presented information, and listened to DOE's concerns. The consultants will prepare a report and get back with DOE on what needs to be done. Ms. Olivier shared some highlights of their recommendations which were as follows:

- To support Universal Design for Learning (UDL) across all grades to support each individual need for every student.
  - To enable all student with disabilities to have access and to successfully participate in the general curriculum. It also allows LAA2 as a route to getting a high school diploma and to ensure that data is meaningfully communicated to families and the community.
  - To create a workforce of highly qualified personnel that is well trained and has the capacity for better results.
  - Also, reconfiguring Louisiana's special education funding formula to maximize fairness, equity and effectiveness.
- Another topic touched on was the Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM). This requirement of the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) specifies that all students with disabilities must have core instructional materials provided in a format that is accessible to them. More information is on the DOE's website.

#### G. OFFICE FOR CITIZENS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (OCDD) – Kathy Kliebert

Kathy Kliebert reported on the following:

- Even with budget cuts, the Secretary is very adamant about not cutting Children's Services or EarlySteps. The cuts that were made are a 3.5% rate cut to waiver and some other providers, ICFs/DD, the freezing of Supports Waiver slots and emergency slots in NOW, with the exception of people moving from state facilities. The new date for the implementation of the ROW will be July 1, 2009. The biggest concern for OCDD is these cuts along with additional cuts for the next fiscal year. The Economic Stimulus package in Washington has a big increase in the federal match rate and will supply relief for Medicaid cuts.
- The Money Follows the Person Grant, because of the delay in ROW, has not been able to move forward as planned.
- Approval has been given for the Children's Choice rule for children that are in nursing homes to be able to transition into community living.
- The Disability Summit will be March 30<sup>th</sup> – April 2<sup>nd</sup> in Lafayette. Sandee Winchell will forward the registration information to Council members.

A discussion followed.

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

Dr. Berry reported on several updates since her written report:

- OPH has a hiring freeze and a 10% or just over 3 million dollars in budget cuts with cuts for the 2010 fiscal year expected to be worse. The Birth Defects Monitoring Network (BDMN) will be the first to be hit by cuts in Children's Special Health Services (CSHS).

- The Care Coordination Pilot in Region 1 has just been completed. The program will expand to Region 4 in February. The plan is to expand statewide over a two year period provided adequate CSHS staffing.
- The CSHS application process has been simplified. The application is one page and can be mailed in or dropped off. The application will be reviewed by the OPH Forms committee and if accepted, will be printed and posted on the website for use.

A discussion followed.

14. Ms. Fontenot announced the next quarterly meeting will be held in Baton Rouge on April 15-16, 2009. This will be the planning meeting and will begin at 10:00 a.m. on April 15<sup>th</sup>.

15. ADJOURNMENT OF BUSINESS MEETING

Motion Passed. Motion to adjourn by Lynn Cannon. Second by Mary Elizabeth Christian. For – 15. Against – 0.

The meeting adjourned at 3:16 p.m.