

**LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL**  
**January 17, 2019**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**

Embassy Suites  
Baton Rouge, LA

8:30 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Patti Barovechio, OPH/CSHS  
Melissa Bayham, LRS  
Michael Billings  
Hilary Bordelon  
Randall Brown Jr.  
Carmen Cetnar  
Lillian DeJean  
Jill Demeritt  
April Dunn  
Michelle Guillory, GOEA  
Julie Foster Hagan, OCDD  
Jill Hano  
Roslyn Hymel  
Mitch Iddins  
Enrice Jones  
Jen Katzman, BHSF  
Hyacinth McKee  
Susan Meyers, Advocacy Center  
Steven Nguyen  
Robert Paddy  
Bambi Polotzola, GODA  
Mary Tarver  
Crystal White

MEMBERS ABSENT

Kim Basile  
Alan Coulter, HDC  
Tara LeBlanc, OAAS  
Tara Smith  
Jamie Wong, LDOE

GUESTS PRESENT

Karen Artus, LaCAN Region 9  
Dawn Aunc, SCLHSA  
Donna Breaux  
Katie Corkern, NSFHF  
Michael DeCaire, CLHSD  
Jamar Ennis, GODA  
Deborah Fontenot, FHF Acadiana  
Liz Gary  
Lynsey Hebert, Transcriptionist  
Ashley Jefferson, OBH  
Kimie Lasseigre, SCLHSA  
Ashley McReynolds, LaCAN Region 2  
Kelly Monroe, Arc of LA  
Laci Polotzola, FHF Acadiana  
Chris Rodriguez, Advocacy Center  
Kara Shupe, FHFGBR  
James Sprinkle, FHF Crossroads  
Robin Wagner, OAAS  
Matthew Wallace, Easter Seals

STAFF PRESENT

Brenton Andrus  
Rodney Anthony  
Shawn Fleming  
Ebony Haven  
Hannah Jenkins  
Courtney Ryland  
Sandee Winchell

April Dunn called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and welcomed Jen Katzman to her first Council meeting.

## SUMMARY OF JANUARY MEETING

**MOTION PASSED.** Motion to accept the [Summary of the October Council meeting made](#) by Bambi Polotzola, seconded by Randall Brown, passed without objection.

### **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – April Dunn**

Ms. Dunn referred to her written report for committee appointments she had made during the last quarter. She announced that she also added Jamie Wong to the Planning Ad Hoc Committee.

Ms. Dunn encouraged all Council members to participate in the Council's Legislative Round Tables and to visit their Legislators with other LaCAN members.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee discussed the importance of recognizing the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of Act 378 of 1989. Act 378 created the Community and Family Support System in Louisiana which has resulted in all the services people receive in their own homes and communities today.

**MOTION PASSED.** The Executive Committee's recommendation for the Council to host a reception Wednesday night in conjunction with the July Council meeting to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of Act 378 **passed without objection; no abstentions.**

The Executive Committee discussed the Council's Customized Employment Training and Competency-Based Certification initiative. The Committee recommends increasing funding for this initiative to enable twice as many people to become certified (from five to ten) and increase the amount of people participating in the training from twenty to fifty participants, including LRS staff.

**MOTION PASSED.** The Executive Committee's recommendation for the Council to amend the 2019 Action Plan by adding \$4,000 to Activity 5.1.3 which builds the capacity of employment providers in customized employment through a competency-based certification program making the approximate cost \$59,700 **passed without objection; no abstentions.**

**Activity 5.1.3** Provide funding to build the capacity of employment providers in customized employment through a competency-based certification program. **Approximate FFY 2019 Cost: ~~\$55,700~~ \$59,700**

The Executive Committee's annual evaluation for Executive Director, Sandee Winchell, resulted in overall positive survey results. Sandee was found to be very responsive to Council members' requests and concerns, very knowledgeable on current issues related to developmental disabilities, with a strong passion for advocacy efforts. Based on the evaluation results and her performance, the Executive Committee recommends a pay increase of 2% to be effective on February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**MOTION PASSED.** The Executive Committee's recommendation for a pay increase of 2% for the Council's Executive Director to be effective February 22<sup>nd</sup> **passed without objection; no abstentions.**

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Sandee Winchell**

Ms. Winchell welcomed new Council member, Jen Katzman, and introduced Hannah Jenkins, the Council's new Executive Assistant. Ms. Winchell shared progress on hiring someone with a developmental disability and discussed the Act 378 training provided to the staff of the Local Governing Entities. Ms. Winchell also reminded the Council of the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities' annual conference scheduled in New Orleans on July 10<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup>.

### **BUDGET REPORT – Shawn Fleming**

Mr. Fleming shared details from the [SFY19 Budget Report through December](#). He highlighted the relatively high level of Council member in-state travel as a result of multiple Ad Hoc Committee meetings.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **ACT 378 SUBCOMMITTEE – Bambi Polotozola**

While reviewing the quarterly data from the [Office of Behavioral Health](#), the Act 378 Subcommittee discussed how small the waiting list numbers were for the Flexible Family Fund program in some regional Local Governing Entities (LGEs). Committee members expressed a desire to increase promotion of this program by distributing poster across the state.

**MOTION PASSED.** The Act 378 Subcommittee's recommendation for the Council to design and print posters for distribution across the state advertising the Flexible Family Fund program **passed without objection; no abstentions.**

### **SELF DETERMINATION/COMMUNITY INCLUSION COMMITTEE – Randall Brown**

The Committee discussed possible activities and initiatives for the Planning Committee to consider when developing a draft action plan for next year.

**MOTION PASSED.** The Self-Determination and Community Inclusion Committee's recommendation for the Planning Ad Hoc committee to consider the following activities for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 20 Action Plan:

- Continue to provide financial support for training on sexuality and relationships and to build awareness and skills with recognizing and handling sexual abuse and exploitation of people with developmental disabilities.
  - Offer these trainings to people in group home settings
  - Offer these trainings via webinar or online on the Council website.
- Advocate for adequate funding for waiver services (i.e. adequate rates)

**passed without objection; no abstentions.**

## **EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – Hilary Bordelon**

The Committee discussed recommendations from the Act 696 of 2018 Ad Hoc Committee related to schools not being able to deny student access to behavioral health service providers at school during school hours if requested by the student's parent.

**MOTION PASSED.** The Education and Employment Committee's recommendation for the Council to send the recommendations from the Council's Act 696 of 2018 Ad Hoc Committee to the Louisiana School Board Association (LSBA) and recommend LSBA distribute these to all local school boards. If LSBA chooses to not send the recommendations to local school boards, the Council should send each LEA school board a copy of the recommendations. In addition the Council should post these recommendations on its website, **passed without objection; no abstentions.**

The Committee discussed the multiple advocacy efforts related to rule changes for school accountability and alternative schools, including sending BESE three letters and an action alert. In response to the proposed rule changes, the Council sent a [letter to BESE objecting to changes proposed in school accountability due to lack of adequate stakeholder input](#). Instead of acknowledging the Council's request to hold meetings with stakeholders to adequately vet the proposed changes, the LDOE chose to submit changes to the proposed rule directly to BESE without stakeholder input. As a result of the latest proposed rule changes to school accountability, four schools would avoid receiving a school performance score. Two (half) of those schools are residential facilities serving students with significant disabilities exclusively. The Committee recognized the Council's purpose is to ensure all students have access to an appropriate education and this purpose is highlighted in the need to oppose the adoption of an accountability system that disregards students with significant disabilities in segregated schools.

**MOTION PASSED.** The Education and Employment Committee's recommendation for the Council to take a negative position on the changes to the accountability system and that all students deserve access to the same level of education by requiring all schools falling under the same accountability system **passed without objection; no abstentions.**

**MOTION PASSED.** The Education and Employment Committee's recommendation for the Planning Ad Hoc Committee to consider the following activities for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 20 Action Plan:

- Provide universities with linkages to assist students with developmental disabilities access post-secondary opportunities.
- Provide training via video examples to teach people with disabilities effective self-advocacy strategies.

- Develop videos and/or visual representations of people going through the transition process to post-secondary options.  
**passed without objection; no abstentions.**

## **COUNCIL AGENCY REPORTS**

### **ADVOCACY CENTER (AC) – Susan Meyers**

Ms. Meyers thanked everyone for their support regarding the recent loss of David Galegos, a longtime advocate and employee of the AC.

Ms. Meyers highlighted the result of surveying approximately ninety percent of polling places in Orleans Parish revealed wide spread problems related to physical accessibility. She encouraged members to alert the AC of issues at their polling locations.

She shared information about an investigation into Robinswood School in Lake Charles related to a sexual assault and subsequent cover up by the administration. Ms. Meyers provided updates on litigation cases, including a case involving the David Wade Correctional Center in Homer, La where an inmate died over the summer and the standard practice is to place people with developmental disabilities and mental health issues in solitary confinement.

The AC recently was awarded a grant called Financial Action Inclusion and Resources (FAIR) which will focus on supporting recently released formerly incarcerated people with disabilities to gain financial literacy, job training, employment, some self-sufficiencies, and hopefully avoid recidivism.

### **LOUISIANA REHABILITATION SERVICES (LRS) – Melissa Bayham**

Ms. Bayham provided updates on the Delayed Status data, essentially a waiting list. Since the report, 145 people in order of selection four can now receive services and were subsequently taken off the waiting list.

Ms. Bayham reported that in the 2017 year LRS served 948 individuals with developmental disabilities. Ms. Bayham has met with representatives from OCDD, LGEs, LRS regional offices and support coordination supervisors to communicate the referral process to LRS, particularly that LRS welcomes any and all referrals for individuals with disabilities who desire competitive integrated employment.

LRS has been filling vacant counselor positions; something they haven't been able to do in past years due to budget reductions. Ms. Bayham also thanked the Council for supporting the customized employment training and certification program for LRS vendors.

### **GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ELDERLY AFFAIRS (GOEA) – Michelle Guillory**

Ms. Guillory reported that GOEA received a continuation grant from the Administration on Community Living to continue Medicare outreach and education. Since October 2018, the grant, through GOEA partners, has supported 79 events, assisted with 3,200 enrollment applications, made 1,500 follow-up calls, provided 2,200 Medicare part D counseling sessions and almost 3,000 Medicare part D enrollments or someone moving from part D to another program that better suits their needs.

GOEA's senior prescription program provided over three million dollars' worth of prescription drug assistance from July to November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and the Aging and Disability Resource Centers had over 4,200 calls.

### **OFFICE OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES (OAAS) – Robin Wagner**

Ms. Wagner shared that since the report to the Council, OAAS has made offers to about half of the 539 people on the waiting list for the Adult Day Health Care Waiver. These offers have resulted in fairly low acceptance rates by recipients. OAAS is conducting outreach meetings in each of the nine regions across the state to share information about OAAS programs, the large waiting for the Community Choices Waiver, and address any individual issues people may be having with services. Part of this outreach, being done in collaboration with Live at Home LA, is to offer people the opportunity to be trained as advocates for the aging population.

Ms. Wagner provided an update on My Choice LA related to an agreement with the Federal Department of Justice to address the high number of people with mental illness in Louisiana nursing homes. Thus far, 22 individuals have transitioned out of nursing homes and over 100 more individuals are in the process of transitioning out.

### **OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH (OPH) – Patti Barovechio**

Dr. Barovechio provided updates on hosting resource information workshops in Lake Charles and New Orleans geared to build provider competencies around caring for children and youth with special healthcare needs.

OPH Children Special Health Services has long sponsored a Family Resource Center at Children's Hospital in New Orleans and is now collaborating with Our Lady of the Lake to replicate this type of service in the Baton Rouge area. This will support the Lake's new Children's Hospital.

### **BUREAU OF HEALTH SERVICES FINANCING (BHSF) – Jen Katzman**

Ms. Katzman indicated Congress has a bill to grant a three month extension for the Money Follows the Person program. Short extensions allow the program to be preserved while options are evaluated. The bill passed the House of Representatives in December, but has not yet been considered by the Senate.

Ms. Katzman said the Self-Direction Stakeholder group will meet in early 2019.

Ms. Katzman provided an updated on implementation of Electronic Visit Verification (EVV), a federal requirement for most Medicaid services. BHSF is working on implementation for personal care service providers under the Early Periodic Screening Diagnostic and Treatment program (EPSDT), but EVV has pretty much been implemented in all other in-home services. Providers are required to use EVV in 90 percent of their check-ins.

Ms. Katzman explained the data reported for the Coordinated System of Care Waiver and the data related to Applied Behavioral Analysis services.

**OFFICE FOR CITIZENS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (OCDD) – Julie Foster Hagan**

Ms. Foster-Hagan provided an update on a request from the Council to consider elimination of family cost participation (FCP) in Early Steps. LDH pulled a group together which met with Dr. Gee. She does not agree with a total elimination of FCP but was willing to review the starting income levels for FCP. The workgroup will meet with Dr. Gee soon with data on the number of people falling into different income levels and total fiscal impact of each level.

Next, Ms. Foster-Hagan provided an update on the recommendation from the Council for OCDD to look at modifying waivers to allow a family member who lives in the home of the recipient to serve as the direct support worker. LDH is open to making those modifications, and will consider adding this provision next time a waiver amendment is made. In reviewing how other states allow this practice, there are some exceptions to having family member work as the direct support professional. Some states exclude spouses, some allow family members, like a sibling, but not necessarily a mom or dad. LDH has a core stakeholder group meeting monthly to get feedback and develop suggestions on the best way to move forward.

Ms. Foster-Hagan shared information related to LDH's budget request to restore provider rates to 2008 levels, the complex care enhanced rate, and the exceptional criteria for children birth to three who would be eligible for screening for waiver services.

**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF DISABILITY AFFAIRS (GODA) – Bambi Polotzola**

Ms. Polotzola highlighted significant developments related to employment initiatives. Louisiana was again selected as a Vision Quest State and as a Core State for the 2019 year. Both of these grants will provide training and technical assistance to build capacity. GODA is also leading a task force for the state to be a model employer of people with disabilities and will be offering training in disability employment for hiring managers with Milt Write in February and March. GODA is also working with Civil Service to develop videos of real stories of employment within Louisiana.

Ms. Polotzola spotlighted recipients of the Governor's Outstanding Leadership in Disability (GOLD) awards and some activities of the State Independent Living Council

(SILC). Council members were encouraged to review the recommendations from the Legislative Committee of the Governor's Advisory Council on Disabilities Affairs.

#### **LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (LDOE) – Jamie Wong**

Ms. Wong announced the award of an eight million dollar grant to enhance options for early childhood education. A focus of the grant will be to include in-home daycare settings in the professional development component.

Ms. Wong mentioned LDOE intends a future focus and activities to address literacy by the third grade for all students and appropriate identification of and services for students with disabilities. Two upcoming conferences were mentioned, a Behavior Intervention Summit and the Jump Start Convention.

Finally, she announced that the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) would have vacancies in the spring and encouraged self-advocates and parents to apply. SEAP will next meet on January 30<sup>th</sup> at the School for the Deaf and Visually Impaired.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A motion by Crystal White, seconded by Hilary Bordelon, for LaCAN actions taken outside of VoterVoice to be counted by the Council **passed with 13 yays to 9 nays; no abstentions.**

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next Council meeting will be April 17-18, 2019 at the Embassy Suites, Baton Rouge.

#### **ADJOURNMENT OF BUSINESS MEETING**

**MOTION PASSED.** A motion to adjourn by Jill Demeritt, seconded by Roslyn Hymel, passed without objection.

Ms. Dunn adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m.