

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Partners in Policymaking Ad Hoc Committee
January 7, 2021

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Good morning everybody.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Great morning and happy new year to everyone.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Do we have...

MARILEE ANDREWS: I think we should. I can take roll real quick.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Please.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Everybody please turn cameras on so I can see you guys. Mike Billings.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Here.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Rashad Bristo. Jill Hano.

JILL HANO: Here.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Bambi Polotzola.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Here.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Corhonda Corley.

CORHONDA CORLEY: It's Corhonda and I'm present.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Nicole Flores.

NICOLE FLORES: Here.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Salina Gilliland.

SALINA GILLILAND: Here.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Liz Gary. We have a quorum Mike.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you. Good morning everybody. Glad everybody could make it for the meeting this morning. This really should probably be our final meeting. I know on the agenda we have for future agenda items I am going to ask, if there are any, ask they be deferred to the self-determination community and inclusion committee. And I can have added on that agenda because we should be able to dissolve this committee because we have met our objectives. At least, I believe we have. So we had our roll call. And I just want to go over the virtual meeting protocols real quick. And, you know, participating via zoom. Considered present when you

display on live video feed your face and your first and last name. Please have your mikes muted unless you are called upon. Electronically raise your hand to request the chair recognize to you to speak. Once recognized to speak, mike may be turned on. And after speaking please return it to mute. Guests may participate via zoom or observe via live on YouTube. All public meetings shall be recorded and be available on the council's YouTube channel. Public comments submitted during the meeting will be submitted via zoom by raising their hand to request to comment or post comments in the chat box. Comments can be posted on the live feed of the YouTube channel for consideration. Any comments regarding a person's character will not be heard and if the comment continues after being asked to stop by the chairperson council staff may be asked to end the meeting. And I would just like to remind everybody that we don't discuss any HIPA issues on the live feed. We shouldn't be discussing anybody's abilities or disabilities. Other than that, move onto our agenda and the approval of the November meeting summary. Sorry Jill, I see you have your hand raised.

JILL HANO: I just wanted to clear the air. The council bought me this echo pen that is a recording device. And I just wanted everyone to know and feel comfortable that my assistive technology does record the highlights of the meeting. But any fluff I will be turning it off of record. Just wanted to have that as a full disclosure.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you, Jill.

JILL HANO: Thank you, mike.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes, ma'am. So has everyone had an opportunity to look at the meeting summary for the November 19th meeting? Give everybody a minute and see if we have any comments. Do we have any suggested changes to the meeting summary? If not, can we get a motion for approval please.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: I make a motion.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you Bambi. We have a motion from Bambi to approve the November 19th meeting

summary. Do we have a second?

NICOLE FLORES: I second.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you Nicole. Do we have any objections? Any abstentions? Any public comment? Hearing none, the motion carries. Now Marilee is going to provide us an update on the contracts. Next two items.

MARILEE ANDREWS: So sorry, I missed who the second was.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: That was Nicole Flores.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Okay. Good morning everyone. I am happy to be meeting with you all this morning. I wanted to give you guys an update on the contract between the council and Families Helping Families at the Crossroads. Who hold their own contract with the PIP coordinator for the implementation of PIP. At our last meeting, which was in November, November 19th we met, and we made, or you guys made some motions to the executive committee to consider. One of those motions was regarding the contract. And I am going to share my screen just so y'all can see that. All the motions in one place. Does everybody see my screen? I can't see what y'all see. Okay. So you will see the third motion, the PIP ad hoc committee recommends the executive committee act as expeditiously as possible in signing a contract with Families Helping Families Crossroads for PIP and offers this motion to the executive committee for consideration. The executive committee met December 2nd and a contract was signed between the council and Families Helping Families at the Crossroads for PIP. Signed in December. However, it was backdated to October 1st. So a contract has been signed. We have been getting invoices. And I am not sure if Jim wants to do the next item which is an update on his contract. The one with FHF at the Crossroads and the PIP coordinator.

JAMES SPRINKLE: Yes. We have a contract and I have signed it and it will be in her hands today.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Is there any questions or comments on any of that? Mike, I think Ms. Corley has

her hand up.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Sorry, I had to unmute myself. Corhonda, you have the floor.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you. I just want to clarify, and this is a two part. It might be a multipart question. But did you say, Ms. Andrews, this contract was only backdated to October?

MARILEE ANDREWS: Yeah. I said the contract was backdated to October 1st, 2020.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Okay. And Mr. Sprinkle, to my understanding was Ms. Thomas still employed just temporarily, still kind of like doing work as the coordinator since the pandemic started in March?

JAMES SPRINKLE: Yes, ma'am.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Okay. So I think that it would be extremely prudent of us to look that labor laws, and consider labor laws, and consider equal employment opportunities and other federal laws that apply to situations like this. And that we actually recommend or send over something towards the executive committee to actually consider paying Ms. Thomas all the way back to the very first day of the pandemic and reimbursing the Families Helping Families at the Crossroads any expenditures they had to do in that part, in that capacity. Because back to October 1st is not long enough if she has been working and the state went into a lockdown in March.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Mike, can I address that?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes, Marilee. Go ahead.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Ms. Corley, I appreciate your concern. She has been paid. Everybody has been paid for that entire time. Our contract runs on federal fiscal year. Our contract with FHF at the Crossroads ended September 30th, 2020. FHF at the Crossroads contract with the PIP coordinator ended also September 1st 2020. October 1, 2020 is the next federal fiscal year and that's when our next contract would have started. It only didn't get, a new contract was just not made. Which is what the committee addressed. There is no concern and no conflict with labor laws.

JAMES SPRINKLE: She has been paid.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank y'all for clearing that up.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Permission to speak Mr. Billings.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes, ma'am.

CORHONDA CORLEY: That is what I just wanted to make sure of because I know in our previous meeting, we stated that Ms. Thomas was only paid like 500-dollars like twice. But it was never stated it was an ongoing payment from March until October 1st. So thank you for clarifying that because no one should ever work for free. That is a violation of labor law and I just wanted to make sure that we were not asking Ms. Thomas to do something any of us would not be willing to do ourselves. And that is work for free.

MARILEE ANDREWS: No, ma'am.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Did you have anything else Marilee?

MARILEE ANDREWS: If there is any more questions, I can answer those. Or if not, we can go to agenda item number four.

HANNAH JENKINS: Corhonda Corley has her hand raised.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Go ahead.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you. I have just another question. I noticed we said the contract is only for one fiscal year. Do we have anything in place to prevent this situation from occurring again considering the pandemic will not be over by time the fiscal year ends next year.

MARILEE ANDREWS: So I am not sure I understand, specifically your question. We have a contract and it's going to run October 1, 2020 to September 30th, 2021. That is when the contracts, all of our contracts end. And then every year, if we have funding, we will fund those initiatives again and find a contractor and the contractor will find the subcontractor. Historically the contractor is Families Helping Families at the Crossroads. So I don't know if you can say today how it's going to play out next federal

fiscal year.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Permission to elaborate Mr. Billings.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Sure.

CORHONDA CORLEY: I am inquiring on if we have any blanket policy in place to prevent a situation like this occurring. We just heard from Mr. Sprinkle the contract was just recently signed. Ms. Thomas, the pandemic, lockdown occurred in March. We had a lapse in the contract from September until whatever date Mr. Sprinkle was finally able to sign that contract. But we know it wasn't December 1st. In the event that we have another situation like this, because considering that the pandemic is not over with and will not be next year by October 1st, 2022 do we have any type of procedure, policy in place to prevent that situation or that lapse in the contract. And if not, can we do a motion to have one put in place.

MARILEE ANDREWS: So there is no procedure in place that I am aware of that forces the council to sign a contract with a contractor or the contractor to sign a contract with the subcontractor. I am not sure if that answers your question. You keep saying something like this happening again. And I guess I don't know what that means.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Jim, do you care to elaborate.

JAMES SPRINKLE: Yeah. Historically for years now this contract is adjusted, renewed every year about the same time. Happened with the council, what the council decides, maybe they want to make a change. It starts every year and has for as many years it's been in existence.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you, Jim. I am not sure of state contract law, but I know on federal contracts in our situation we can't issue contracts in advance. It's usually every year a new proposal for the contract. So Corhonda I hope that answers your question.

HANNAH JENKINS: A statement from Ashley McReynolds regarding this discussion.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Can you read that?

HANNAH JENKINS: Sure. Ashley McReynolds says, I thought the delay was from the DOA. My understanding that almost all contracts were late coming out of DOA.

MARILEE ANDREWS: So, no. That was not the delay. The delay was the interim executive director wasn't comfortable signing a contract without the budget portion of that contract. And a budget portion of that contract she did not feel could be completed thoroughly until it was decided what to do with the 2020 class that only completed part of Partners. And how to possibly do the 2021 class. So that was the goal of this ad hoc committee was to make a recommendation on that to the executive committee so that when she saw that she would be more comfortable signing a contract. Which is what happened.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you. Salina, you had your hand up earlier. Do you still have a comment?

SALINA GILLILAND: Yes. Thank you. I saw the agenda shows that we're going to go over the virtual accommodations for self-advocates for the 2020 class. But I wondered are we going to cover the virtual format and scheduling for the class in today's meeting? Are we going to know what accommodations are going to be made for everyone?

MARILEE ANDREWS: The agenda item number 4 2020 PIP self-advocates virtual accommodation was put on the agenda because it was raised as a concern by, if my memory serves me right, by Ms. Corley at one of our previous meeting. It's not to discuss the specifics of how to implement a virtual session. That would, as I understand it, would fall more under, that would be minutia of how to run the program. Which wouldn't be on this, wouldn't be on an agenda or for a committee to decide.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Not within the scope of this committee. So let's move onto the next item and maybe Adrienne can help bring us up to speed.

ADRIANNE THOMAS: Yes. This will be easy. Good morning and happy new year to everyone. I just wanted

to reassure everyone I am using the same information as I was to share in the November meeting. Just to confirm and let all those that were concerned know that we are going to follow, or I will encourage to follow the same guidelines and principals that are used as I or others have participated in coordinating IEP and 504 plans. With that being said, we are going to handle the information in a sensitive and confidential manner. That information that Marilee and I have collected that we have through the application process and through all of the information that has been submitted by each individual participant we are going to deal with that specifically with that participant. We are also going to consider, I hope, and I think Marilee and I agree as we discussed prior that other consideration also will be the concern expressed a parent in which the disability within their family unit accommodations to be considered. And I know that was one thing that was a concern of Ms. Gilliland at the last meeting. So there are three main areas that, and this information is not reinvented. This information can be found online and any professional organization that assist and put out papers or research, the valid research information about accommodations. One that, I am not promoting a website or anything, but one that I have used in the school system has been a guide and it shows accommodations in three main areas. And that is accommodation that change the way information is presented. So we know that the way we present information in person now has to be converted and put into a form to be presented virtually. Accommodations that change the way assignments are completed. And accommodations that help with scheduling, timing and organization. And I know that is where Ms. Gilliland was really concerned, and other parents may be concerned. And I see some people writing. If you want me to repeat those three areas, I am okay with it. I said, once again, those accommodations that change the way information is presented. Accommodations that change the way assignments are completed. And

accommodations that can help with scheduling, timing and organization. So I know that when we send out information prior to the year beginning we have a schedule of dates and times that we will meet in person, identified a meeting place. And two dates usually on that that must be met that you cannot miss. And so those things will be merged into that third section about accommodations that can help with scheduling, timing and organization. And once again, I will encourage in our future discussions as we get ready to meet the needs of the 2020 class and therefore that we use those same guidelines and principals that we use in coordinating IEPs and 504 plans. That we do it in a sensitive and confidential manner just as we have been doing for in person accommodations.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Hey, Adrienne. I just want to make sure I understood you correctly as I take these notes. You are saying that there will, you plan to implement accommodations in those three areas.

ADRIANNE THOMAS: Those are just the three areas that the accommodations usually fall in. But if someone needs, roughly just thinking of a regular student IEP, if someone needs extended time in taking a test and that accommodation falls under accommodations that can help with scheduling, timing and organization. So whatever strategy we use to meet the needs of our participants usually will fall under those three general areas.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Thank you.

SALINA GILLILAND: How will those accommodations be determined and implemented? Will it be survey? How will you get the needs from everyone?

ADRIANNE THOMAS: May I go on and answer her?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes, ma'am. Go ahead.

ADRIANNE THOMAS: The first thing we will do is go back and review all of the information that was, and that is actually being done now. Not we will. I have actually been doing it as part of my responsibilities. So basically what I do is take the application, that initial survey, I don't know if you remember when you

filled out the application there was information regarding either your or your child's disabilities. There is also an initial survey. There are some specific questions that ask about any accommodations that you may need. And just without, just an example, as if someone had said they needed their information in large print. So that information has already been received as well as we look at, or I looked at and continue to look at the feedback that is given all those sessions. Even from the evaluation, from the email, or the text messages that I have received personally from individual participants, I keep documentation on that. And that is also being, that also is being looked into consideration. Then from there, a step two, or the next step after that information has been reviewed via each participant I will reach out to each participant. And that can happen by phone, by email. You know the different ways that I communicated with you. And ask you to respond back to me if you have any additional concerns, or if you want to discuss what you have said in your application that we have done in person. If there is anything beyond those things that I know will happen. So for example, you know use zoom for example. With the zoom format, if we are meeting on zoom and if you are requesting or in need of an accommodation that goes beyond my strategies or resources then my third step in that process will go to Marilee and Mr. Sprinkle. And perhaps the interim director. And that's where we determine. And I present the information on your behalf. This is what we have in the applications. This is what we have discussed. This is what we are doing. This is how it's affecting this person's ability to be successful in this program. And these are the recommendations that we might want to consider or look at. And that happens completely an on individual basis. Those are the general three steps I will take rather in virtual or in person.

SALINA GILLILAND: If I am understanding, you're going to be going to each participant individually and

making sure of what accommodations are going to be needed. Won't be a reassessment of everyone's technology need and situation. Because things may have changed for people in the last year.

ADRIANNE THOMAS: That would happen in step two. I already have step one. And I may have a list of, I may have three things, without using you for an example, but not using you for confidentiality. Hey, Salina. I see 1, 2 and 3 on your application and we have been meeting those things in person. Now on virtual, do you have any other concerns, let's talk about it. That's what happens in step two. Then as I say, if you have any changes or anything that would prevent you or you think you need any assistive technology. I notice Ms. Hano, congratulations on your assistive device. Things like that. That is at that point that we can look at those things. Because it may not be that the council may be able to partner using a resource that may benefit you in other areas. That's what we want to make sure that all resources, not just for the success of the Partners program. But for the success of your family and your desires and needs so you can be a successful policymaker. That is the general concern. If it means you didn't know about LaCAN and they can help you with technology devices, then that's what we want to make sure that you are provided those. Or at least aware of those so you can be successful in those areas. Like I said, that actually may be in the step three part. Say hey Marilee, hey Jill, hey Ms. Ryland formality. Ms. Gilliland had this concern, and I am suggesting we recommend her, kind of recommend her to Partners at LaCAN and get these devices because they may help her be more successful.

SALINA GILLILAND: Thank you.

ADRIANNE THOMAS: That concludes my virtual accommodations synopsis and the examples for the questions that helped you clarify any concerns anyone may have had.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you Adrienne. Any more questions for Adrienne? Seeing none, let's move onto

Marilee and item number six.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Hannah or Brenton, does anybody have their hands up or any chat?

HANNAH JENKINS: Ms. Corhonda Corley has her hand raised.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you so much Mr. Chairman. Ms. Thomas, will there be any standard practice? Cause I noticed Ms. Gilliland's question was about how it would be implemented. But will there be a standard norm that you would do besides the individual things that are needed. Such as like today, our meeting is live streamed, but we have a standard practice, a standard accommodation we have closed captioning provided. So just in case some people may not feel as comfortable with disclosing their actual needs that we do have some type of accommodations already available. As well as another possible accommodation is sending over the materials to everyone in large print. With minimum background emblems and stuff behind the text so it's easier for them to read. Wonder if that was a thought or consideration just having some standard accommodations just to make sure that we are being as inclusive as possible.

ADRIANNE THOMAS: Mr. Chair, may I answer?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Sure. Go ahead.

ADRIANNE THOMAS: Yes, Ms. Corley. That is correct. Let me reemphasize, the standard is the steps I just stated and that happens in person or virtual, which we are moving into. Regardless, let me not say regardless. If the Partners session is in person or the Partners session is virtual, I as an advocate, and parent, and as an educator, and social worker, and all those other titles I might have through my ethics and principals still go through the same process of looking at what is requested. Now I might add as saying, and I can't speak, I can speak to the practice as long as I am the coordinator that this is the practice. What I have the ability to also do is to know that or to have the knowledge and the initiative to undertake or to carry out that even if a person does not disclose how

their disability specifically affects them, I along with others have the ability to look at the disability and have the knowledge of what possible accommodations that person may need without being disclosed immediately. My social work background allows me to start where that person is, and they may not be comfortable disclosing to me at that time what they need. But that is my job and that is my responsibility to be a coordinator that allows a person to feel comfortable disclosing so they can be successful in what they need. If I can't do that, then I am not carrying out those responsibilities for them. And I need to either brush up my skills or get some assistance. Kind of like asking a question, but that is the standard and I know you want that clarity. That is the clarity that no matter what it could be from ALS to Parkinson's to spina bifida. I have my resources, my websites that I am going to look at what the possible accommodations from, not just in regards to Partners, but in every daily aspect of life what accommodations that person needs. Hoping that's why I was selected as the coordinator because that is where my background expertise is and meeting the vocational needs of people with disabilities. Part of what I pledged an oath and licensed and credentialed in.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you so much Ms. Thomas. I just wanted you to clarify so the audience would actually be able to know. Because I don't think that they are always fully aware of everything that I may be aware of, or that some of the other people on the council may be aware of considering your background and your area of expertise. Just wanted it to be stated for the record so that everyone else would know just how passionate you are and why you are the perfect person for this position.

ADRIANNE THOMAS: Dually noted.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Billings.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you. Marilee, you have the floor.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Thank you, Adrienne. So I am going to move onto agenda item six ITAC disparities. Just to refresh the committee, at the committee's second meeting in November Ms. Corley wanted to incorporate targeted disparities according to ITAC. She mentioned ITAC disparities and requested an agenda item to look at previous Partners years to see how to move forward with the 2021, 2022 class looking specifically at ITAC disparities. There is a discussion on what is an ITAC disparity. I did reach out to NACDD, The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities and I spoke directly with their ITAC technical assistance person. Essentially, I asked her if ITAC has a list of disparities that they have adopted for DD Councils to respond to. There is a lot of good information on ITAC's website, just as a side note if someone was interested. They have a disparities resource guide posted from Georgetown and a resource guide for councils and others to use to respond to disparities. But they do not have a list of disparities for DD Councils to address, like they have adopted. I think it might have been possible that we have talked about the targeted disparity element in each council's five-year plan. ITAC does collect targeted disparity statements from councils for their five-year plan. So I went ahead, and I took it a little bit further and I found for Louisiana for our five-year plan, now at the time that this information was taken the five-year plan was 2017 to 2021 five-year state plan. And Louisiana targeted disparity was individuals with developmental disabilities who live in North Louisiana which tends to have a higher number of underserved and unserved people, more rural, has more poverty, has lower employment in the general population and has less access to quality employment support providers. Continuing to move forward, just laying the groundwork for you guys. We have a new five-year plan. So we have a state five-year plan for federal fiscal year 2022 to 2026. That went out for comment and the due date on that has passed. The council adopted it in

October of 2020. It went out for comment, public comment on the council's five-year plan with a due date of December 10th. And I am not sure if it's on the agenda for the January meeting or not. That is the background on ITAC disparities. I am not sure if Adrienne has the data from the PIP alumni that was requested or that we wanted to talk about. Look at previous years to see how to move forward with PIP classes looking specifically at ITAC disparities. Just wanted to share that information with you guys as that was kind of an assignment for me. I know that was a lot of information.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes. Good information. Thank you, Marilee. Do we have any other comments? Corhonda.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you. First, I wanted to see if Ms. Thomas has something to say cause she was muted, and I don't know if she was actually getting ready to say something or wanted to say something before I did.

ADRIANNE THOMAS: Can you hear me now?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes.

ADRIANNE THOMAS: I am going back and forth. I do want to say this is a lot of information. I am still in that process because I am having to reach out to Liz and Marilee because to gather that information. A lot for precise analysis and to actually capture a lot of historical data that we are talking about 400 people and the ITAC disparities are very sensitive. So some of those we won't, like we can't just pick up the phone. There is some disparities that are very sensitive. And unless that information is there or voluntarily disclosed, we can't just pick up the phone and start calling for certain information. We are going to, I am going to continue to examine that information and put it in parallel to what Marilee is saying about the ITAC disparities. And especially those that are closely related with what is identified in the five-year plan. The last five-year plan wanted to look at the increase of participants in North

Louisiana. I am especially going to be looking at did we increase our goal or increase reaching out to those participants that are in North Louisiana. Or if we wanted to increase our self-advocates, how will our numbers going up and down for self-advocates. Mr. Billings, if I might say, I commend Ms. Corley for pointing out we should look that ITAC disparities. And I think moving forward and I think Marilee and I agree as she started her suggestion, and I started my assessment that we will use the information that we have and that is being provided as continued guidelines. It has been a part of the selection process. It may not be, not using the word of ITAC, but using the words of Partners. If you go, and this is information that is online. You can go on the Partners, the Minnesota website and see the selection process for participants in Partners in Policymaking that the Louisiana, our council strongly attempts to align our program with that program because that is what our charge is to do to be aligned with what other states are doing when it comes to the selection process. And so I just want to say we are going to use that especially for a basis of what we would consider improvement if that is what we are charged to do.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you, Adrienne. Liz, you had your hand up.

LIZ GARY: Thank you Mike. I want to reiterate as far as it goes when it comes down to making sure the disparities are touched on that it's really, really important for recruiting effort. It's a recruiting issue more than anything. A marketing issue in getting the people out there to actually apply. Year after year, the first year I did it, it was like 65 applications. The largest year ever in applications. After that it's always been like 30, 32. We had a couple 40, 45. But definitely a recruiting effort and making sure we are tapping into every area of every part of the state that can share that information, get that information out. Make sure people understand what it is that it's a free session for training them on

becoming leader. I think the most critical thing is getting the information out to the people so we can get the applications in. Once the applications were in the first thing we did in the 11 years I did it was look at all the ones that were outliers and made sure they qualified. If they qualified and there was no other issues they were accepted. We would start with the ones, if you had 40 applications and 15 from region two, those sat until, and region nine, those sat until we made sure every other region was touched. We made sure if someone was in their region, unless they completely did not qualify because they didn't have a disability, or their child didn't have a disability that they were accepted if they were in any of the disparity issues. We made sure of that. But it's definitely a training and recruiting issue. I want to share that because I think it's important for everybody to be able to be out there pursuing that and pushing Partners, so people are applying. In reference to what you are saying Adrienne, more than happy to help in any way. I can give you pretty much the last 11 years. I can tell you who, what, when, where of those people. So it's kind of up here. You have to ask me names and I would have to go back to the visual. But definitely something I can help you to be able to draw down and see where they fell and that kind of stuff to get the data that is being requested. Other than that felt like it was very important to say that. Always has been a recruiting effort with a lot of things when it came to the world of disabilities. We have to make sure too that those ones out there who are unsure, for instance, a lot of self-advocates that don't know how they are going to get there so they don't even apply. If they are living in group homes or other places where these caregivers are not pushing it then they are not going to do anything and not let them apply. A lot where I have talked to the caregivers to make sure they were aware we'd get them a bus, an Uber. Do everything we can to get them there and that was an expense we absorbed to ensure we got the self-advocates there.

Just challenge everybody that obviously this year is going to be a different year where anyone will have the capabilities of participating, learning. But when we go into mid-June and mid-July if we are looking better with covid then pushing for next year, all of us need to be able to take a huge role in recruitment throughout the entire State of Louisiana. Thanks Mike.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you Liz. Very good points on recruitment. And I have been on the selection committee and you really can't select somebody if you don't have applicants. Definitely got to target those select fields. Jill, you have your hand up? Can't hear you Jill.

JILL HANO: Okay. Marilee, when did you say the deadline for our public comment was, December 10th?

MARILEE ANDREWS: Yes. So the state five-year plan for federal fiscal years 2022 through 2026 at the October council meeting the council adopted it. And then after it was adopted it had to be sent out for public comment. It was sent out for public comment via LADDC news. And the due date, it was sent out for public comment October 26th, 2020. And the due date for comments was December 10th, 2020. That passed.

JILL HANO: Did we get any public comment?

MARILEE ANDREWS: That is a great question. The comments were sent to Ms. Courtney Ryland. She does the planning for the council. I haven't heard from her what the comments were. I think we asked briefly in a staff meeting, but not sure if she shared that. I know when she does have it compiled, if there were any comments, I am sure she has the mechanism of sharing it. It might even be on the January council meeting agenda. I haven't looked at it in detail yet. But I haven't heard anything yet.

JILL HANO: Okay. Thank you.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Welcome.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Corhonda, you have your hand up. You have the floor.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you, Mr. Billings. And I really and truly appreciate everyone. Ms. Andrews, I

did not hear, and I just want to clarify before I go into my next question and statement. You did not state that there was anything in our five-year plan that was adopted as it relates to inequities and disparities for people that are diverse and inclusive with Partners in Policymaking for our five-year plan, correct?

MARILEE ANDREWS: I am not sure if I said what you are asking. I talked about 2 five-year plans. Our old five-year plan. Forgive me as I flip through my notes. Our last five-year plan was 2017 to 2021. Louisiana adopted targeted disparities for those five years in that five-year plan. Just to summarize, it was people with developmental disabilities in North Louisiana. Because this area has a higher number of underserved or unserved, is rural, has more poverty, has lower employment, and has less access to quality employment support providers. That was the last five-year plan. And then the new five-year plan, as I reviewed it, under goal two community living and supports the only thing was objective 2.3 which that targeted disparity disadvantaged population. So that is the current five-year plan. Does that give you more information to elaborate on your question or does that answer your question?

CORHONDA CORLEY: That answers my question. And I wanted to make the point and thank you so much because I really appreciated all the time and energy you put into seeking the information. Because the information was very much, I did read it. And I took a great pleasure and delight in it. And hurt me in my heart to know we are not reaching our populations as needed so that we can be more diverse and inclusive. If even represented on this ad hoc committee today as we sit here. We can look at how many minorities are present, how many self-advocates are present just from looking at this ad hoc committee. If we look at the DD Council membership, it's reflected on there who is a self-advocate. It's also when you attend the meetings you can see who is diverse. Who is a minority. That representation matters. And I am just wondering if it

has ever been considered, especially since our governor has created a task force that addresses inequities and disparities. Have we looked at that group as an actual group that we can use as a tool to actually help us with reaching out to these populations that are unserved, underserved as it relates to diversity and inclusion. Also, are we utilizing our Governor's Office of Disabilities Affairs. They send out a newsletter faithfully. They will send out surveys, they will send out anything to try to bring about inclusiveness and diversity. Are we utilizing the tools that we really have that are at the forefront. We have other organizations such as the NAACP, the Afro Latino, the Latina community, the Vietnamese, the Arabic that actually have communities that represent those that are developmental disabled. And yet we do not have that population ever represented. Deaf and blind. We have a school for that. Yet we don't have those populations represented. The majority of those populations I am speaking of are not members of the Partners in Policymaking alumni. When I speak about that, I speak about that being a member of this diverse population that is not represented. But I also take to heart what Ms. Lillian DeJean stated on a meeting several times over about our need for more self-advocates. And she did great work on presenting the actual percentage of self-advocates that are actually represented. Whether in Partners, on the council, etc. I just wanted to know how much are we using these different entities to actually bring them about. And do we even have that representation on the selection committee or Partners in Policymaking class. I think that may be also another hindrance if we don't have those populations represented in the selection process then are we really and truly being true to ourselves to actually put forth a real great effort.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Thank you Ms. Corhonda for sharing your comment. The first you thing you mentioned you have down you were questioning if the council looked at targeted disparities as a group to

help us reach out to underserved and unserved populations as it relates to disability and inclusion. So that's kind of broader than this ad hoc committee, which was really to decide what to do with the Partners class who couldn't finish. So that is the first thing. The second thing is I think we are on a good track to address that. There was an ad hoc committee formed. I can't remember if you were there, I feel like you might have even made the motion, but my memory could be wrong. The council recently created like a disparity ad hoc committee. That would be a good place for you to share this kind of input and for that kind of work to be done. The next thing you said are we utilizing the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs and other groups in reaching those who are developmentally disabled. We work closely with GODA. Bambi is here now. She is the executive director of GODA. She has been on the selection committee. She might want to answer that question better. The next thing you said is many members of disability groups are not members of Partners in Policymaking. And again, Ms. DeJean's presentation on our need for more self-advocates. I am going to lean back on what Liz Gary shared, and Mr. Billings kind of doubled down on that a little bit. I think we have identified that is a concern and the solution is in recruiting. From what I hear them saying. I was on the last Partners in Policymaking selection committee. It was made up of people that had graduated from Partners. I believe a requirement to be on that the selection committee. So you can't, not sure if it's just our standard or actually a rule somewhere with the state that started Partners, but to be on the selection committee you had to have graduated from Partners. You can't just put any person on there just because they have a disability. But if you wanted people on that committee that had a disability, which I think would be a great idea, they would have had to graduate from Partners. Like circular how to get those people in Partners. Again, I believe, and relying on the information of Liz Gary, the coordinator for a very

long time, the selection process it's a recruiting issue. You can only pick who applied. If we're sitting with a hundred applications and zero applications of someone who is Deaf, you can't put someone who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing in PIP if they are not there to select. So I think we have clearly identified that is a concern. And I believe we have identified the solution is recruitment. I can second what Ms. Gary said, which I was there with huge multiple boards and markers and we might can probably attest who remembers, we broke it out by region, by disabilities, by race, by all the things that the state that started Partners said this is what you should look at when you select. And the one, a region had one applicant we picked, that was the first person, I am saying we, the committee that picked. A region with ten applications that one we looked at last to make sure you had people from different areas. If there were 30 applicants with autism spectrum and one with some other disability, we went with that disability first. I hope that is some good information that is heartening to you in some way. Moving forward with the concerns regarding disparities, targeted disparities, things like that, I believe that would be most appropriate to be on the committee that was actually for that.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Agreed. That topic is at the forefront of pretty much everything the council is working on right now. But as far as this ad hoc committee, it is really outside of our scope of what this committee was formed for. But it is an important issue and I appreciate the discussion. Jill, you have your hand up, but I barely see the top of your head. There you go.

JILL HANO: I think I forgot to take it down from before.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Okay. No worries. Any other comments?

MARILEE ANDREWS: They are telling me there is some comments in the chat.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Can someone read those out for us.

HANNAH JENKINS: Ms. Corhonda Corley has a question. She says have the disparities ad hoc been chosen as well as a scheduled meeting date? If they have not made selections, I would love to be on that task force. She also asked how can one apply to be on the selection committee for Partners.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Mike, you want me to take that.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes. Please.

MARILEE ANDREWS: So the disparities ad hoc committee, I am not sure what is happening with it. I am not sure what council staff is in charge of it, or even been a chair selected. I do know, I want to say came about around the time of Lillian's presentation. I do also know at the same time the council's chair suspended all ad hoc committees that weren't essential. This one was deemed essential which is why we're still meeting. To answer that question, I would recommend you email our interim executive director, Courtney Ryland. I think everybody has her email. I can put it in here. She is in charge. So she will kind of divvy that up and assign a chair and things like that. Your second question, how can one apply to be on the selection committee for PIP. Historically the council chair has looked at the council members and found out which ones were Partners grads and then selected out of those people to be on the selection committee for PIP. If you are interested in that you should, I would recommend you email the council chair. And you have to forgive me, Ms. Corhonda. I am not sure, did you graduate from Partners in Policymaking? You did, okay. So that is a check. You are not a council member so that, not sure if they would allow you to be on it, but I know things are changing. For example, in this committee half the committee are non-council members. That would be the information I would give you and I would reach out to our council chair on that question for the next time there is a selection committee.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you, Marilee. Do we have

any other comments? I don't see anything else. The item number seven is the dissolution of the committee or future items. And really, we have met the goal of the committee, so I don't see any future items that can't be addressed by either the self-determination and committee inclusion committee or the council itself if they come forward at a later time. So I think it would be, I would like to formally dissolve the committee. If we could get a motion to do that.

LIZ GARY: I just have a question before we formally dissolve. Marilee, can we get any feedback on if the motion, the other two motions that we had talked about were approved by the executive committee based on moving forward with the virtual and the second motion which was to do 2021 sessions open to the public.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Yes. So I know we talked about that earlier this morning and I'm just going to share my screen so everybody can see.

LIZ GARY: I find the motions, just didn't know if those three were approved.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Right. I was just going to put them up in case somebody else didn't have them pulled up. And then I was going to talk about it.

LIZ GARY: Great. Thank you.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Can everybody see that? So this is just a refresher, these are the motions that this committee made at our last meeting. It was brought to the executive committee December 2nd. I have not heard anything from it. I didn't find any minutes, I didn't find a summary or the transcription from the meeting. It was shared with all of us at a staffing meeting number three that the contract was signed between the council and Families Helping Families at the Crossroads for PIP. And so that was the only update I had. I hope for that information to be shared with me soon and you all. I have access to the same information you guys have, which is on our website if you go under our 2020 meetings you will see where this meeting was, pull the agenda, and this motion. And then at some point there should be a summary hyperlink there as well. And

I know that's not all the information, but that is the information I have.

LIZ GARY: So I know the meeting was held because somebody had told me. I didn't even know the meeting was happening. And I know they did have the meeting about it. I just didn't know if these were actually approved. The only thing I really, really have a concern with, and I want to make sure we are careful with it, is the motion number two where it says recommend a virtual format in 2021 for Partners in Policymaking session. I think it's critical and on the part of the DD Council that we are not using the Partners in Policymaking name to do these sessions because it's not truly the Partners in Policymaking. Unless you get approval from Partners in Policymaking from Minnesota. I would be super, super careful about that because it is not the format, the same format. Even if you use the speakers and try to do the same thing. I do not, unless something has changed because of covid, you should not be using that official name when it's not the true Partners in Policymaking program of the something hours. I just feel it's very important that is on the record stated that the name is not used. When we did it in 2016 and traveled around the state it was regional workshops. We didn't use the Partners name, but gave the same type of thing, just can't use the name if we are not doing the format that's been trademarked. Because that name is registered and trademarked. Just wanted to share that and put that on the record.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you, Liz. Surely be something for Adrienne and Jim to keep in mind as they move forward. Do we have any other comments? Can we get a motion to formally dissolve this committee? Corhonda.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Billings. I am going to piggyback off of Ms. Gary. If the executive committee has not made a decision yet as it relates to these many sessions, then I don't think it would be extremely prudent of us to dissolve this ad

hoc committee just yet. I think we need to actually know where the committee, where the DD Council stands as it relates to that motion before we just say we are ready to dissolve this ad hoc. Because if we dissolve now it would be a dissolution prematurely. And then that motion can actually not be addressed, and we may not end up having those many sessions. Just want us to take that into consideration and I will go ahead and yield to back to Ms. Polotzola since I see she has her hand up.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: If there is an objection to this motion, I don't think we have to formally vote to dissolve this committee. Self-determination, that is their purview to end the committee whenever they want.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: That is correct. That was a comment I made earlier that any other business maybe we carry over to self-determination community inclusion. Because really, we have met our objectives. Jim, do you have any feedback, do you think we are in a good spot going forward?

JAMES SPRINKLE: No, not really.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Can you express your concerns.

JAMES SPRINKLE: I think we are all looking forward to this new year as much as we can, but so many uncertainties.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Right. But do you see any other actions for this committee?

JAMES SPRINKLE: No. Because the main thing is you have a confident person on board who is going to handle it and you and I don't have to worry about it. No, I don't see any reason to have a further committee.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Adrienne, any comments regarding that?

ADRIANNE THOMAS: No. I am just writing my to do.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: All right. I think we have accomplished our goals and we really have no further business that was under the purview. We can't keep putting minutia in front of us to keep carrying on just for the ad hoc committee. Marilee, go ahead.

MARILEE ANDREWS: So Bambi was right in saying that

this was created in self-determination community inclusion committee. The task was to make a recommendation to the council on what to do with Partners due to covid. That was the only task. And so that task was met. You guys did make a recommendation. So the way I see it to stay on to make sure they accept your recommendation would not be appropriate. The second thing is I think to dissolve this committee the recommendation would be you guys would recommend, hey we are done with our work type of thing. Ultimately SDCI has to recommend to the council to dissolve the committee. Ultimately the council really made the committee. It came from SDCI.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you for that clarification. Marilee. Sorry, having some respiratory issues this morning. So do we have, based on that, do we have anyone who would like to make a motion to address to the self-determination community inclusion committee and then to the full council this committee be dissolved?

MARILEE ANDREWS: You guys want to hang out for a while.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: I guess.

JAMES SPRINKLE: I guess keep on meeting for whatever purpose.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: I have no idea what we would meet about.

SALINA GILLILAND: I will make the motion.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: I will second it.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you. I believe that was Salina and seconded by Bambi. Do we have any objections? Do we have any abstentions? Do we have any public comment?

SALINA GILLILAND: I just want to thank you for including me in this discussion. I appreciate being allowed to give input and speak on behalf of the other participants. Appreciate all of your time on all of this. And if there is any future discussion or planning regarding the implementation of the completion of 2020, I would love to also be able to participate in

that or considered for it. Thank you so much.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you, Salina. We appreciate you participating. So hearing no other objections, or no objections, the motion is going to carry, and we are going to dissolve or recommend the committee be dissolved. So do we have any other public comment regarding our meeting today?

JAMES SPRINKLE: Go for it Adrienne.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Right. All right. Closing comments. I really do appreciate y'all participating in this ad hoc committee. We covered a lot of important information. It was great to get to know Adrienne and Jim. Appreciate you sitting in with us. Do we have a motion to adjourn?

LIZ GARY: I make a motion to adjourn.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you Liz. Do we have a second?

NICOLE FLORES: Second

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Sorry, I didn't see who seconded.

NICOLE FLORES: Second.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you, Nicole. Do we have any objections? Any abstentions? Hearing none, we will adjourn this meeting. Thank you everyone.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Thank you all. Appreciate everybody's work.