

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Executive Committee
January 19, 2021

COURTNEY RYLAND: Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. This is the executive committee meeting for Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council. Mr. Brown, you have a quorum. Yet we do not have Ms. Mary Tarver or Mr. Steven Nguyen with us just yet.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you, Courtney. Welcome everybody. Let's give them just a few more minutes. Let's say about five more minutes. If they don't show, we'll start.

Okay, everyone. Welcome to the quarterly meeting of the executive committee. We thank everyone for being able to attend today. Thank you to our members of the committee for being able to take the time this afternoon to be with us to conduct today's business. Thank you all. And the first thing I want to do, Courtney, could you put the agenda up on the screen so folks who are watching can have it in front of us. I think that's helpful. Thank you. So I will read our mission statement. Do you have that available for me so they can see it as well. Okay. So the mission statement for Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council is as follows. To increase independence, self-determination, productivity, integration and inclusion for Louisianians with developmental disabilities by engaging in advocacy, capacity building, and systems change. Do you have those ground rules available for me as well. I will go over those. Our teleconference meeting protocols are as you see before you. The council meetings shall be accessible by zoom and live streamed on YouTube, which we currently are. Council and committee members will participate via zoom and shall be considered present when they display a video feed with their face and the first and last name. Have microphones muted unless called upon by the chairperson. Electronically raise your hand to request

the chair recognize them to speak. Once recognized to speak by the chair, their mike shall be turned on. After speaking the mike shall be returned to mute. Guests may participate via zoom or observe meetings live on YouTube. All public meetings shall be recorded and may be made available on the council's YouTube channel as determined appropriate by the chairperson. Public comment submitted during the meeting via any form shall be considered. During zoom meetings guests may electronically raise their hand to request to comment. Upon being recognized to speak by the chair their mike should be turned on. After speaking the mike shall be returned to mute. Post comments relevant to the item under consideration in the chat box. Post comments during the live stream of the meeting on the council's YouTube channel. You see the link below. Public comments of a person's character will not be heard. If the comment continues after being asked to stop by the chairperson, council staff may be instructed to end the meeting. You might be asked by me to cease speaking. And the executive committee will be the determiner of that, along with me, in today's case. Let's move forward. Can you put the agenda back up on the screen please. Thank you. So that is the ground rules for today and our mission. And if no one has any objections the summaries of our last two meetings prior to this one you see linked there. Hope you all had time to review it. If no one has any objection, those will be approved by acclimation. Do I hear any objections to the October 20th, 2020 meeting and the December 2nd, 2020 meeting? Summaries are linked there if you need a moment to read over any of those or both. Hearing no objections, the summaries shall be entered into the record. Having passed by a unanimous consent, vote. Before I get into the rest of the agenda, I want to change things up on the order just a bit. Is Lillian with us Courtney?

COURTNEY RYLAND: I believe she is. She might not be on panelist mode yet.

RANDALL BROWN: Switch her to panelist and let's

let her speak to us before we begin the rest of the business. Thank you.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Hello.

RANDALL BROWN: How are you?

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Doing good. How are you?

RANDALL BROWN: I am well. Thank you for being with us and speaking with us today. You have the floor.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Cool. I first want to start out with this story. At first, I am sure everyone will be confused why I am telling the story, but I promise it will come full circle. So about a year ago I went to LRS to try to obtain employment. I had gotten to be 18, it was about that time to transition to the workforce and I was referred to a vocational counselor. Or to have a vocational evaluation to see what would be appropriate with my interest, experience, et cetera, et cetera. And actually ended up being really bad. I was verbally told I was basically unemployable and the final report they said I should probably just stick with being a volunteer as a career for the rest of my life. And also that my career aspirations and disability policy was unattainable. And that I wasn't super educated on what disability policy was. If I were, I would understand the physical demands of the job would be too much for my disability. Please excuse my cat. She has joined us now. That is council member Cecilia. Now she is rolling around. Sorry, very distracting. That evaluation ended up being really, really bad and I walked away from it feeling very dehumanized. It was very harrowing because it was a reflection of everything I had been told as a person with a disability throughout my entire life. People have questions as to why they were even giving me an education because people assumed I was too disabled to learn. People wondered why I am going into college, again because of the severity of my disability. And this eventually shifted to a realization none of this was true. I can still have a life with disabilities. I can still go to college with a disability. Have a

job with a disability. And the foundation for realizing this was inaccurate was my community, right. I am part of this really beautiful disability community who is incredibly supportive of me, understands I can do things because and with my disability, not despite my disability. My story isn't unique. I think we all know the system built for people with disabilities really aren't functional for people with disabilities. Not built for self-determination or people with disabilities being happy in their job. Just checking off the box, okay we have rehabilitated them. But not all kids have access to this support or community. And I don't tell this story specifically to bash LRS. I think a systemic issue. Across every state agency. It's systemic and we need to start addressing this. The thing about a youth leadership forum is that it offers this community and the support. And the how to get a job that will make you happy with your disability and how to have an independent life that says you can do this. You are worth an education. You are worth a job, worth living independently. Worthy of investment, right. I think we need to start moving in the direction of creating YLF, so kids here have this opportunity. And not only will this benefit our youth. But also going to be really beneficial for our council as well. I think we have all seen the fatigue that has encompassed our council over the past four years. I see us getting tired and burnt out and that is understandable. Becomes kind of draining. We need to start getting fresh blood in here. New people with new ideas. Kids and advocates not necessarily weighed down by the past. Start building a foundation for new vision for the council. One that is a little more positive and welcoming and productive. And so YLF really has a lot of potential to benefit everyone more than just our youth. So the reason why I am speaking to you today is because I would like to request that we form a committee specifically to create a YLF. We need a committee because there is a lot that goes into planning. Generally about a five day, almost summer

camp like event where youth get the crash course on self-advocacy, disability history and culture, lessons about sexuality. Everything you need in your toolbox as a person with a disability. And I want to request a committee because there is a lot of planning that goes into this. But also probably going to need to look at obtaining federal grants to get this off the ground. Because YLFs are also not cheap to start. I would say if we have about 20 delegates, we are looking about 30,000-dollars. And you see whenever we had a YLF here in Louisiana from 2000 to 2005 it abruptly ended once Hurricane Katrina started and Governor Jindal came into office. The hurricane decimated the economy and the disability community. And the reason why the YLF stopped is because they didn't have a sustainability plan. They were reliant on DD Council funds and state funds. The federal grants will come in so as our sustainability plan and so we are not really dependent on the state. Cause I think we all know the state is unpredictable with its budget sometimes. I think we should also add a YLF committee into our FY 2022 plan so that is in stone. And I also want to start the discussion of having a staff member specifically for self-advocacy and youth advocacy. Not necessarily like right now but start having the discussion because when we get closer to actually hosting a YLF we will need that extra help and that extra expertise on board. I think that is my spiel. If y'all have any questions I am sure I can answer them.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you, Lillian. Appreciate your passion there. I know this is a big issue. You are very passionate about and knowledgeable about. Certainly willing to work with you in every way we can to make it happen. As you did rightly point out, something we can't do extremely quickly. There will be some things that go into it as far as research how much the cost would be and what exactly we would need in terms of funds to sustain it. That is certainly doable, and you have my commitment we will do that. Self-determination committee can also look into some of

these issues as it relates to starting a committee if they are so inclined to do so. I am willing to form an ad hoc committee when we get to a point of having what the cost would be. And it's a good idea to pursue federal grant money. And if we can do that, we will certainly start that process sooner rather than later. If anybody on the committee or anyone has any further comments or questions, I yield the floor.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Mr. Chair, this is Hyacinth speaking.

RANDALL BROWN: You have the floor.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Ms. DeJean, thank you so much for your presentation on youth leadership forum. It is so needed for this council. We already know that we do not have an adequate number of or the right amount of number of advocates on our council. And for you to present this information to us, we are grateful for that. We want to fully support you in this initiative, and I want to be able to share with the executive committee this is something I believe we should act quickly on. I don't think this is something that we should delay to different meetings. And so certainly I hope our executive committee report will include some more discussion with the full council to ensure this youth leadership initiative takes off. And we hit the ground running with this. What I do not want for this to just be delayed. So I am asking that the executive committee bring this issue to the full council for consideration.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. We don't need a motion to do that. I will do that. Let me be clear, I was not saying delay anything. Certainly, something I agree we will do. I also want to do it right. I don't want it to fail again or fall by the wayside as it once did. I want it to be, as Lillian rightly pointed out, sustainable once we do it. Yes, of course we should have discussion at every level with the full council. And I just suggested the self-determination committee as a possible point of discussion as well because Lillian is on that committee. And I know Mike you are

agreeable to this as well. Any place the discussion can come out and we can get the plan formalized and get things rolling I am all for it. I believe we all are as well. Thank you, madam vice chair, for those comments.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: I guess my question to you would be which committee would make the motion to form a YLF committee? Would that be the full council that would have to create this ad hoc committee or the responsibility of the executive committee to form?

RANDALL BROWN: We will form an ad hoc committee. The executive committee can do that, and we will do that. But what I wanted you to be able to know you can do is also bring these issues up with your chair of your self-determination committee as well and make them part of the discussion as well if you choose to.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: As a point of clarification, would we be able to form that ad hoc committee today during this committee meeting?

RANDALL BROWN: You have my commitment to do it. We will need to look at how many people you think you will need, and we will have to ask for people to participate. Which I will do at the meeting on Thursday. And we will formalize the ad hoc once we get those names and get people's availabilities and that sort of thing. But you have my commitment we will form the ad hoc.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Okay. Cool. Thank you.

RANDALL BROWN: You are welcome. Thank you. Is that all you had for us today?

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Yeah. That's all I have. If you have any questions, like I said, please reach out. I have researched this quite a bit. I attend Oklahoma's last year. Planning to attend this year cause it was an incredible experience. Again, I just want to echo Ms. Hyacinth's words. My only concern is I just don't want this to be pushed aside cause it kind of has for the past three years.

RANDALL BROWN: I understand.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Like to get things rolling.

RANDALL BROWN: I understand. We have, as you know, as a council as a whole, we have a lot on our plate right now. But of course this is very important, and we will work towards getting it started again.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: All right. Virtual high five.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you. Thank you very much Lillian for everything you do. Okay. And so now Courtney, can you put the agenda back up on the screen. Does the executive committee have any feedback as far as her presentation for me? Or for us?

STEVEN NGUYEN: I just want to say this is exciting. I am excited for the future for our youth.

RANDALL BROWN: I agree. Thank you, sir. Okay. So having that issue taken care of for today, let's move onto our legislative advocacy agenda item. Excuse me, public comment on the adopted five-year plan. So as you know we had the 45-day comment period for the public to give feedback for our five-year plan. That was done. And so we do have those public comments available. And Courtney, can you pull those up please for our review. Here you see the public comments we received on the screen before you. Again, the comments having to do with our five-year plan. And the first one you see there says there are many families across Louisiana who are isolated. They are isolated due to a person in their home with a developmental disability who has behaviors. I have brought up this concern many times over the years. I personally have had these challenges with my own son. I have met countless families with children/adults who are home due to behaviors who can be thriving out in our communities with appropriate behavioral support. Those behaviors impede their ability to have a fulfilling life. ABA, which is applied behavior analysis, ends at age 21 in Louisiana. I am disappointed to learn that the five-year plan, the behaviors are not part of the DD Council's goal. I am not sure the council is aware of how many people with developmental disabilities remain home because they have never received behavioral therapy or support for their behaviors. None of the

three goals is possible for our population of individuals with developmental disabilities and behaviors. I just wanted to share what I hear and see in the communities across South East Louisiana. Sincerely, Sherri Houin. That is our first comment. Our second comment is good morning. It would be awesome if the objectives in goal two community living and supports would be accomplished. From Lisa G Smith. And our third and final comment is I don't see anything about transition services from pediatric to adult community services section of the five-year plan. There is both a local and national need for people with disabilities with complex medical needs as they transition from pediatric care to adult care. Here is a good article about the barriers to transition to community services for children with Dravet Syndrome. I think I said that correctly. That would apply to in person, the complex medical needs. Sincerely Katheryn Hart. Those were the three public comments we received on the five-year plan. Do we have any discussion? Courtney, here is a question I have for you. Aren't there ways we can address the issues that have been brought up in the comments here within the scope of the five year plan we already have even though they might not be directly mentioned. You have quite a bit of leeway, correct me if I am wrong, on implementation of the goals. And then, of course, we still have to work on now that we have the goals, still have to work on how to achieve those and the steps for that. Could it be that in that process we address those two major concerns?

COURTNEY RYLAND: If you want to amend your goals that would require another, it would be a major revision and have to put that out for another 45-day public comment.

RANDALL BROWN: That's not what I am talking about. Talking about within the framework of the goals we already have. Don't you have the ability. Cause we haven't even gotten to the nuts and bolts of how we are going to get to those goals. We have to have another

meeting.

COURTNEY RYLAND: Correct, for activities. Correct. What is currently being proposed on Thursday is the ratification of the five-year goals and objectives.

RANDALL BROWN: Right.

COURTNEY RYLAND: So activities will be what the planning committee will draft when they convene in either February or March.

RANDALL BROWN: So I guess here is my question. Don't you have, even within the five-year plan that we have before us that we have worked on and we have before us to approve, don't we have leeway, if you will, on the objectives as far as carrying out is there a way we can address some of these concerns without having to modify the five-year plan to do it is what I am asking?

COURTNEY RYLAND: Well, like I said, your activities are on an annual basis. Those can change as the council allows. If a council wants to change their goals or objectives that is when I actually have to report that.

RANDALL BROWN: You are breaking up a little there.

COURTNEY RYLAND: If we want to revise any of the goals or objectives then we need to do that now. That needs to be done this week. But activities are fluid. As long as it's relatable to our objectives we have established, then we are still in compliance.

RANDALL BROWN: I guess what I am asking is, is there a way we can make those forthcoming, not goals or objectives. Look, within the plan we already got, is there is a way to make sure we can address what these two ladies have brought up without changing a single word. Is there a way that you the staff, we as a council can work within the existing plan we have already put out with objectives coming up to hear them, to meet their concerns? In your estimation.

COURTNEY RYLAND: If you're wanting to make those initiatives for the 2022 plan, yes. You can make those initiatives that's being recommended for the 2022 plan.

RANDALL BROWN: And they would be within the framework of the five-year plan, correct?

COURTNEY RYLAND: Correct. There was a reason why we kind of did generic language for our goals and objectives.

RANDALL BROWN: Exactly. Because we want to give that flexibility, correct. Yes.

COURTNEY RYLAND: Correct.

RANDALL BROWN: What I am saying is I think there is flexibility even though some of these areas were not mentioned specifically, I think flexibility is within this existing plan to address them and we can do so in the 2022 plan as Courtney just pointed out.

COURTNEY RYLAND: Correct.

RANDALL BROWN: Which is yet to be formulated. But I think it can be accommodated within their framework of the existing plan before us. Do you agree, Courtney?

COURTNEY RYLAND: I agree.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. Are there any questions?

COURTNEY RYLAND: You would need to bring it before the full council on Thursday's meeting if you want the initiative to be recommended for consideration by the planning committee.

RANDALL BROWN: Sure. I will do that. With the executive committee's approval, I plan to do that. Is there any discussion?

MARY TARVER: This is Mary. Our education committee met today, and we didn't have quorum, so we had some work and the planning committee still hasn't met and all that stuff. I think there is still time for us to do what we need to do to make changes and decide exactly how we can incorporate some of the ideas.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. Great. Is there any other feedback? Any questions?

STEVEN NGUYEN: Asking for clarification, these two concerns will be addressed?

RANDALL BROWN: Yes. In the 2022 plan. Their concern was like these things weren't mentioned within

the five-year plan. And they are right. However, the five-year plan is written broad enough to incorporate the number of things as the council sees fit that might not specifically be mentioned, but we have the power and the authority to address. And the 2022 plan will be the best way, I think, to address some of those issues that the people brought to us in the public comments. Cause we have yet to formulate that. I think the best and, frankly, fastest way to address some of these issues that were brought before us without having to amend the five-year plan as written and wait another 45 days.

HANNAH JENKINS: Randall, you have two public comments.

RANDALL BROWN: Could you please read those.

HANNAH JENKINS: Sure. Ms. Kathy Dwyer, there's also the report I sent you from the dental task force for adults with disabilities with recommendations to help achieve the access healthcare objective.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, ma'am. I do have that report that you sent to me and thank you very much for that. I am still reviewing it so we will definitely bring that up in our discussions as we move forward with planning.

HANNAH JENKINS: Also a second comment saying there is also legislation, two legislators are working on to be introduced this spring for the dental task force to achieve the recommendation of funding for dental services for adults with DD.

RANDALL BROWN: I am very pleased to hear that. I am not sure which legislators those are if she could provide us with those names. Doesn't have to be here today. Ms. Kathy, you can email me with those names, I would be happy to look for that bill when it comes up once they are submitted. As well as possibly speak to them about collaboration on the bill. Any other questions or comments? I see she says rep Rhonda Butler and Kathy Edmonston. Thank you very much. Any further discussion or public comment on the five-year plan? Okay. Hearing none, we will move to the

legislative advocacy agenda item. Which is direct support provider wage increase. And Courtney, correct me if I am wrong, we have data on raising the base pay by 2-dollars. But don't have data on raising the individual pay. Am I right in saying that? Correct in saying that?

COURTNEY RYLAND: Correct. Basically been advised that getting that data would be not possible.

RANDALL BROWN: Who told us that?

COURTNEY RYLAND: That would be Charles Ailes of OCDD Louisiana Department of Health.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. Just wanted to get that on the record. So the question we have is do we want to go with the base pay which we have data for. And I would recommend if we proceed, that's what we do since we have the data to back it up. We don't have the data for individual raises. So that would be harder, much harder ask, I think. But I am open to comments, questions and interpretations. I believe the other issue we have with this is we need figure out a way to determine what a livable wage is, correct, Courtney? We don't have a defined amount for what would be considered livable wage.

COURTNEY RYLAND: Correct. There is actually three things that we need to get clarification on with this legislative advocacy agenda item. Number one was to clarify if we want all home and community-based services providers to receive a 2-dollar an hour wage increase. Which would include OCDD and OAAS office of community, sorry, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities and Office of Aging and Adult Services. If not, then we just need to collect data from one of those entities. We needed to establish if we wanted the 2-dollar an hour wage increase to be applied to base pay verses 2-dollars an hour to current salary which would be almost impossible to calculate. And we also need to decide what was considered a living wage, a competitive livable wage because without that there is no way to calculate how much the ask would be.

RANDALL BROWN: So what feedback, if any, do y'all have for us council? Anybody have any questions, comments?

MARY TARVER: Randall, it's Mary again.

RANDALL BROWN: You have the floor.

MARY TARVER: I guess I needed, I know we had talked about this before, but who, is it just the DD Council that is leading the charge on this? Or are there other people we are partnering with to help advocate for this, for whatever change? Cause I don't want us to be asking for one thing and then another group is interested for something else and we are not talking the same language. Do you know, wasn't there somebody else advocating for this as well?

RANDALL BROWN: Courtney, would you like to answer that?

COURTNEY RYLAND: I have actually been apprised that there are actual entities that are not going to be requesting this because they know of the financial cost related and it would be inappropriate to ask for that kind of funding during this next legislative session. So I haven't heard of anyone who is on board with requesting this ask. We have had collaboration with our cameras bill. That legislative agenda item. I don't know if maybe that may have been something we had discussed. But we are not working with any other entity regarding the direct support professional wage increase.

RANDALL BROWN: Again, we don't have our numbers calculated. What we are attempting to do. But we do know a very large ask.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Randall, sorry. This is Brenton. We do have numbers.

RANDALL BROWN: Could you please share those.

BRENTON ANDRUS: If you are adding in Aging and Adult Services and Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, looking at both those departments, your state general fund would be 45 million-dollars. Total funding for OAAS is 65 million. Their portion would be 21 million. For OCDD about 75

million total all in funding SGF about 24 million. That is just for that year. That would be to raise it to the minimum of 9.25 base pay. I forgot the federal minimum wage. It's 7.25, so goes to 9.25.

RANDALL BROWN: Right. And I believe I made clear when we discussed our legislative agenda my concern, and the vice chair made this clear as well at our last quarterly meeting. We made clear we did feel like there will be a lot of potential cuts. We are not sure where yet or how much. But very deeply concerned about that and still am. So but we have before us what the council instructed us to do. In order to carry out the ask, the legislative ask, we have to have our formula set and have our ducks in a row as far as what our ask is. That is what this body is attempting to have us do today. Again, I echo the sentiment that all of it is needed. No doubt about that. The question is in our current economic climate with covid and such affecting our economic health of the state, is this a prudent ask of our legislature at this time. I think the council made clear at our last meeting that it is. They want us to move forward with it. In doing so, Brenton just gave you some numbers. A very large ask. A 45 million-dollar ask if we include both areas of departments that include waivers for our populations that we serve. That is a very large number to be asking for in any year. I think in particular this legislative year, even bigger hurdle. I fundamentally do believe. But it's where we are. As an executive committee, do we recommend the inclusion of both or just one, the OCDD Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities and Aging and Adult Services, or together, or do we ask for one? What is y'all's feeling on asking? Do we have any questions or comments y'all?

MARY TARVER: If we have to move forward with this then I would say we need to look at the OCDD. And I don't know what the impact of the administrative change is going to be. But there has been talk of a change with the federal minimum.

RANDALL BROWN: Wage.

MARY TARVER: So that may have an impact on this as well. So I guess that would be my comments.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you.

COURTNEY RYLAND: There are a couple of public comments.

RANDALL BROWN: Can we please read them. If the council has no further pressing questions, can we please read those.

HANNAH JENKINS: Mr. Harlin said if the President raises the minimum wage, we need to consider how it will affect DSPs.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, sir. Good point.

HANNAH JENKINS: Ms. Kelly Monroe said if you are making this a mandate to providers you will need to take into consideration all costs of a wage increase the providers will have. The providers will not be interested if you do not have something in the bill that will prevent the department from taking the money back after the raises have been given.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you, Kelly, for that feedback.

HANNAH JENKINS: And Ms. Kathleen Canino said under the ask for cameras, can we please ask to include cameras for seclusion rooms/areas.

RANDALL BROWN: Noted Kathleen. Thank you.

HANNAH JENKINS: You also have Ms. Kathy Dwyer with her hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, Ms. Kathy. You have the floor. Ms. Kathy Dwyer, you have the floor.

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to add to what Mary Tarver said in addition to the discussion of minimum wage being raised at the federal level. There is also discussion about a bill....

RANDALL BROWN: I think we lost Ms. Kathy.

KATHY DWYER: Did not ask and end up being funds left over.

RANDALL BROWN: Ms. Kathy we lost you there for that last sentence or two. Hate to ask you to do it, but could you repeat your comment there to us. We lost

our connection with you. We can hear you now, but we lost connection during your comments.

KATHY DWYER: Can you hear me now?

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, ma'am. You have the floor.

KATHY DWYER: Did you hear any of my comments or do you want me to start over.

RANDALL BROWN: You might want to start over.

KATHY DWYER: Okay. Thank you. I was saying about the discussion at the federal level to increase federal minimum wage to 15-dollars, there is also discussion about sending federal aid to states and local government entities to help with covid. That will help the budget shortfall we may be experiencing. Continue to ask in the event...

RANDALL BROWN: Sorry. We lost you again. I have to assume you mean in the event we are given federal aid that the ask is already on the table. Let me know if that's what you intend. I would assume that is it, but I am making an assumption on my own. If you can confirm with us that is what you are asking for us to think about having the ask on the table with the legislature in the event the federal funding comes in to help with the budget shortfalls. I hate to put words in anyone's mouth. Assuming that must be what her comment is. Again, Ms. Kathy, we lost you so that's why I am commenting on it. Are there any other comments? I think she said yes, her connection is still poor. Noted Ms. Kathy. I think we understand what you are asking of us and your ask is noted. Is there any other comments Hannah or Courtney?

HANNAH JENKINS: No, sir.

RANDALL BROWN: So how do we as executive committee feel about the issue in general. Do we want to recommend based on what we know is the will of the council from last meeting to proceed. Do we want to recommend one or both. If we choose to recommend, we have to decide do you want to ask for one population, which would be OCDD or the Office of Aging and Adult Services also has waivers. Do you want to ask for one set or both. Or in light of the cost, do we want to

recommend to the council that we reconsider this issue entirely on Thursday.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: This is Mike. I think it would behoove us to reconsider on Thursday with the full council.

RANDALL BROWN: I agree with you, sir. Any other feedback? Anybody have any questions, comments or concerns?

MARY TARVER: Y'all will have the cost that we know of now so that can be presented to the council so everybody understands the money amount.

RANDALL BROWN: Just like we just did. The same presentation we gave to y'all, we will give to the full council and discuss it. My question to y'all as a body, do y'all want to make a recommendation to the council or just leave it up for discussion to be reconsidered in light that we now have numbers. Do you want to make a recommendation to say like in keeping with the council's wishes from last meeting we would recommend one or both, or we would, do we want to make a recommendation to the body or leave it open for discussion?

STEVEN NGUYEN: Leave it open for discussion.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. Is everyone in agreement with that?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yeah.

RANDALL BROWN: Madam chair, are you in agreement. Madam vice chair. I promoted you.

COURTNEY RYLAND: Dr. McKee, can you hear us?

HYACINTH MCKEE: Yes. I can hear you.

RANDALL BROWN: Are you in agreement?

HYACINTH MCKEE: I apologize for that. I did have connection difficulties, but yes, I am in agreement.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. Just wanted to make sure. I want us to be unanimous in our decision.

HANNAH JENKINS: Ms. Kelly Monroe has her hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, Kelly. You have the floor.

KELLY MONROE: Hi guys. I just wanted to also just keep in mind that if you leave the office of aging, the

Department of Office of Aging out you will be causing a disparity on that side. The DSPs working for OCDD will, I mean OAAS will move over and go work for OCDD individuals. And that would cause a huge disparity. That is one of the reasons why when we went to go doing the restoring the rate back to 2008 that we included both departments because we did not want to cause this disparity. Also the office of aging, their rate reimbursement is much lower than developmental disabilities. And so that would cause even more of a problem than it already is right now. I would hope that you would take that into consideration. And then also take into consideration that when they did the 2-dollar wage pass through before the department after six months of it in place they took the money back away from providers and providers still had to pay that 2-dollars. I would hope you guys would put something in the bill that would prevent the department from taking that money away from providers that they would be able to continue to pay their employees. Thank you.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you, Kelly. Your comments are noted. I do happen to concur if we were to ask, I think you should ask for both because we don't want to create a disparity. But there again, everyone knows full well my position on the legislative agenda as a whole in terms of it's going to be a big ask. We need to be aware of that. Now we know a little bit more of exactly how big an ask it would be. That's certainly something we will have to have a vigorous debate about, and everyone's comments are noted and respected. So this issue will be brought up for discussion tomorrow, excuse me, not tomorrow. Thursday. Thursday's council meeting. We will bring this up for reconsideration to the full council. And as I stated, we will essentially present the same data I just gave you all today. We will do so in a way that allows everyone to debate it. Do we have any other comments or questions?

HANNAH JENKINS: Ms. Bambi Polotzola has a comment.

RANDALL BROWN: Could you please read it for us.

HANNAH JENKINS: Yes. She said there are legal

issues with requiring pay rates. This issue was discussed at length at council meetings over the past several years.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you for bringing that up Bambi. You are right. Thank for putting that on the record. One of the reasons why I think it's important for the full council to have this discussion on Thursday. Any other questions or comments on this issue? Okay, hearing none, do we have any other comments from the public?

HANNAH JENKINS: Ms. Kelly Monroe says yes, Julie was involved in that conversation.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes. One good reason why we should have this conversation before the full council. So everyone can be present and give their feedback and input as we make this very important decision. Okay. So do we have any other, I think that concludes our business for today's meeting. Do we have any public comment?

MARY TARVER: I just wanted to mention today we had our education and employment committee meeting, and we did not have quorum. We had four members that were missing. And we did go ahead and go through the agenda. Of course, we can't make any recommendations to the full council on Thursday. But I wanted us to see are we having that happen a lot. Zoom in some ways it makes it easier and some ways it makes it more difficult. Just wanted to reach out and see how the other committees were doing on their quorum and meeting quorum and if there is anything we need to look at overall.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes. I can tell you from the standpoint, and it's one of the reasons why I was hesitant when Lillian was talking about needing a committee for the youth. One of the challenges I have run into throughout this whole year of, almost year now, of the pandemic having us on zoom it is very difficult to get a quorum for any of these meetings. That's one of the reasons why I didn't automatically say yes, absolutely. Even today because I have to look

at when is she available to meet with us. Definitely want her involved, Lillian involved in every aspect of that committee, should there be one, and there now will be one. Yeah, it's been a pretty good challenge to make sure we have quorums for our committee meetings for some time now. I don't know there is anything we can particularly do that we are not already attempting to do. We are open to anything. It's harder, I know, because we have to spread these meetings over a number of days where we normally have a two-day cycle and we're present and we know they will be months in advance and everyone is aware and make plans. Harder and more fluid in the case of zoom for a number of reasons. Everybody's technology access is different. Weather plays a large factor. Those things don't go away as long as we are zooming. Something we have to consider. But I know for me in deciding when to set up various meetings yes, quorum is an issue. I am sorry today's committee didn't have the quorum you needed to conduct business. But I think BESE also met today.

MARY TARVER: Well, we had four members that were not present. I don't know if any of them had anything to do with the BESE meeting. We did agree we would look at their calendar before we set the next meeting. Certainly open to that. But in some aspects, I wonder if we didn't do a disservice to ourselves at the beginning because we were like oh, we'll schedule it whenever. And maybe it should be just relooked at or rediscussed like, okay should all of our meetings still try to be around those same days we normally would have had our in-person meetings for those two days. I don't know, I am just saying. This has been a year, and should we take time to review how things have gone and I guess maybe if we had data, how many meetings have we had to cancel. I don't know necessarily, data. But just in general, have a rundown.

RANDALL BROWN: To my knowledge, today's education committee meeting is only the second meeting in all of these we had that I think a quorum wasn't eventually obtained. Potentially a third. I think one of our

executive director meetings had to be rescheduled as well. Two or three. Not a huge number considering how many meetings we had. But it is a problem that as a chair you constantly encounter in the zoom environment.

MARY TARVER: Well, that makes me feel better.

STEVEN NGUYEN: Honestly, I think a lot of that is just fatigue. Tired of being on zoom. This is the way of life now days.

RANDALL BROWN: I think you're right. A lot of fatigue setting in.

MARY TARVER: We're fun.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: I think we also have the challenges still with covid. I know in my household I have had kids quarantined multiple times, and then work schedule, and medical appointments juggling for everybody. It's difficult.

RANDALL BROWN: That's one of the reasons we talked about why we had, in the beginning, more fluid as far as what days we could have meetings is because of covid and its constraints. Which we can all agree, is not much better than it was a year ago when we looked at this. Or nearly a year now. So it's just a problem. I think going to be the new normal as long as we are on zoom for our business. But certainly acknowledge it's always fluid. We can always look at ways to change and improve how we carry out the business during this phase.

MARY TARVER: Thank you. I just wanted to prepare everybody for our Thursday meeting.

STEVEN NGUYEN: And ultimately, let me say, and I don't want to be the bad guy here cause we are all volunteers. I understand how much we all juggle, every member of the council has to juggle a lot normally, but in this environment in particular I think we all have a lot on our plate. Ultimately every member's responsibility. They know they are members of the committee. So we give them plenty of time, of notice as to when those meetings are. And usually those are conducted because we have asked in a poll, in most cases, who would be available. In some cases, not so

much with these standing committees. I know ad hoc committees always have a doodle poll and try to pick the times most people said they could attend to avoid this issue. Might just we send out a doodle poll before we schedule the next meeting. To send out a poll these are potential dates for the meeting. Are you available.

MARY TARVER: I think we will work on that for sure. I think a good suggestion. I do think the zoom it's great cause this is kind of what we were leaning and trying to figure out how to make work so people, the DD community could be part of the meeting. I think some big pluses.

RANDALL BROWN: Absolutely.

MARY TARVER: Sure we were reporting back in so y'all would know if any of our committees were having issues.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you for that. I hope y'all can reschedule at some point to have your meeting to get your work conducted.

MARY TARVER: Any of the new members of the council have decided what committees they were going to be on. And just looked at what our makeup of the committees are to make sure.

RANDALL BROWN: Right. One thing I was going to stress. This next meeting is the meeting I am going to bring that up. Give them time to consider what committees they would like. But before I officially appointment anyone, I always look at the makeup of each committee before I make it official. You have my pledge I will do that in this case for the new members as well. Although we want everyone to be where they feel like they can best contribute, also make sure everything is balanced the best we can. All right. So we will definitely look at sending out doodle polls before we schedule the standing committee meetings as we continue the zoom environment.

HANNAH JENKINS: Mike Billings has his hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: You have the floor.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: I just was looking at attendance

of this meeting and for the year prior to covid at our executive committee member meetings we would typically have maybe one to four members of the public would come to our meeting. And usually all from the commuting area of Baton Rouge. I don't know where all these attendees are from. But we definitely get a lot more via zoom, a lot more participation and we appreciate y'all.

RANDALL BROWN: We do. That's why I try to stress, thank everyone for attending. Because I do understand everyone is taking the time to be here, give their feedback and be an active part of the community and we welcome it. In doing so, we want to make sure we have quorums, legally necessarily to conduct our business. I think we can resolve what happened today if we just send out a doodle poll prior to us scheduling the meetings for the quarterly meetings. We do that mostly for every other meeting we do. I take a look at who says they are available and what days and try to see which one will most likely provide us the quorum we need before we schedule it. We can do the same for outstanding committees. We haven't, until today, needed to. I guess nearly a year later that is a success. Even though today, I am sorry y'all couldn't meet, Mary. But in general, I think it's going pretty well in terms of quorums and attendance for the quarterly meetings.

HANNAH JENKINS: You have a few public comments.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes. Read those for me.

HANNAH JENKINS: Sure. Ms. Bambi Polotzola says one member who in absent said she needed more notice in order to schedule off work.

RANDALL BROWN: Noted.

HANNAH JENKINS: Ms. Kathy said I love the accessibility of zoom. I would not be able to participate as the public. And Ms. Corohonda Corley asked when will a diversity committee be formed and start meeting?

RANDALL BROWN: The diversity committee will be formed very shortly after we finish the business of

this quarter. It's one of those things that is extremely important. One of those things I would like to ask for our vice chair if she graciously would chair for us. I would like to get with her to select the membership of that committee that is reflective of its work. I do apologize that it has not yet been done, but it's the first thing on my priority list for the next quarter, essentially. Start as soon as we conclude the business of these quarterly meetings. That is only because we ran, months before we ran out, the year before we ran out of things that are a priority to do. Certainly is a very big priority. Don't want it to get left behind. It will take center stage for me as soon as this quarterly meeting is concluded. Any other questions? Any other questions or comments? Okay.

COURTNEY RYLAND: I do not see any hands raised and I do not see any other chats in the chat box.

RANDALL BROWN: I thank you all for your time today. Thank you, committee, for your time and attention and feedback today. You are all extremely important to the work we do, and I appreciate you more than you know and more than I am able to tell you. This committee is very important to the work of the full council. And every one of you I know has a heart for the work and grateful for you and grateful to serve with you. To our public, we welcome you and welcome your feedback and thank you for being with us today. Hearing no other questions or comments, do I have a motion to adjourn?

STEVEN NGUYEN: I move that we adjourn.

RANDALL BROWN: Do I have a second motion to adjourn?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: I second.

RANDALL BROWN: Do I have any objection to our motion for adjournment? Seeing no objections, ladies and gentlemen we are adjourned. Thank you all.