Mike Billings called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM. A quorum was established.

Approval of the **January Meeting Summary** passed by unanimous consent.

**Non-Contractual Activities**

Jen Katzman shared updates on Act 421 Children’s Medicaid Option with the committee. More information about this program can be found on the [program’s website](https://www.youtube.com/user/LADDCouncil/videos). The [program application](https://www.youtube.com/user/LADDCouncil/videos) submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on September 1, 2020 is still pending approval. The department originally planned, pending approval from CMS, to open registration up in April 2021 with a program implementation date of May 2021. This timeline has been delayed. Total funding for this program ($27.2 million) was included in the Fiscal Year 22 (FY22) budget proposal. Questions about the program can be submitted to [421-CMO@la.gov](mailto:421-CMO@la.gov).

Ms. Katzman also shared the Medicaid renewal process has started, and service recipients need to be on the lookout for this information. Currently they are still maintaining all eligibility at this time, pending few exceptions, but some individuals may be receiving notice that they qualify for a different Medicaid program.

Julie Foster Hagan and Ms. Katzman also provided information about the current proposed budget. At this time, the budget is intact and no major cuts are being proposed. Included in the American Rescue Plan was a ten percent increase in the federal match for home- and community-based services. The department is awaiting
guidance on how these additional dollars can be used. There has been some
discussion about using some funding to ensure adults with intellectual and
developmental disabilities have comprehensive dental coverage and children who
require anesthesia for their dental treatments. It was also noted that the Biden
administration extended the public health emergency for an additional 90 days.

Ms. Hagan provided the committee with an update on the Appendix K exceptions. She
shared the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) held two listening
sessions earlier in the month to share plans for Home- and Community-Based (HCBS)
Waiver Services after the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency ends and to solicit
feedback on those plans. Over 200 individuals participated in the call for providers and
over 400 participated in the call for families and self-advocates. Many of the participants
expressed the need to continue the exception that allows close relatives to continue
serving as Direct Support Workers (DSW).

It was shared that 45% of waiver recipients have been vaccinated for COVID-19 with
17% remaining who want to receive the vaccines. Only 21% of the DSW workforce and
20% of support coordinators have been vaccinated. Ms. Hagan also shared the Office
of Community Partnerships and Health Equity within the Louisiana Department of
Health is hosting an upcoming webinar event discussing COVID-19 and its impact on
persons with disabilities and providers. This information session will be held on Friday,
April 23rd from 1:30 - 2:30 PM (flyer).

Ms. Hagan also provided an update on OCDD’s Developmental Disabilities Services
Visuals Workgroup. This workgroup was created to identify processes in the OCDD
service delivery system that may benefit from visual representations (i.e. flow charts,
mapping) with a goal to ensure visuals are developed in a manner that is easy for
individuals and families to understand so they may be better informed regarding what
steps should be taken to access OCDD services. She mentioned OCDD had plans to
update its website as well to make sure it was user friendly. More information about the
status of the workgroup can be found here.

**Contractual Activities**
The committee received multiple updates on contractual activities including Partners in
Policymaking (PiP), LaCAN, Families Helping Families Resource Centers (FHF) and
new initiatives of the Council that began with the Fiscal Year 2021 Action Plan.
Additional information about these activities can be found linked in the meeting agenda
and the Council’s quarterly Status Report under goals one and two.

Adrienne Thomas, PiP Coordinator, shared specific updates about the steps taken thus
far to ensure the 2020 class can resume virtually in 2021. PiP participant, Chrystina
Paolella, shared some of her classmates concerns for conducting PiP virtually and
requested they be allowed to resume classes in-person when it is safe to do so. Council
Chair Randall Brown acknowledged the concern and assured the committee he will
reach out to the Colleen Wieck, Minnesota’s Council Executive Director, to discuss how
their PiP class has been moving forward during the pandemic.
Marilee Andrews and Devika Rao (O’Neill Communications) discussed Council member concerns about the videos produced as part of Activity 1.4.3 specifically the lack of diversity and persons of color in the first video designed to introduce viewers to the Council. Ms. Rao stated a second video, which will expound upon the first video, is in production and includes diverse participants.

Dustin Chandler with Interaction Advisory Group (IAG) provided the committee with information about efforts to establish pilot programs in multiple regions across the state on first-responder tactics, approaches and resources in fostering relationships with and dealing with individuals with developmental disabilities and training for people with developmental disabilities on how to interact with first responders. Mr. Chandler stated they strive for at least two self-advocate and one parent advocate be included in the first responder trainings. Thus far, the trainings have been well received but the demand is greater than the monthly trainings currently included in the Council’s contract with IAG. Due to this demand, IAG has offered additional trainings at no expense to the Council. Concerns were noted about the outreach to promote such trainings statewide. Mr. Chandler provided his email address (dustin@interactionadvisorygroup.com) so those with questions, comments and concerns can contact him directly.

David Whalen with Niagra University also shared with the committee information about efforts to establish a training program on emergency preparedness and response relative to people with developmental disabilities. Those with questions can find more information at https://frdat.niagara.edu/ or email Mr. Whalen at dwhalen@niagara.edu.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM.