

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council  
Executive Committee

July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. By my watch it's 2:00. Do we have a quorum present?

AMY DEAVILLE: We do have a quorum.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you. Is there anyone we're waiting on?

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Mary Tarver has not signed on yet.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. We'll give her just a few minutes. Has she indicated she will be signing on or not?

AMY DEAVILLE: I haven't heard from her.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. We'll give, let's start at 2:05 if she doesn't sign on before that. Give her a few minutes.

Okay. Good afternoon. Is everyone now present?

AMY DEAVILLE: Yes. They are.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. Thank you. Thank you everybody and welcome to the quarterly meeting of the executive committee. I want to thank everyone for being here this afternoon. Our public visitors as well. Welcome. And this is the final meeting of this term of our officer ship, but I want to thank Jill Hano for agreeing to be appointed to serve as member at large for essentially this meeting. So, thank you very much for your willingness to serve today and in the future, I would hope. So let's dive into the business at hand. Can we put the agenda up on the screen for everyone to see, please?

AMY DEAVILLE: Yes, sir.

RANDALL BROWN: So, our welcome, we have taken care of. Our mission statement, if you could post that for us for everyone to see. All right. Our mission statement for the 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. And the virtual meeting protocols are as follows. Council meetings shall be accessible via Zoom and live steamed on YouTube. Council or committee members shall participate via Zoom and shall be considered present when they display a live video of their face, their first and last name. Have microphones muted unless called upon by the chairperson. Electronically raise their hand to request the chair recognize them to speak. Once recognized to speak by the chair, the microphone shall be turned on. After speaking, the microphone shall be returned to mute. Guests shall participate via Zoom or observe meetings 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 comments submitted during a meeting, or any format below shall be considered. During a Zoom meeting guests may electronically raise their hand to request to comment. Upon being recognized to speak by the chair their microphones should be turned on. After speaking the microphone 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 YouTube channel. Which you'll see linked there. 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. The chairperson will notify the executive committee of the occurrence. Council chair will seek guidance to determine if it is legally appropriate to redact or share the video of the meeting on the council's social media. So those are our virtual protocol meetings for today's meeting and every meeting that we have via Zoom. For everyone's knowledge as we begin today.

First order of business is the approval of the

April 21st, 2020 meeting summary that you see hyperlinked there. And I think everyone had an opportunity to review this already. It's provided in your packet that you were sent. So do I have, let me just ask it this way, I think it will be easier. Are there any objections or any changes needed to the meeting summary for April 21st, 2021? Are there any objections or any recommended changes to the meeting summary as it is written for April 21st, 2021? Hearing no objection and no call for changes, the summary is approved by unanimous consent and shall be entered into the record.

Okay. Our next order of business is the review of waiver requests that has been submitted by the Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge. Amy, would you live to give us detailed background on this matter?

AMY DEAVILLE: Sure. I just pulled the waiver request up. Can everyone see it?

RANDALL BROWN: Can you blow it up just a little bit.

AMY DEAVILLE: Is that better.

RANDALL BROWN: There we go. That's better, I think.

AMY DEAVILLE: We received a waiver request from Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge in regards to their new executive director Dr. Marilyn Thorten. The waiver request, as far as I can gather, is for whenever a Families Helping Families board is hiring a new executive director, but the new executive director does not quite meet the qualifications of being someone who is a family member of a person with a disability or an individual with a disability. And so, this waiver process was in place so that people could, so that boards could ask our executive committee to grant them a waiver and allow them to hire somebody who has the right knowledge and skill set, but just may not meet that criteria. So, what is on the screen right now is the waiver request that they submitted.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. She has already been hired for the position, am I correct, by the board of Greater

Baton Rouge Families Helping Families, is that correct?

AMY DEAVILLE: That is correct.

RANDALL BROWN: And she does not meet the requirement of being a family member or a person with a disability from, what I'm understanding, is that correct?

AMY DEAVILLE: That is correct.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. You said not quite meet when you were describing the reasons for a waiver. Is there any background do we know on the candidate? Did she once qualify and now may not or what?

AMY DEAVILLE: She identified as a person who was a family member of someone, and she was his direct caregiver. But he is recently deceased. And their justification, let's see, is kind of described in this. She has a PhD, and she was a strategic choice for the center. She has a wealth of knowledge, skills, diversity of expertise along with her maturity and compassion for the families we serve. And I'm just reading from this. And so, they felt like she was the strongest candidate for the position. Let's see. For many years Dr. Thorten was the direct caregiver of an immediate family member, her brother who was physically disabled. During law school she studied the rights of people with disabilities as a foundation to pursue legal advocacy on behalf of this population. And her direct experience as a caregiver of a family member with MS and other disabilities lends her world of experience that along with her other qualifications lead her to stand out heads and shoulders above the other candidates for the ED position.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. Thank you for that information. So how does the committee feel about the waiver request given the information we know?

EBONY HAVEN: Dr. McKee has her hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes. Madam vice chair, you have the floor.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Motion to accept the waiver request from Families Helping Families Baton Rouge for Dr. Marilyn Thorton.

RANDALL BROWN: Very well. We have a motion on the floor from the vice chair of the council to accept the waiver request from Greater Baton Rouge Families Helping Families for their new executive director. Do I have second to Dr. McKee's motion.

MICHEAL BILLINGS: I'll second.

RANDALL BROWN: I have a motion and a second. Do we have any further discussion?

HALIE BELIN: Brenda Cosse has her hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes. Brenda, you have the floor.

BRENDA COSSE: Good afternoon, executive committee. I was looking on the transcript following the meeting and it doesn't reflect the executive committee. My hand was raised before we got to this agenda item. Thank you. Can we have an introduction.

RANDALL BROWN: Sure. My apologies. We will do that after this vote, if you don't mind.

BRENDA COSSE: Thank you, chairman.

RANDALL BROWN: And so, is there any discussion of the motion on the floor? Okay. So, we have a motion made.

JILL HANO: Is this for region two, correct?

RANDALL BROWN: Correct. Greater Baton Rouge is region two. This is a vote for us to accept the waiver request they have asked us here in writing to accept. So, if you vote yes, you'll be accepting the waiver request. Having said that, is there any more discussion?

HALIE BELIN: Corhonda Corley has her hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, Ms. Corley. You have the floor.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Great afternoon and thank you so much Mr. Chairman. I have several questions that I just need to ask the executive committee to answer before they actually vote on that motion. Number one, what is the criteria for the individual to be hired as an ED of a Families Helping Families center. Number two, if we already have a person hired in this position that does not meet the criteria that needs an exception, then wouldn't it be prudent of that center

to submit that waiver prior to actually giving that person the job and having them in place. Number three, if this waiver is not approved, then what will you tell Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge. Would you tell them to fire their new ED and actually go back to the drawing board? Or would you tell them to have her serve as an interim until they can find a new ED that meets the criteria. So, I'm just asking these questions because I think that this is something from here on if the motion is approved by madam vice chair, then this is something the council need to put in place to make sure we never end up back in this same predicament.

RANDALL BROWN: I do believe you're correct. The preferred way of this happening would be for us to receive a request prior to their actual hiring of the candidate. However, covid being as it is and things being not exactly as they normally are, I do believe the vote, that's why I asked for clarification, has already happened and she is in place. She does seem to meet all the criteria with the exception of the one which is to be a family member or a person with a developmental disability or a disability. And she did meet that criteria initially. And so, I think the feeling is given that unfortunate turn of events, she seems to meet all other criteria set by that board. And to answer your questions, the criteria for who leads the centers is set by their board. And we have deliverables that we monitor. Obviously, want them to each meet in our contracts for deliverables with them. Greater Baton Rouge has so far and always done that to this point. And I think this is just a very unfortunate situation out of everyone's control both on the front of asking beforehand, and of course, her very unfortunate loss. Which we extend our public and heartfelt condolences to her for the loss of her brother. Which I would assume is fairly recent. And so, we certainly want to be compassionate to that loss. Having said that, I mean, if this vote passes then obviously the waiver is granted. If the waiver is not

granted, then we would discuss ways in which we could see that the criteria could be met. And if it could not be met, then we would have to figure out a way in which our deliverables might be affected by that. But they have made the decision as to who their ED is and will be. So, they have approached us in good faith and goodwill given the situation here. And although late, they do understand the process and are asking for our understanding here that they do believe her to still be their most qualified candidate. So, with all the information we have before us we now have a motion still on the floor. And I'll ask once again, do we have anymore comment on the motion? Hearing no comment on this motion, I'll call now for a vote on the matter. Are there any objections to the granting of this waiver, the approval of this motion to grant the waiver to Families Helping Families Greater Baton Rouge for the hiring of their new executive director? Does anyone object? Does anyone abstain? Does anyone abstain from the vote? Hearing no abstention, this motion carries unanimously.

JILL HANO: No. I abstain please, Randall.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. We'll mark you as having abstained. Amy, make sure that's noted that Jill abstains.

AMY DEAVILLE: Yes, sir.

RANDALL BROWN: So, the vote passes with a vote of near unanimous with one abstention. Now that concludes this matter of business at this time. So, Amy, would you please put on the screen our agenda so we can move to the next item. And so, the next item before us is to clarify the, what is that?

AMY DEAVILLE: The wording.

RANDALL BROWN: The language.

AMY DEAVILLE: Yeah.

RANDALL BROWN: The wording of subsequent waiver request.

AMY DEAVILLE: Yes.

RANDALL BROWN: In what way are you requesting the clarification?

AMY DEAVILLE: I actually think it's a really easy fix. Let's see. Let me find where it is. There is one part of wording here, and it might actually be further down, where it says that we are asking for a waiver, a waiver of the requirement on the DD Council for the executive director to be a family of or an individual with developmental disabilities. And then when it actually talks about that further in the document there's one part where it's confusing because it really should say that the person that the board has identified does not meet the requirements and is seeking the waiver. But the word not is not in there. So, if it's okay with the executive committee, I actually would like to work with LDH legal to just go over this document and make sure that it's very plain.

RANDALL BROWN: I think it's more than okay. I would suggest that actually.

AMY DEAVILLE: Okay.

RANDALL BROWN: So that we'll make sure that we have wording exactly legally correct for future requests. We also do need to make it clear to each of our FHF centers when they're requesting a waiver such as this, they need to make every effort to please have that request to us prior to an actual hiring, if and when possible. I understand covid has its restrains on us all. But I think that's something that you can make clear to each one in your weekly calls with them that when a waiver is needed, we understand that's why this process exist, but it does help us, the sooner we know it's needed, the better.

AMY DEAVILLE: Right. Okay.

HALIE BELIN: Randall, there's a comment in the chat from Kathy Dwyer. She said does a vote not go to the full council.

RANDALL BROWN: In this case it's not necessary because the council has previously given us, as the executive committee, the authority to handle this matter. Okay. And I do believe I did not stop to do introductions. And so, I apologize. And so, we'll do so at this point. I'm Randall Brown, chair of the



council and head of the executive committee. And as I call on each one of you, please state your name. Mike Billings.

MICHEAL BILLINGS: I'm Michael Billings. I am a parent of multiple children with disabilities from region two and serve as the chair of the self-determination and community inclusion committee.

RANDALL BROWN: All right, sir. Ms. Mary Tarver.

MARY TARVER: Mary Tarver. I'm a from region six in Alexandria. And I am the chairperson of the employment and education committee.

RANDALL BROWN: Ms. Jill Hano.

JILL HANO: Hi. I'm Jill Hano, a self-advocate from region ten and the member at large of the Louisiana DD Council.

RANDALL BROWN: And thank you very much for agreeing to serve in that role, Jill.

JILL HANO: Of course.

RANDALL BROWN: Last, but certainly not least, is our vice chair Dr. Hyacinth McKee.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Greetings everyone. Hyacinth McKee. I'm a family member and a parent of someone with a disability and I'm a vice chairperson.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you very much. Do we have any members of the public who would like to extend a greeting and be acknowledged?

AMY DEAVILLE: Brenda Cosse has her hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes. Brenda, you have the floor.

BRENDA COSSE: Good afternoon. Brenda Cosse. Parent, council member. Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you, Brenda. Thank you for your service. Is there anyone else present who would like to be acknowledged?

AMY DEAVILLE: Kathy Dwyer has her hand raised.

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

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Randall. Kathy Dwyer, chair of the Louisiana OCDD State Advisory Committee. I also wanted to correct my question. I made a typo

when I asked about, I did not mean to say does it not go to the council. I asked does it now go to the council. I wasn't sure of the procedure.

RANDALL BROWN: At this point the matter has been settled.

KATHY DWYER: Right. I heard you. I wasn't questioning that it should. I just didn't know what the procedure was. That's all.

RANDALL BROWN: I appreciate your clarification. And as always, thank you for your participation and feedback Ms. Kathy.

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Randall.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. Is there anyone else who would like to be acknowledged from our public today before we proceed? And my deepest apologies for jumping right into business and not doing formal welcomes at the beginning. Hearing none, I think we can safely move forward on the agenda. Okay. And so, our next item is the chat feature for future council and committee meetings. And that's the presence of the chat box during council and committee meetings. We decided, if the committee will recall and for Jill's benefit since she's new to the board today, we had decided to try our last quarterly meeting, which was the April 2021 quarterly meeting, without the use of the chat box. I didn't hear any negative feedback from it not being enacted and we did finish a little bit ahead of schedule which is very unusual for a full council meeting. And I will say as your chair who has to do his best, as you see today, I'm not the greatest at managing a number of things as we move forward trying to manage a meeting on Zoom. There's a lot of components to it. I'm not always the greatest at making sure things go as smoothly as they could or should. I'll take my responsibility there. Doing the best I can. But I can tell you that running a full meeting, quarterly meeting with 20 some council members present on average as well as members of the public. I think at one point in time last meeting we had upwards of some 70 people whose screens were available and

could potentially be active. And so, the chat box feature is something that if I as your chair am running quarterly meeting it's very difficult for me to monitor, I'll be honest. Because you're having, as chair, to keep control of a number of factors to keep the meeting flowing and going appropriately as best we can with Roberts rules of order being our guide and ideal. But I will say, it adds a very challenging component when the chat box is active. And I do recognize that it does have its advantages. We can share links, we can do things of that nature. I had asked for that to be tried because we had not tried to do it without it. That's my prospective on it. It's now up for debate for us to discuss about the future of its use. And, of course, this only relates to, or more mostly relates to our use of it during Zoom. I will open the floor to comments or questions on the issue.

HALIE BELIN: There's a comment from Charlie Michel. It says would you consider making someone a cohost so that person can monitor the chat box. This would allow the public to make comments in a public meeting.

RANDALL BROWN: We have previously done that Charlie. In fact, at every one of our meetings that's what I have done other than the last meeting which we tried just to see how efficient and how it would work without it. And so that's why this is here just to give feedback on how we thought that went or if we think it should be reinstated. It has been active during the committee meetings. It was just asked to be withdrawn from the last quarterly meeting just to get a sense of how it might go because we had always tried it. We built the protocols from scratch for Zoom as the pandemic fell upon us and so we had not tried it without the use of the chat box. And so, if we decide to reinstate it, that's exactly what we will do. A staff member will assist me in keeping track of the chat. And was there another question, I'm sorry, or comment.

AMY DEAVILLE: Mr. Billings has his hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, Mr. Billings. You have the floor, sir.

MICHEAL BILLINGS: Thank you. I liked in the April council meeting, I thought it flowed smoothly. And in our regular other different committee meetings, and I had one this morning, the self-determination community inclusion meeting. Even a meeting that's scheduled for two hours and a much smaller gathering it's very difficult to chair the meeting and keep up with comments and folks raising their hands even with staff helping. And it's hard to keep the meeting on pace and not fall behind.

RANDALL BROWN: I'm glad I'm not the only one who shares that viewpoint in the matter.

MICHEAL BILLINGS: And it's very difficult especially on Zoom because folks take, they schedule out the time for the meeting and then if you run over you get into time conflicts and people have to drop off, you lose your quorum.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, sir.

MICHEAL BILLINGS: It gets very difficult.

RANDALL BROWN: Well, thank you, sir, for that feedback. Are there any other comments or questions?

AMY DEAVILLE: A number of people have their hand raised. Dr. McKee, Kathy Dwyer, Corhonda Corley.

RANDALL BROWN: We're going to go with the committee members first. So, Dr. McKee.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, for acknowledging me. I would like to cosign on what Mike is saying. It is a challenge and I want to say that we as DD council members and individuals that have to chair these meetings have come a long way from when we first started in this covid 19 pandemic reality of trying to engage in Zoom virtual meetings and Robert's rule of order. This executive committee has offered trainings from a professional parliamentarian to help us better utilize Robert's rule of order as well as engage in virtual committee meetings. A lot this executive committee has done. And there's a lot that needs to be said about the leadership of the chair for

allowing this to happen. So, we have come a long way. And so, we are wanting to make sure that we are keeping in mind that we are providing the right accommodations for individuals. But we also welcome public comment to help us do this.

RANDALL BROWN: Absolutely.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Again, it's very challenging to chair a meeting and also monitor that chat box. And so, at this time I'm asking the public to give us comments whenever our chair acknowledges them but give us some that we can work with so we can better help you. But keep in mind that we are, it is a challenge for us as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

RANDALL BROWN: Absolutely. I want to make clear, we're here to serve our community. We know that we're committed to that. And we're not in any way trying to silence voices or anything of the sort. And we absolutely love to have everyone's input and comments. But it is a very difficult challenge. And we're just being frank about it and honest. And so having said that, I will now ask about the comments from the public.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Kathy Dwyer has her hand raised.

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

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Randall. I find (inaudible) accommodations for people with disabilities, especially those with communication challenges. So, I think disabling the chat would be taking away another accommodation. And I certainly understand the challenges with running the meeting. I had the same when I run the state committee. What we're experiencing is with Zoom it's making meetings more accessible to more of the public. Which is what we want. So, I think it's just something we're going to have to learn to somehow deal with, assign somebody to be a cohost and help monitor it and just do the best we can. But not take away that accommodation--.

RANDALL BROWN: Not to cut you off. I'm sorry. But as I stated before, we tried one meeting where this

was an option. Every meeting we've had from the very beginning all the way through. I've lost count, but every single meeting. And that's exactly what we do is the staff does assist me in reading the chat. And so, if we agree that the chat box stays then that's what continues is we allow the chat box to be there, and a staffer or group of staffers helps me tomorrow. Because it's a monumental challenge on quarterly meeting days. Helps me tomorrow in doing that as best I can.

KATHY DWYER: Well, if someone is not able to speak, they won't be able to communicate.

RANDALL BROWN: Understood.

KATHY DWYER: I think it would be a big mistake disabling the chat just for that very purpose. That would be sort of like not allowing sign language interpreters.

RANDALL BROWN: I understand. Thank you for the feedback.

KATHY DWYER: You're welcome.

AMY DEAVILLE: Dr. McKee has her hand raised.

HYACINTH MCKEE: No. I need to take it down. I'm sorry.

RANDALL BROWN: Other public comment.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Corhonda Corley has her hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, Ms. Corley.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I actually have to agree with Ms. Dwyer and with Dr. Michel as they both stated. Also, I think that we may need to consider having legal to make sure that we are complying with open meeting law and Robert rules of order if we were to eliminate the chat box.

RANDALL BROWN: I already consulted with them on the question and that was up to our discretion. That's why this is on the agenda.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Okay. I wasn't through though. Hold on one second.

RANDALL BROWN: I understand. But I was answering your question.

CORHONDA CORLEY: I think we need to consult with them as it relates to not only that, but also with ADA American Disabilities Act. Because we have a plethora of people that do try to attend our meetings that actual utilizes the chat in a way in which it is beneficial. Additionally, as Mr. Billings stated, we did have self-determination meeting earlier today and a lot of documents, a lot of links as the meeting progressed were posted in the chats. So if the chats are eradicated then how will gain access to that pertinent information as it is discussed and then finally made accessible to the public. Unless the DD Council is. ng to make sure that all documents and all information that is discussed and that is going to be discussed is provided to the public on the DD Council website in advance then we do need the chat. Last but not least, I know that Dr. Charlie stated to add a cohost. I think the problem is that we have a large number of vacancies in our staff right now with our DD Council.

RANDALL BROWN: That is a problem.

CORHONDA CORLEY: And I believe that in the time being right now as a solution we can utilize some of the contracts that we have that we're paying moneys to right now to actually help us. I do believe we're still paying Lighthouse a contract. Why don't we utilize them right now to help us make sure that we are doing our meetings in ADA compliance, and they can actually monitor the chats. They can actually help with the chat and help our skeleton staff that we're working with right now until we actually employ the individuals that we need to actually be in our council. So, I think that could be an easy temporary fix for the time being until our new ED actually hires some more people.

RANDALL BROWN: All right. Well, I thank you very much for those suggestions. Are there any other comments?

AMY DEAVILLE: Brenda Cosse

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

BRENDA COSSE: Good afternoon. Brenda Cosse, parent member, Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council. My question is what is the purpose of the chat feature. My second question is, is it any different from the Q and A and when did the Q and A feature no longer become available. Thank you.

RANDALL BROWN: The Q and A feature and the chat box feature are essentially nearly identical features in terms of how our meetings run. So, it was utilized at last meeting some. But I think that if you have one, you essentially you have the access of the other. In that you have the ability to get word to us through typing it out. I would point out that prior to Zoom we did not have this much accessibility and we're proud to have had it. I just have to be clear that it's a challenge to do this. So, bear with us. We hear our public and we're sensitive to it. So, it would just continue if we so move to have the chat box then we will continue as we have done for the past 16 months of meetings as best we can do it tomorrow. Any other questions or comments?

AMY DEAVILLE: Bambi Polotzola has her hand raised.

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

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Hi, this is Bambi Polotzola. I am all for accessibility, but I think that if we think back to the way we operated in person people would be at a meeting and at the end of a discussion item people could line up and go to the mike and express their concern. There wasn't this, the chat feature gives this opportunity for this endless stream of comments. Like I have to stop myself from not posting my comments that I'm saying right now in the chat and just waiting my turn like I would if I was at the public meeting. Now people need accessibility just like there's an example of ASL interpreters. They can make that request and that would be provided. If someone needs to be able to use the chat feature or use some typing feature because they can't speak that should be requested and should be provided. But to let everybody have an endless opportunity to have their stream of



thoughts in a chat is consuming the council. And I think the council members are, it's just too much on, it's too difficult to get through meetings with that type of input. I think there has to be a process and the process can mirror the process that we had in public. Except--.

RANDALL BROWN: I don't mean to cut you off at all, Bambi. Thank you for your comment. Why I wanted to try it this way is because it did mirror exactly or near as we could get it to how the actual council meetings run in person. And that is to have comment at the end of discussion of a topic. Or as we move to a topic and then call for discussion to have people called upon the chair is the way the meeting runs. It's just the chat box allows for an extemporaneous conversation without the acknowledgment of the chair, so it's allowed. That's been fine, but it does create a distraction for the person, whoever that may be trying to chair, particularly tomorrow's meeting when we have everyone present and there's tons of information shared. And it's a wonderful thing in terms of dissemination of information and I agree with that. And that's why I've been reluctant before our last meeting. But the reason I finally brought it up was because we will be looking at what we do post pandemic. And how we meet the challenges of the greatness of the Zoom openness that we have experienced while we try to keep the meeting running according to Roberts rules of order. To be honest with you, I have not really followed it as I should. I have allowed more back and forth in the chat to have say because I do believe so strongly in all of us having our say and love having everyone present and having their voices heard. But I mean it is a challenge. Tomorrow will be a challenge to get the meeting done in a way that is appropriate for the business at hand. We have a lot of business tomorrow that's all very important. And so, it's just important for us to get a sense of what this begins to look like. Obviously, the pandemic is not over for us. We're still in the public health emergency. And as

long as we are we're meeting this way. And so, but I think to try and to test and adjust the process is not in any way to try and cut folks off or silence voices. That's not it. What we want is the best possible outcome where we can get the business done in a judicious, timely manner with quorums because I have a very hard time getting quorums for our meetings to even be conducted now. And I think it's because of how long our meetings tend to run. And the chat plays a big feature in why that is. And so, I'm just being honest with you. That's just what we have found in the 16 months of doing this work this way. And without quorums then, obviously, we can't conduct business. And so, it's just something we have to address and it's not an issue that brings us great joy. I mean we want to hear everyone. Have everyone available where we can. But Bambi rightly said, and we put this in all of our communication that we do make public about our meeting, is if you need accommodation to request it. And when it is requested accordingly it is granted. I have never not granted an ADA request that was asked of me as your chair in the last 16 months and would not start now. We're going to follow the law. So, this is just a question of basically housekeeping. How do we continue to allow the openness we have now become accustomed and is a great thing, but allow us as chairpersons and us as committee members to go about the business in a timely way that's efficient?

AMY DEAVILLE: Mr. Billings has his hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, Mike. You have the floor, sir.

MICHEAL BILLINGS: Randall, I concur with everything you just said, and I would like to bring attention just looking at this meeting right now we have 28 participants at this meeting. Before covid at an executive committee meeting, including staff, committee, and public we might have had ten.

RANDALL BROWN: Correct.

MICHEAL BILLINGS: So, this Zoom has opened up considerable for council members, public.

RANDALL BROWN: And we love that.

MICHEAL BILLINGS: We do. We really do. And we appreciate the feedback and the comments. But at a full committee meeting we really need to come up with some type of compromise there. If we're not going to do no chat, then we need to have a period of chat and a time period of chat. Otherwise, I don't say how we keep the meeting on schedule and on pace. That's just my opinion. Once again, I really, really like the Zoom format because it is so available for everyone across the state. That's all.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you, sir.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Hano has her hand raised.

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

JILL HANO: A few things. Because I completely understand with our public how this is kind of like, this is the only form of communication for our public. And I completely agree with Bambi because if I'm not mistaken in the beginning when we first started doing these Zoom protocols the chat feature was set up exactly like the line for public comment. My understanding the chat feature is supposed to be a substitute for public comment. And it is helpful like I believe Ms. Corhonda said. It's very helpful cause when a committee member or a public member request a meeting link it's easy to just put it in the link in the chat. But I do on the flip side I think it has gotten out of hand. Like I was in a committee last week and I couldn't even relate the chats to the....

RANDALL BROWN: Discussion.

JILL HANO: Thank you. So just throwing it out there. As much as I hate to say this, can we limit chats to like okay five or six we'll read out loud and then if it doesn't pertain to the subject at hand, it will not be read or be read at like maybe the end of the meeting.

RANDALL BROWN: The only issue I would have with that is lot of things get posted and said throughout our meeting. And so, you'll have probably another hour of reading public comments if you did it all at the end

on a day like tomorrow. It's a lot of comments. It's a lot of sharing. And it's not a bad thing. It's not a bad thing at all. It's a question of logistics and time. It's a question of keeping things germane. Like you said, you had trouble keeping up with what was relevant to discussion and what was not. That's causing our work to take longer and have more of a negative effect on our members as in leaving the meeting worn out or so. We understand we're here to serve. We all have a heart for service, I do believe, in this work. I'm not at all complaining. But just being honest, tomorrow is a lot. Tomorrow is a lot for every member. But as your chair, I mean, it's a lot of work. And I'll commit to do it. If we decide that's what we do, then I'll continue to do as I've been doing, and we will proceed.

JILL HANO: Now this is a large ask, but there's got to be a way to hear the public, but not get caught up. There's got to be a happy median to this issue. I just don't know where that would quite be.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes. I don't know. I mean it's a difficult balance to strike. The only suggestion I would have if we're going to keep it, we keep it and we move forward like we've been doing. To try to reinvent the wheel on it I don't think there's a need. It's a question of do we keep or not. Is it active at quarterly meetings or not? And so that's up to this committee to decide.

AMY DEAVILLE: There are some comments in the chat feature. I'll just read through those really quick. Bambi Polotzola said I really liked the protocols for the April meeting. Steven Nguyen said will another accommodation be provided for those who need/prefer writing in their questions/comments. Ashley McReynolds says what if the person is Deaf or has a communication disability and their only way to communicate is by typing in the chat. They will no longer be able to participate. Kelly Monroe said I agree Kathy. And Susan SWLA said I agree with Kathy.

RANDALL BROWN: Understood.

AMY DEAVILLE: And Susan has her hand raised.

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

SUSAN: Thanks, Randall. I appreciate being able to speak. That is what I want to speak about is that I've been around for just a little bit and been to many council meetings over the years. And in the last 16 months those of us who have always been in the audience, speaking for some of us, I feel like we've had the chance to express our feelings much more frequently. And that could be both good and bad. So, what I was thinking was perhaps you keep the chat, but not answer questions as they come in. Perhaps like Bambi was speaking earlier about at the end of each subject and only if they're germane to that topic. Kind of like I believe you did that in April it went a little smoother. Because I understand everybody's exhausted when they leave the meetings even though they're on Zoom. But I never left a council meeting in person not exhausted either.

RANDALL BROWN: I understand that. And let me be clear, I appreciate so much your feedback and I'm happy to hear that you think this is a good thing. That you've enjoyed the openness cause you have been with us a while and I really appreciate you speaking up today and giving that feedback. I appreciate all of you doing so. Please don't think I don't. Having said that, are there any other comments or questions.

AMY DEAVILLE: One other comment in the chat from Melinda. Then there are the people who have problems with internet connections being able to type is clearer. And I believe that is it for questions and comments.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. All right. So, hearing everything we've heard how does the committee feel about the issue? What if, let me throw this as a suggestion, what if at the beginning of say tomorrow's meeting we put out an email of say, I don't know, one of the staffers who will be staffing tomorrow and say if you need to have the accommodation of being able to type your comment please email your comment to said

staffer at this email address. And then like I did in April at the end of each agenda item we would address, I'd call for topics that are related to that item, I'd call for comments related to that item and then the staffer could read comments that are germane and related to that item at hand. Would that be agreeable compromise?

JILL HANO: I like that.

RANDALL BROWN: And then for those who don't need the accommodation for typing what you would then do is then wait when I call for public comment on each item just like we do at the public meetings and then everyone would raise their hand. And again, staff will help me keep track of whose hands are raised just as they're doing today and have done at every meeting. And we will do our best to make sure everyone gets heard the same way they do at a council meeting. Is everyone agreeable to that as a solution perhaps?

MARY TARVER: Randall, this is Mary. I don't know if we send out an email today that we can implement this tomorrow. But I do think that we can continue to monitor the emails like we've been doing. And like you said, just do it the way we did it in April which was at the end looking at the comments and, you know, that that makes sense to me. I don't know if an email today will help us for tomorrow.

RANDALL BROWN: Well, it may not. And let me be clear, this is not just about tomorrow. This would be about every Zoom council meeting we would have into the future. What this item would set the precedent for meetings related to our Zoom protocols as long as we're meeting under Zoom protocols. So, you're right and correct in that we might have a problem making sure that everyone's aware. But we would announce it at the beginning of the meeting and throughout the meeting. I would be sure to make a note to announce that if you need to type your comment to us as an accommodation to please, you know, submit it to this email and that would be something we would do not just tomorrow, but if this becomes the norm that would be part of the

protocol.

AMY DEAVILLE: Michael Billings has his hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, Mike.

MICHEAL BILLINGS: Hey, Randall. The idea of an email address is a good one. However, you might want to consider a generic email address for that.

RANDALL BROWN: I was just throwing it out there as a possibility. We could certainly set that up. I don't know about tomorrow. But we could certainly get that done for future meetings.

MICHEAL BILLINGS: That way the email address doesn't change. It's consistent.

RANDALL BROWN: I agree with that. Thank you for that idea.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Hey, Randall. This is Brenton. I'm not able to raise a hand since I'm listed as a cohost. Just as staff I do want to express some concerns with the email idea. Essentially if people are sending us an email, we're doing the same thing by reading emails as we would by reading the chat. The only thing is it's going to add an additional complication on our part because now we have to go out of Zoom to collect these emails and go into a different program.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you for that feedback.

BRENTON ANDRUS: If the idea is to continue with getting written comments, then I think you just need to leave the chat in place.

RANDALL BROWN: I agree with you. I think we boil down to do we keep it or not. I think we keep it. If we keep it, we just keep it the way we've been doing it. I do like I did in April, and I call for staff to read the comments that are germane to the topic that I'm asking about. I think that's the fastest, fairest way to continue to do it.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Yeah. I would say if we're keeping chats, just keep it in the chat as opposed to that email option. It's just going to get really complicated.

RANDALL BROWN: Sure. It adds an extra step for you guys. I understand that.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Thank you.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you, sir.

AMY DEAVILLE: Brenda Cosse has her hand raised.

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

BRENDA COSSE: Chairman Brown, is the email a part of our records.

RANDALL BROWN: It would be, yes. Pardon me. I didn't catch that last comment, Brenda.

AMY DEAVILLE: She asked if the chat was part of our records.

RANDALL BROWN: I mean essentially, yes. It's part of the public meeting and it's recorded just like every other part of the meeting is for the day. So, everything that gets read from the chat and shared with the chat is part of the public record, yes. As it should be.

BRENDA COSSE: But then that means that we would have to read every chat in order for it to be recorded.

RANDALL BROWN: Well, no because you have to read things, cause people have conversations in the chat tomorrow. I mean essentially providing information between one another. Also, it's not just providing for the group, there are conversations that occur. You know, at time. It's things that are germane to the topic is what we want to share and need to share. I've already talked to legal about that. That's how I've always try do it and continue to strive to do it. But everything that is germane to the topics is shared during the meeting. So yes, it becomes part of public record.

BRENDA COSSE: Thank you. And please clarify that on the full council meeting. And as a council member and I'm listening and I'm trying to weigh administrative responsibilities and accessibility, I think is what we're talking about or accommodations or hearing from the public. I don't want us to do anything that limits the public.

RANDALL BROWN: Understood.



BRENDA COSSE: I'm getting a little emotional, chairman. Because the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council is one of the few venues that we are given the liberty to express ourselves as stakeholders who are self-advocates, parents.

RANDALL BROWN: We love you too.

BRENDA COSSE: Parents and family members. Thank you.

RANDALL BROWN: We love you too. Okay. And so, is there anymore conversation or discussion on the issue?

AMY DEAVILLE: Kathy Dwyer has her hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, Ms. Kathy.

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Randall. Perhaps when you're reading some of the housekeeping rules in the beginning add something about limit chat to questions or comments to the subject at hand. And, you know, ask that the conversations be held elsewhere.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you for that suggestion.

KATHY DWYER: You're welcome.

RANDALL BROWN: It's appreciated. okay. Is there any other comment?

AMY DEAVILLE: I'm not seeing any.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. So given all we've heard today and thank you everyone for your comment and feedback. You're all important to us and please know that. How do we feel about the issue? Speaking to the executive committee, how do y'all feel about the issue given the discussion we've had on it today?

AMY DEAVILLE: Dr. McKee has her hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, madam vice chair. You have the floor.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Given the overwhelming response from the public it appears it is still the public's preference to allow the chat feature to remain as an option for us when we're conducting meetings. I am always in full support of what the public is asking for us to do. I have a tendency to always align myself with the public even when it, at times, it may be personally uncomfortable for us to manage.

RANDALL BROWN: I try to do the same.

HYACINTH MCKEE: As DD Council members as well as administrators. I do want to ask the executive committee to consider having this chat feature still being there given some stipulations, including some of the recommendations that I've heard from the public. One in which having a staff member monitor the chat and make sure that the information that's coming through the chat box is pertinent to the topic at hand. Then also too to consider, and I'm not sure if Zoom allows this, but allowing the chat feature to be where the comments are only directed to the panelist. And I don't know if it can minimize or eliminate that side bar conversation between different people. For instance, when we're in a live format of a council meeting, we as council members cannot engage inside bar conversations when topics are taking place. So, I'm not sure if Zoom or there is some type of way in which Zoom could eliminate that option to engage inside bar chat conversations.

RANDALL BROWN: I think it's very difficult.

HYACINTH MCKEE: I'm not sure.

RANDALL BROWN: I think we've tried over the period of some months and it's difficult. I think the way to do that is to just acknowledge the topics that are germane and not acknowledge the topics that are not

HYACINTH MCKEE: Okay. Cause I'm not sure if that's a disabling feature. For instance, like I can't engage in a sidebar conversation with Jill in the chat. So, I'm not sure if that's something Zoom--.

RANDALL BROWN: We will certainly look into it. I know we have in the past and we, of course, we had to start from scratch as everyone knows and everyone, I'm sure, can relate when we were learning all of this. So, we can go back and play with it and try. It won't necessarily be ready for tomorrow, but we can certainly look at ways to try and mitigate that. But I have to concur the overwhelming majority of our comment today has been positive for it to remain. I have no issue with doing so. It's just a discussion we needed to have with relation to how to keep things running

smoothly so we serve everyone in a way that is both productive and helpful.

HYACINTH MCKEE: So, with that my motion is to keep the chat feature for future virtual council and committee meetings with a staff being assigned to monitor the chat.

MICHEAL BILLINGS: I'll second the motion.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. I have a motion from the vice chair as she eloquently stated there. And a second from Mike. Do I have any abstentions? Does anybody abstain? Before I call for a vote, do I have any comment on the motion? Hearing no comment, do I have any objections to the motion? Okay. Hearing no objection, the motion has carried unanimously. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Okay. So, thank you all for that debate and let's move to our next item. And that is to review the public comment for the federal fiscal year 2022 action plan. Is that correct, Amy?

AMY DEAVILLE: Yes, sir. There was only one public comment. Can you see it on the screen now?

RANDALL BROWN: Can you blow it up a little bit more.

AMY DEAVILLE: I can.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. And so that comment is?

AMY DEAVILLE: The comment is from Margaret Best that says the plan is good. Need to address trainings for the DSW.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. Thank you for that. So that is the one public comment we received from having the plan out for public comment for the required number of days. Is there any discussion of that by the committee? Any comments or feedback with regard to it? Okay. Hearing none, we will move to the next item on our agenda, and this is the reallocation.

AMY DEAVILLE: I'm sorry, chair. Kathy Dwyer raised her hand.

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

KATHY DWYER: I'm sorry. I was having problems with my clicker. That one comment you received about

training for DSW, and I would like to expand on that a little bit by saying we need to establish a career path for DSWs. Be it at various certification levels or something so that they have something to look forward to in terms of promotions and so forth to better themselves.

RANDALL BROWN: Your suggestion is dually noted. Thank you.

KATHY DWYER: You're welcome.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. So, the next item, if there's no further comment for the public comment of 2022 action plan. The next item on our agenda for today is the reallocation of fiscal year 2021 funds from Puerto Rico. Would you care to elaborate on that for us Amy?

AMY DEAVILLE: Yes. This is actually just more of an announcement. There will be an allotment of funds from the Puerto Rico DD Council. And we are supposed to know more about the amount that we will receive probably in August or September. So, we will have more funds coming in.

RANDALL BROWN: That's great news. We certainly have plenty of places we can apply them. So, we will deal with that once we know exactly how much we'll be receiving. But that's certainly great news. We will be receiving extra funds. Thank you to our brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico for the gift. Okay. Are there any other comments with regards to that item? Hearing none, our next one is I need to let everyone, make everyone aware that diversity and equity and inclusion ad hoc committee was finally able to meet and begin its first meeting. And Amy, I do believe you have some information with regard to a motion they prepared.

AMY DEAVILLE: I do.

RANDALL BROWN: To put up before us. Okay. As everyone might remember, and our vice chair graciously chaired this committee, so I'll yield the floor to her in a moment. As everyone is probably aware who's a regular attendee of our meetings a year ago or more, we

decided this was a need and we asked for the formation of an ad hoc committee at a council meeting. And so we very loosely gave them instructions and they spent the better part of two hours about a week or so ago and this was what they came up with for what they see as their path to begin that work to be productive and have a say in terms of equity and diversity and inclusion for our council so that we can become better at doing what it is we're here to do. And so, I'll stop speaking so much on the matter and just let it speak for itself. Madam vice chair, since you chaired the committee, would you care to give feedback on what we see before us?

HYACINTH MCKEE: Greetings and thank you, Mr. Chair. Committee members, council members, and members of the public what we have before us is a motion to the executive committee to consider expanding the purpose of the DEI committee. Back in July of 2020, I believe, when the diversity, equity and inclusion committee was formulated it was formulated on a very small purpose. And the purpose at the time was just to engage in discussion and dialogue around issues as it relates to diversity, equity and inclusion. It did not expand into this great depth until recently. The purpose also July 2020 was to establish an antiracist statement. The DD Council at that very meeting established an antiracist statement. So, part of that purpose was already fulfilled at the same time in which the committee was formulated. So moving forward the DEI committee is recommending to the executive committee to expand the purpose. the DEI committee to include the following. Make recommendations to the executive committee for consideration regarding the following be the purpose of the DEI committee. Addressing all emerging issues with regard to diversity, equity and inclusion meeting on an as needed basis. Supporting advocacy efforts for diversity, equity and inclusion to enhance cultural competence and create an overall inclusive culture for people of color, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual identity and orientation,

religion, and diverse language speakers. Establishing, implementing, revising and revisiting policies that promote diversity, equity and inclusion that are aligned with the DD Act. And adapting to diversity embedding an institutionalized knowledge of diversity, equitable practices inclusive of culture competence and cultural humility in council policies, procedures and practice and dedicating resources to policies, structures, practices and procedures to support DEI in the mission and the work of the council. So, we offer, and we request the executive committee consider expanding the purpose of the diversity, equity and inclusion committee to reflect this request.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you. And so, ladies and gentlemen of the committee you have before you the ad hoc committee for diversity, equity and inclusions suggestions for what they would like to have the ability to do for us in future. And correct me if I'm wrong, but didn't we say we would like to meet on a quarterly schedule just as the council does its regular business?

HYACINTH MCKEE: That is correct, Mr. Chair. We did have engaging dialogue of recognizing that emerging is something right now that is very real and what's happening right now. So, the word emerging requires us to meet when there are emergent issues. And we felt strongly as a DEI committee that what's happening right now as it relates to the DD Council as well what's happening statewide and nationally and globally is considered emerging. Therefore, the DEI committee felt that it was important that we at this time meet quarterly around the same time in which all other committee meetings are being taken place.

RANDALL BROWN: Correct. And what we will also do is in future should issues related to these topics that would fall under this then you would simply ask for a meeting of a formation of this committee and the meeting scheduled for it for emerging issues into the future as well. Am I correct about that?

HYACINTH MCKEE: That is correct.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. So, this is the work the committee produced for us. And so, what is the feel of the committee. We don't need a second for this motion since it comes out of committee. So, what is the feel of the executive committee on what is presented here?

MARY TARVER: This is Mary.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, Mary.

MARY TARVER: I had a question like how would the group decide what needed to be addressed? You know, how does stuff get fed into their group?

RANDALL BROWN: From being there in the discussion I think it would be as we are made aware of an issue that's related to it. As the executive committee be made aware or the council would be made aware, then the chair of the council would then call upon the committee either in its current form or if it needs to be reformed, since it's an ad hoc, to address that particular issue that's been brought to us with regard to diversity, equity and inclusion.

MARY TARVER: Okay. Thank you.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you. So, are we all in agreement that this motion from the committee, we concur? We agree? Or is there more discussion needed?

AMY DEAVILLE: Charlie Michel has his hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes. Charlie, you have the floor.

CHARLIE MICHEL: Hi there, Randall and everybody. I have no issues with the content or anything. But that second bullet right there I was reading it, mines more of a grammatical thing. If you look at what it says supporting advocacy efforts for diversity, equity and inclusion to enhance cultural competence and create an overall inclusive culture for people of color. Here's where I have a problem grammatically. It doesn't seem like ethnicity, gender identity, sexual identity and orientation, religion and diverse language speakers necessarily follow the form. And I don't have any idea, cause I'm just looking at this right now. But something to the effect of and create an overall inclusive culture for color, people of different ethnicities, and I don't know what the best way, you

know, different gender identities. But there needs to be something else to tie the form in together, otherwise it just seems grammatically awkward. That's just me. And the second thing is will this committee be working, will one of the missions be to obtain the cultural diversity that is required of the DD Council? I know y'all have been struggling with that for several years.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes. They would be helping us to address it. It's something we have to address already. But yes. It would fall in their purview to help us to do so. Yes, sir.

CHARLIE MICHEL: Okay. That's the only two points. One was grammar, the other was a question. Thank you.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you, sir. Any other comments with relation to the motion before us? Speaking to my committee, are we in agreement with the motion as it stands? It's a motion from committee so we don't need a second. So, I guess what I'm asking is are we all in agreement, is there any objection to this motion being passed out of committee today?

MARY TARVER: No. I approve.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. So, there's no objection. Is there any abstention? Does anyone obtain?

JILL HANO: Not I.

RANDALL BROWN: Okay. So, the motion carries unanimously. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. There's one more issue not listed here. And now that that has been approved, we can move forward. And thank you for that work madam vice chair and pass our thanks onto the committee, please. And that is the youth leadership forum also met after this agenda was put together just last week and they came up with what their parameters are for their work also. And so again, they are formed by this committee for the purpose of a youth leadership forum and getting that off the ground and together and they had a very productive meeting. Lillian is unable, I believe, to be here today so I'm putting this forward in her stead. And I was there, they had great discussion. There's a lot of energy to this and



everybody's really excited. And so, this is the work they came up with. This is what they asked of us for their ability to work on as well. So, it's listed here before you and that's to create, the youth leadership forum mission statement is to create a youth leadership forum that will teach and empower young people with developmental disabilities personal and systems advocacy skills and promote networking with other self-advocates so that they may become future leaders. So that is their mission statement, and they want, basically, to have our blessing to begin to put together a forum that achieves this mission. And I certainly fully support it and I would ask y'all to do the same. I think it's pretty self-explanatory and I think they're really ready to begin their work as well. So is there any objection to this motion which comes out of the youth leadership ad hoc committee that we formed. Does anybody abstain? Hearing no objections and no abstentions the motion passes unanimously. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

AMY DEAVILLE: Kathy Dwyer has her hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, Kathy.

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Randall. Question, would systems advocacy include like government election process and bill process and so forth.

RANDALL BROWN: It very well could. I would ask you to please attend the next youth forum meeting when we make that public, and you can certainly make that point to them. But it very easily could be part of that.

KATHY DWYER: Okay. Cause I think that would be important and I was a member of the first youth leadership forum.

RANDALL BROWN: That's great. They'll be meeting, I believe, quarterly as well. They asked for the same, at least for the foreseeable future. So, keep your eye out for that and we'll make it public, of course, in our meeting schedule. And please attend when you can and give them those ideas.

KATHY DWYER: Okay. I wish I had the old materials

I would have shared.

RANDALL BROWN: Well, I understand. But your knowledge would be invaluable, I'm sure, to them. So please attend when we make that next meeting public when we get it scheduled.

KATHY DWYER: Okay. Thank you.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you.

AMY DEAVILLE: Brenda Cosse has her hand raised.

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

BRENDA COSSE: Good afternoon. Are these two committees that we're discussing, are there still opportunities to serve or do they have all the members that they need?

RANDALL BROWN: At present they have the members they currently need, but I'm always open to expanding that so if you're interested in serving talk with Amy and Amy will let me know who has requested and I will take a look at seeing if we can accommodate that appointment. But obviously, everyone can attend these meetings. You don't have to be a member of these committees to have your say and have your input thanks to Zoom, right. So yeah, so please be on the lookout for it and, you know, even if you're not a member of the committee that does not mean your voice is not important. So please, when we make these public, keep your eye on our Facebook page and our social media accounts and make sure if you can attend, please do so you can be heard. Are there any other questions or comments? I believe we can move forward now, Amy. And thank you, Lillian, for your hard work as chair of that committee. I see she just joined us, and we thank you. So, are there any other issues we need to address on the agenda?

MARY TARVER: Randall, this is Mary. I think that today is our first executive committee meeting we've had since Amy's been here and I just wanted to see if there was any comments she had or thoughts that she had as she's getting started in her new role. Just kind of hear from her, welcome her.

RANDALL BROWN: Absolutely. Amy, you have the

floor and welcome.

AMY DEAVILLE: Okay. Hello, everybody. This is my first executive committee meeting and tomorrow will be my first full council meeting, so I am, you know, nervously anticipating a whole day of meetings. But I've, you know, not been here very long so I'm still learning everything which is great and overwhelming. So, I'm enjoying this time of trying to learn everything and if anybody has any knowledge to share, I'm always open to hearing it.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you very much, Amy. And I've gotten to work with you closely since you were selected and I have to say, you know, thank you. You've jumped in and sort of really made your way as best you could in the situation, and I appreciate that. And if we can accommodate you better in anyway, please never hesitate to let us know. That's what we're here for.

AMY DEAVILLE: Thank you.

RANDALL BROWN: And are there any other comments? Is there anything else we need to address before we adjourn?

MARY TARVER: It's me again. I know we've had, Courtney had a resignation, and we already had the position of the....

RANDALL BROWN: Deputy director.

MARY TARVER: Deputy director. So, I just wanted to see where we were with that.

AMY DEAVILLE: We are in the very beginning stages of being able to replace those positions. I have to update position descriptions and work through the states process which is sometimes lengthy.

RANDALL BROWN: But that has begun, correct, for both positions?

AMY DEAVILLE: Yes.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Corhonda Corley has her hand raised.

RANDALL BROWN: Yes, Ms. Corley. You have the floor.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. And

thank you, Ms. Tarver, for that question because that was something that I was going to inquire on. But secondly, I think that it would be really wonderful if our DD Council would disseminate something stating to the rest of the community that Mr. Fleming no longer works with our DD Council. As well as thanking him for his many of years and expertise and dedication that he did to our council. This is not to throw any shade towards Ms. Amy because we appreciate her being the new ED. But we did not disseminate anything to anyone in our community showing our appreciation for his hard work and years spent. And I just think that it would be descent and in order for us to do so. And I look forward, Ms. Amy, to working with you as well as seeing the job descriptions for the many positions that we have in the DD Council office. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you very much, Corhonda. Your suggestions are noted. Are there any other comments or suggestions? Before we adjourn, I would like to take a point of personal privilege. As I said in the beginning, this is the final executive committee meeting that is scheduled before the end of our term as your officers. So, I would like to take a moment to sincerely thank you my fellow committee members for serving with me. It's been an honor to serve with you. I wanted to say that because we don't know what tomorrow will bring and I have enjoyed working with you all. And I really thank you so much for all your support and dedication you've given to me as we know I wasn't elected to this post. Fate gave it to me in a terrible way. And so, I've done the best I could with the conditions we were under, but you guys have been phenomenal in supporting me and I really want to thank you so much executive committee.

MICHEAL BILLINGS: Thank you, Randall. I enjoyed working with you and the rest of the executive committee as you touched on. The last two years we've had quite an arduous task and you led us through. So, we appreciate that.

RANDALL BROWN: I appreciate you very much. All of you. And I just wanted to get that on record and be clear that, you know, I couldn't have done what successes I had, I couldn't have had them without you all. So, I want to thank y'all, sincerely. And I wish us all the best in the future. And hearing that no--.

HYACINTH MCKEE: One more comment. I want to say executive committee to our leader Randall Brown, y'all we did it through a pandemic. So, guess what we made, we made history. And I'm telling you ten years from now, 15 years from now they're going to talk about us. They're going to say how did that DD Council, how did they get through that. How did they get through all of that work and all the struggles, and they got it through a pandemic. With that being said, our leader Randall, you led us through a pandemic. So, guess what folks, you made history. It was a pleasure serving with you all. It was fun. We had hugs, kisses, fights, not fights. But it was an honor and pleasure to serve with you all. So, see you all tomorrow.

RANDALL BROWN: Thank you so much. And thank you, Steven. You were a key to this too. So, thank you so much. And thank you, community. Thank you for being there for us. Telling us how it should be and keeping our feet to the fire. We truly do care. We really do. And I hope y'all know that. And so, everybody have a great day and we'll see you tomorrow. Having no objection, of course. Assuming no one objects, we are hereby adjourned.