

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Partners in Policymaking
December 1, 2021

SHANDRELL STEWART: Good morning, everyone. It is 9:00 a.m. We'll be starting in just a moment. We're waiting on Ms. Bambi, and she did notify me that she's trying to log in.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Good morning, everyone.

RASHAD BRISTO: Hey. Good morning.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Sorry for my tardiness.

CRYSTAL WHITE: Good morning.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: I don't know if I'm supposed to kick it off, or the staff needs to give some instructions?

SHANDRELL STEWART: You can start it off.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Okay. Let me pull up the agenda real quick. Okay. So welcome, everyone. I appreciate you guys getting on so quickly. Also, seems like on the agenda our first thing is roll call. But I think there's only four members of our committee. Myself, Rashad, Brenda and Crystal. Is that correct?

RASHAD BRISTO: Yes. That's correct.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Okay. So I guess that is our roll call. Everyone is here. And then our virtual meeting protocols. I don't have that. Do we need to review that?

SHANDRELL STEWART: Yes, ma'am. I have them for you. Teleconference meeting protocols amended by executive committee September 9th, 2020. Council meetings shall be accessible via Zoom and live streamed on YouTube. Council or committee members will participate in Zoom, via Zoom, and shall be considered present when they display a live feed video of their face with 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, their microphones shall be turned on. After

speaking, the microphone 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 a meeting via 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 microphone 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's YouTube channel. 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 this 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.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Thank you. Appreciate that. So our next item on the agenda is present overview of each applicant. And who is going to do that?

SHANDRELL STEWART: I can go through the applicants names and scoring. We also have Ms. Adrienne which is the PIP coordinator on the line. If you would like for her to go through it, she can. She will be able to give you a little more detail about it. It's completely up to you all.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Do you have-- and we all have received the packet with the applications for each applicant as well as a scoring rubric. Which the scoring rubric, the intent, as I understand it, is to make sure that we're meeting kind of our federal mandates and also our values of having a diverse group of people. Including people with developmental disabilities, racial, gender and geographic diversity. And that's what this rubric, it seems to me that it's

leading in that direction. My question is what might make it easier is if we had like a spread sheet or something with everyone's name and their ranking on this scoring rubric. But first, I guess, I have a couple of questions. Is how many applicants do we have that meet the qualifications for the requirements for partners? And how many are we accepting? Cause that will give us an idea of, you know, how much work we really have to do to weed through the applicants. So can somebody answer how many applicants, eligible applicants we have?

ADRIENNE THOMAS: Yes. I can answer that for you, Ms. Bambi. Good morning. There were a total of 25 applications. Of the 25 applications there was only-- there were two that were considered ineligible upon review. So that left a total of 23 applications that were eligible for review. And those two, the two that were not accepted for review but included in the number of 25, did not meet the qualification of being a young adult with a disability or a parent of a young child with a disability. And I'm sorry, I might have missed the second part of your question. I did note to include a spread sheet with rankings. I'm not sure if you want that for future scoring rubrics?

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: That may be helpful. We have had that in the past. Just like a spread sheet and it really wasn't a ranking at the time when I was on the committee before. It was just basically a spread sheet with like, it gave the different descriptors of the person. So I see Crystal has her hand raised. Before she speaks, I just want to make sure, so we have 23 eligible applicants, correct?

ADRIENNE THOMAS: Yes.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Okay. Crystal.

CRYSTAL WHITE: Bambi, correct me, or someone, anyone can correct me if I'm wrong. But for some reason in my mind, I've never sat on this committee, I don't believe, but I believe that if we're going to have a class, we need a minimum of 20. I believe that is-- I've heard that in council meetings before. I

just wanted to throw that out there. So we have 23 applicants, and the minimum is 20 to have a class, you know. I'm just saying, we probably need to choose more than 20 because some dropout, as we know. And we want to make sure we have enough people to go throughout the class. And really reach our goals of having at least 20 advocates a year trained.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Yeah. That's correct. Thank you, Crystal, for pointing that out. So I think our class size can be, what's the largest? Is it 20 to 25? Is that what we look for?

SHANDRELL STEWART: The information that I received just says the minimum of 20. It doesn't actually say a maximum number. From my understanding, and the research I've been able to do, the class size usually stays around 20. They don't really go any larger.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Okay. So I guess could we like look at the rankings. Oh, Crystal, go ahead.

CRYSTAL WHITE: I believe 2019 was the largest class and I wanted to say we started with 28 and we had like three dropout. I believe. I think Rashad was in that class as well with me. So I just wanted to put that out there.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: So, and I'm not sure of the right protocol. I know right now present an overview of each applicant. And, of course, we don't want to share personal information. And we all had a chance to review the applications. One of the reasons why I was thinking about a spread sheet because one of the few things that I would like to know is like of the 23, how many are from each region. What is the racial diversity of these 23. What is the gender diversity. You know, all these components that we're looking at like self-advocates verses and parents. And also disability diversity would be good. We don't have to say specific information, identifying information. But it would be good to know that we have a class that's representing a diverse disability population. Cross disability population. So Adrienne, do you have that information readily available?

ADRIENNE THOMAS: I do. I just may not have the regions right quick. So of the 23, do you want it by regions? You don't need it in percentages or anything like that?

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Yeah. Just the numbers will be fine.

ADRIENNE THOMAS: Okay. Out of those applicants there were two self-advocates. And there is also, we're going to say three self-advocates. I think there is one advocate, one person that was listed as a parent and a person with a disability. I just need to make sure that is correct. Three males. The majority of the applicants were from region two. However, I'm going to give you a quick breakdown because I don't have (inaudible).

SHANDRELL STEWART: I have the regional breakdown, Adrienne, if you want me to call it out for you?

ADRIENNE THOMAS: Thank you.

SHANDRELL STEWART: Okay. For region one of the 25 applications, region one had two applicants. Region two had ten applicants. Region four had four. Region five had three. Region eight has two. Region nine has two. And region ten has two.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: The two applicants that aren't eligible are regions...

SHANDRELL STEWART: If I'm not mistaken, the two that weren't eligible would be one from region one and one from region eight.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Okay. And then regards to disability type, do we have any breakdown of-- I know in the past we would say autism, cerebral palsy, down syndrome or other type of disabilities.

ADRIENNE THOMAS: I have the answer to that. Both those, autism and developmental disability with multiple diagnosis. Including cerebral palsy.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Okay. Oh, Crystal. I'm sorry.

CRYSTAL WHITE: Quick question. After we take out the people who are ineligible, do we have any regions who are not represented?

ADRIENNE THOMAS: Yes. Shandrell, do you have that

spread sheet as well with the regions that did not receive any applications?

SHANDRELL STEWART: Yes. Regions three, six, and seven did not receive any applications.

CRYSTAL WHITE: Can you remind me where these regions are located?

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Three is like the Houma, Thibodaux. That's Bayou Land. Six is Central Louisiana. And seven is the Monroe area.

RASHAD BRISTO: North Louisiana. Seven is North Louisiana, Shreveport area.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Oh, it's Shreveport. Okay. Well, we usually have some applicants in the Shreveport area. So, yeah. I mean, region three, understandably, they got hit by that big storm. So that could have impacted if they would have had a few applicants. Six is historically, we don't get applicants from that region. Now seven, we have some good numbers, I think, in that Shreveport area. So that's a little bit surprising.

RASHAD BRISTO: Unless I'm wrong, madam chair, I think a majority of seven representatives applied for council members. So I think that's where we had a large number of applicants for DD Council members. So I think that's where it kind of got sifted out with partners.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Any other questions about those numbers? It seems like we still have the same issue that we've always had, the low numbers of self-advocates, of men. Regionally, the regions that we, you know, region six is always a region that we try to get more people, try to get people and don't seem to manage that. Any other questions? Okay. So I guess I just need maybe some help from staff or from the committee like where do y'all want to go from here? The agenda item is present overview of each applicant. Do we want to do that?

AMY DEAVILLE: Hey, Bambi. It's Amy.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Uh-huh.

AMY DEAVILLE: So this can be, I mean, I hate to

say it this way, but this can be as easy or as difficult as you want it to be. We have 23 eligible people. We typically take a little over 20 knowing that some are going to dropout. We can extend invitations to all knowing we'll probably have some drop. Or we can go through the process a little more in depth and you can select a few to not make it in or maybe make it in as alternates and move on from there. So it's up to the selection committee to decide if you want to just accept all 23 and extend invitations to them, we can. Or we can, you know, select a few to not make it in if you'd prefer.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Rashad.

RASHAD BRISTO: I'm in agreement with Ms. Deaville. We don't want to sift too many to the point that we don't have a qualified, we don't have the appropriate number for a partners class. Again, like she said, if we extend an invitation, we don't know if the dynamics of anybody has changed at the time, or they may not be able to participate anyway. I don't have a problem with accepting those that have been already presented to the committee, in my opinion.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: So Rashad, you want to make that in the form of a motion?

RASHAD BRISTO: Yes. I make the motion that we accept all candidates that have applied that have not been disqualified for the Partners in Policymaking class for the calendar year 2022.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Do we have a second?

CRYSTAL WHITE: I'll second.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Okay. We have a motion by Rashad. A second by Crystal. Do we have any discussion? Any opposition to that motion? Any abstentions? So moved. That was really quick. So the next item on our agenda is announcements. Crystal.

CRYSTAL WHITE: This is not so much an announcement, but maybe a statement or suggestion since we know we have these problems. We really, really, I believe it's time that we sit down and be creative with how to improve and maybe go outside of our normal box

of thinking. And especially to get more men, more self-advocates, more regions involved. I know we usually, with the crowd of social media, our Families Helping Families centers, but I really think if we get people together and we think it out a little more, especially have our population already on the council really help us think through this that we can reach more people and get what we're supposed to be getting. Just wanted to make that statement.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Yeah. We definitely need to continue our work to do a better job of recruitment and outreach. So thank you, Crystal, for that comment. Any other announcements? Okay. If there are no announcements, we just need a motion to adjourn.

RASHAD BRISTO: I move to adjourn.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: We have a motion to adjourn.

CRYSTAL WHITE: I second.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Crystal seconds. Any opposition? Okay. Thank you, guys. Thanks Rashad and Brenda and Crystal. And thanks to all the staff. Thanks Adrienne.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you. Y'all have a great one.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: You too.