

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council  
Executive Committee  
April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024

CHRISTI GONZALES: Good morning, everyone. The quarterly meeting of the executive committee for the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council will now come to order. How is everyone doing? Okay? Will Ms. Ebony please give us the roll call for attendance.

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, ma'am. Ms. Jill Hano.

JILL HANO: Here.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Brooke Stewart. She's on her way. Ms. Renoda Washington.

RENODA WASHINGTON: Here.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Angela Harmon. Ms. Christi Gonzales.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Here.

EBONY HAVEN: You have three. You have a quorum.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Okay. At this time we will have Ms. Haven read the mission statement and ground rules.

EBONY HAVEN: The council's mission is to increase independence, self-determination, productivity, integration and inclusion for Louisianians with developmental disabilities by engaging in advocacy, capacity building and systems change.

The ground rules are on your paper so you can go through the ground rules. The one that I gave you. So it will have the new updates.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Okay. Here are some of the new rules. For committee members and members of public attending in person please raise your hand to speak and wait to be recognized by the chair before speaking. To help the meeting run smoothly please keep side conversations to a minimum and comments related to the topic we are discussing. For those committee members who are attending virtually remember you must be on camera and have your first and last name showing to be counted towards our quorum. Please keep microphones muted unless called upon by the chair. Electronically raise your hand to request to speak and wait to be called on by the chair. For attendees electronically raise your hand to request to speak. Once recognized by the chair your microphone will be turned on. After speaking the microphone will be returned to mute.

Also, the question and answering and chat is to only be used by those needing an ADA accommodation to participate in the meeting. Public comment will not be accepted by the Q and A and chat except for those individuals who requested the accommodation. As for order, committee members in person and virtually will be allowed to speak first. Public members in person will then be called on followed by public participating virtually who have their hands raised. Comments in the question and answer and the chat will be addressed last. As with all hybrid meetings it can be difficult to keep track of those who want to speak in person and virtually. Please be patient. All comments and questions from committee members and public may be limited to three minutes or less should we run into time constraints so please keep that in mind. Also, comments about a person's character will not be allowed. Finally, members of the public will have the opportunity to provide public comment before each vote and during designated public comment periods. The chair may also use their discretion to determine if comments will be accepted outside of those times.

The next item of business is the approval of the meeting summary for the April 3rd executive committee meeting which was distributed. The meeting summary will not be read unless requested by a member. Are there any corrections?

ERICK TAYLOR: Yes. Was I counted on the roll?

EBONY HAVEN: This is the executive committee, Erick, so it's just the officers of the council. So you're not on the committee. You're still a council member, but you're not on this committee. So I promise you'll be counted for the committees that you are a part of.

CHRISTI GONZALES: If there is no objection the meeting summary is approved as distributed. Hearing none, the meeting summary is approved.

The next item of business is the executive director salary determination. Is there any objection for us going into executive session? If there's no objection we'll go into executive session. And we are now in executive session.

{Executive session}

CHRISTI GONZALES: Executive session is now over and

we will now come to order. We will now entertain-- oh, yes. The next item of business is the executive director salary determination. And I just wanted to go over some things that we've been going over for the past year in trying to make a salary determination. In January the council needed additional information to make a decision about the executive director salary and requested that the decision be sent back to executive committee. So we included in the packet a link to the agenda is the original information that Ms. Haven provided for the January meeting and additional information that was requested from Dr. Barovechio.

The vice chair and I had a meeting with Ms. Haven on February 21st and decided it was not fair to ask her to complete her own research for her own salary. Especially after she provided the information for the January meeting in the timeframe we requested. We were not able to reach a decision. So she did then provide information about the previous ED salary along with our current staff salaries which can be found on the Board of Commission's website. The budget is also included on the website through March 2024 and sources which were included in the original documents.

Jill and I were responsible for obtaining the additional information from Dr. Barovechio and researching southern region ED salary ranges. So to give you further explanation on the information that we sent out in January it's in your packet and linked to the agenda. We've included the executive director's job description which includes the ED's responsibilities and essential requirements, the Excel spreadsheet which has the council information with similar allotments to Louisiana and includes information on DD Councils that have similar federal allotments to Louisiana. This document was provided in lieu of the southern region executive director and other EDs in the state salary ranges because it's very difficult to compare ED positions. There are an abundance of ED positions with different roles and responsibilities so comparing them to this position would not have been a fair comparison.

The Louisiana State Civil Service compensation manager also informed Ms. Haven that civil service only has salary ranges for unclassified ED positions. There is a wide variety of EDs in state government who are responsible for entities of varying size, scope and organizational

structure therefore it's difficult to make accurate comparisons. For this reason Ms. Haven provided the Excel spreadsheet with councils of similar allotment to Louisiana. We know that each executive director of every DD Council has very similar, if not the same duties, and can be compared to the ED position for the Louisiana DD Council. Therefore the Excel spreadsheet provides thorough information about each of the councils with similar allotments so that fair comparisons can be made when discussing salaries.

The additional considerations document included in your packet also includes information Ms. Haven gathered during the current budget for salaries and information I just stated from the state civil service. At the January meeting Dr. Barovechio stated that she would provide a tipsheet on salary calculations that outlines a systemic method for identifying civil service equivalent roles and calculating pay for contract staff positions. She also provided the resource for the administrative pay schedule that a classified ED position could fall under. However, we must take into consideration that the ED position is unclassified and the duties are very unique to this position. Based on this information I would like to open the floor for discussion or questions from the committee. Anybody? Yes, Erick.

ERICK TAYLOR: You say based on decision that means on us to speak on the raise. I'm not understanding what you want.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Well, it's been over a year. We have many people on the council have been requesting a salary for Ms. Haven so they've been coming back and they've been requesting more information so this is what we're giving them for her salary. To make that allotment. Go ahead, Brooke.

BROOKE STEWART: I would like to move that we recommend to the council the salary range of 115,000 to 130,000 for Ebony Haven as the executive director of the LADDC.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Is there a second?

ERICK TAYLOR: I'll second it.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Is there any debate from committee members? Is there any public comment?

REKEESHA BRANCH: We have one hand raised. Ms. Kathy Dwyer.

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have a few

questions. Does any of the information that was provided about salaries include number of years those positions or those people held? Because a beginning salary verses someone who's been there 5, 10, 15, 20 years can make a difference so I think that is a consideration that the council must take into--

BROOKE STEWART: Yes, it's on the page.

KATHY DWYER: Okay. Additionally, is the council still doing a national search or has that been decided? Because I know I haven't been able to attend all meetings.

JILL HANO: Ms. Kathy, I don't know if it was January, and Ebony, no disrespect, but like I don't know what meeting it was but I know that we did learn, because I specifically remember, if we're offering under a certain-- we decided as a council if we're offering under a certain amount that we would not do a national search. Does anyone remember?

KATHY DWYER: If I may. I remember at a DD Council meeting Dr. Phil Wilson, who is the executive director of the Human Development Center, expressed concern about not doing a national search and I thought that it was agreed to do one unless I missed something since then.

BRENTON ANDRUS: So just for clarity, if I'm not mistaken, it was the October meeting the council already voted to hire Ebony as the executive director. The holdup has been the salary, which was supposed to be addressed in January, it was not, so it's coming back this quarterly meeting. So the motion to actually hire her as the director has already passed.

KATHY DWYER: Okay. That's what I wasn't sure of. And I have one more question or maybe two. How many years has Ebony been with the DD Council?

EBONY HAVEN: I've been here for five and half years.

KATHY DWYER: And roughly maybe one as acting or executive director?

EBONY HAVEN: I think it's close to seven months.

KATHY DWYER: Seven months, okay.

EBONY HAVEN: I was the deputy before then.

KATHY DWYER: Right. Given that information I would suggest that the lower end of the salary be given considering it's not an extensive amount of experience with the DD Council.

CHRISTI GONZALES: We'll take that into consideration. Thank you. Any other questions? Are you ready for the question? The question is the executive committee

recommends a salary range of 115,000 to 130,000 for the executive director made by Brooke Stewart, seconded by Jill Hano. When Ms. Haven calls your name please respond with yes if you're in favor of the motion, or no if you're opposed to the motion, or abstain if you're not voting.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Jill Hano.

JILL HANO: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Jill Hano, yes. Ms. Brooke Stewart.

BROOKE STEWART: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Brooke Stewart, yes. Ms. Renoda Washington.

RENODA WASHINGTON: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Renoda Washington, yes. And Ms. Harmon is absent. So that's three yeses.

CHRISTI GONZALES: The yes votes have it and the motion has been adopted. The next item is the legislative advocacy agenda process. We will examine the current process for selecting the legislative advocacy agenda and discuss possible changes to the process. Brenton, would you like to start the discussion?

JILL HANO: All we have for that is this right? Okay.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Yeah, I mean, it would be basically feedback from y'all if y'all had any ideas of how we should go about developing the advocacy agenda. Especially over the last few years typically the process once summer is here and the legislative session ends the LaCAN leaders have community input meetings. That was something the council implemented some years ago to do these community input meetings to bring in ideas of things that they think the council should consider for their agenda and the council sets its agenda in October.

The issue we have there is between when they start doing those community input meetings, which is usually like August timeframe, they get together in September, they meaning the directors, FHF directors, Families Helping Families directors and LaCAN leaders and they come up with what they think their recommended items based on the feedback that they've gotten in their center or in their region, what they think the council should consider. A few things to note there. They usually go anywhere between three to five agenda items at most depending on what those items are because there's a lot of work that's involved in these particular agenda items. There are days at the capitol, there are action alerts, there are legislative

visits. All these issues. So they have found that any more than that amount of issues it becomes complicated. It's a little too much. And we've seen the more things that we push out the more our LaCAN members stop responding to things because I think they get overwhelmed sometimes.

And then that recommendation will go to the council. It is strictly a recommendation. Our leaders and our directors are well aware and we try to communicate that as well at those community input meetings that all these things are just recommendations. It is the council's advocacy agenda so you should set what that agenda is. Unfortunately one of our barriers is we have very minimal, and I mean very minimal involvement from our council members in community input meetings, in LaCAN and understanding these issues. So that creates a barrier there. Then you're coming into this October meeting with 100 plus issues that staff leaders, directors we don't have within a month, especially when we're trying to prepare for the council meeting in October, we don't have the time to research 100 plus issues the way it needs to be researched to determine what exactly we should do.

A lot of times you also have to consider we're looking at partners for that information. So if we, our agenda item this year one of the items is for the increase in the night rate for waiver services. We don't have that information. We have to go to the department and wait for the department to provide us with that information and feedback. And so then we hit their timeframes, their schedule. So that makes things kind of complicated as well. So we tend to do as much research and get information as we can on maybe their like top ten that they come up with. They do a ranking. By they, the directors and leaders. They do a ranking of all these issues. Because another thing out of the 100 plus issues you get a lot of them are not systems change, legislative fixes. It might be an isolated issue happening in your town, your parish. It's not a statewide issue. Or there might not be anything we think we can do legislatively. You know, for instance, one of those things our housing and transportation. We know Louisiana is always a barrier. But we haven't figured out the exact path legislatively how you fix it. It doesn't mean the issue isn't there. So those are things we're looking at.

You also have to look at the feasibility of things.

We do try to provide information. Like I can tell y'all now they are already anticipating next year during legislative session we're going to deal with a fiscal cliff. Funding is probably going to be something very difficult to do next year. So do we start looking at things on more the administrative side. So those are things we try to explain to you. We try to help leaders, directors and council members understand. But especially after the last few years the agenda has taken almost all of our October meeting to try to come up with and then the agenda changes because we get more information. Executive committee comes in, has to make decisions. So the agenda then changes in January. And so there's just not enough time to really make thought-out decisions about our agenda. And for something so important as a legislative agenda we really need to figure out a process that allows us to do that. What process can we really consolidate these ideas, again, go through 100 plus ideas. But how do we figure out what are the most important ideas, what are the most important things that are going on. Are the community input meetings working. I mean, some regions it works well. Some regions it doesn't. We try to offer virtual and in-person opportunities to get as many people involved as we can.

And then also how do we fix the stagnancy that is our council members. Not necessarily putting y'all on the spot, but the council as a whole does not go on legislative visits. Does not take action on action alerts. Does not really participate in any community input meetings. That's also a barrier because then you're not able to talk about the things you're hearing. So we're looking for advice, feedback, things that we can consider about how we should go about setting our agenda. What's going to get you the information you need to make educated decisions. Because when you make this decision in October we've got about three months to come up and create with all our materials that we can do because after the holidays we have to start legislative visits, we have to start roundtables, we have to start going to the capitol. So that's kind of what we're looking at.

CHRISTI GONZALES: So we start this when?

BRENTON ANDRUS: Generally late summer. Session typically ends early June. It takes a little while for all the legislation to be signed and for us to really get an



idea of everything that happened in the session. So usually by the end of June we get with our directors and leaders to provide them with information on how the session went, how is your membership doing as far as advocacy. And then they take that information and they start rolling into community input meetings which is usually the August timeframe. And then September is whenever they start coming up with their kickoff.

CHRISTI GONZALES: And we have to have it for October or September?

BRENTON ANDRUS: Your October meeting is traditionally when you create your agenda.

CHRISTI GONZALES: So we need it before October, right?

BRENTON ANDRUS: Yeah. All this has to come in before October because mid-October you're discussing it.

JILL HANO: So kickoff and community input is before October? Okay.

BRENTON ANDRUS: And then obviously you accept input as well at the October meeting too. People can comment on those.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Any other comments? Yes, ma'am.

LAUREN WOMACK: I have some ideas for what Brenton was asking. I know personally I relinquish that I would have taken Partners in Policymaking (inaudible) the bylaws and consider making that a requirement of new council members. Would that be possible?

JILL HANO: Well, I know that our national-- I feel so old because every time something comes up I'm like I was in the room. You were with me I think. We had a national-- and I don't know if this is what you're asking, but we had someone come from national to discuss with our council back in the day cause we had on our plan to support two council members every year for Partners and nationals suggested that we take that item off because it was a conflict of interest since we are a funding source for PIP.

BRENTON ANDRUS: That was a few years ago.

EBONY HAVEN: I would just like to add so all of the council members as well, Lauren, are volunteers so we can't make anything mandatory for volunteer members.

LAUREN WOMACK: Well, I don't know if we could consider to be on the council.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Like a recommendation?

EBONY HAVEN: So whenever the membership committee does meet, that information for any applicants that are applying

we provide that information to the membership committee. Like if they are a Partner graduate, if they participated in LaCAN. We even go so far as to look back at years past to see if they responded to action alerts. If they went on any legislative visits. If they attended any yellow shirt days. So just to see if they've been active in advocacy you can look at that before you make a determination.

JILL HANO: And I always go through my applications. That is one of the first things I personally look at is did they go through Partners. And your status report it tells me how many Partners graduates are on the council.

CHRISTI GONZALES: It also has it in our bylaws that to have an active DD Council they take action in LaCAN, LaTEACH and all that too.

LAUREN WOMACK: And then my other suggestion was I know we have a bylaws committee meeting, but maybe put things in the bylaws to support participation of council members so that we can establish quorum. Make it a little bit more stringent just so that we can be more effective and maybe-- I don't know. Put some of those things in the bylaws, certain things, certain requirements in the bylaws. But then again if it's voluntary, I don't know.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Because one of the questions I think--

LAUREN WOMACK: Might be suggested that you do this and if not we, you know--

CHRISTI GONZALES: Choose someone else.

LAUREN WOMACK: Well, ask you to question your commitment, or have to get so many points of participation, something like that. Because it makes it really challenging if we can't get a quorum.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Or the same people attending all the time.

LAUREN WOMACK: And they're out of the loop.

JILL HANO: I will be the first one to admit that I am not as involved with LaCAN.

BRENTON ANDRUS: And just to clarify, I wanted to bring up that point because it is, when you're involved in these things I think it makes you understand better, be better educated when this agenda comes up and that's why I wanted to mention it. Of course all of our leaders really want y'all involved in everything they do. You're their connection to the full council. And so I wasn't saying it

to make anybody feel bad or guilty or anything.

However, but we really need more council involvement outside of these quarterly meetings. Because I think this has a snowball effect not just on our agenda, but all the decisions we make all the time. We're here for two days and then everybody vanishes for three or four months and then we come back together.

ERICK TAYLOR: Even though y'all speaking about it would be good for us to be involved in certain things. So basically you're saying that would help more of us just getting out of these walls or help more for our face to be shown.

BRENTON ANDRUS: So take for example the community input meetings that they do. So a lot of our leaders when they come to kickoff if we have questions about a particular item that came up they can give us some details oh, this was part of the conversation. This is why it came up. This is what they talked about. Those leaders aren't necessarily always at the council meeting. There are things that happen and they can't attend the council meeting. But if you as a council member were there and you heard the issues in your region of things that are important to them then you can think oh, I remember who came up with that and this is why it was discussed. Or oh, it was an item that was brought up. There was really only like one person that it really resonated with, but this item resonated with a bunch of people. And so it gives you another opportunity to better understand where that list comes from and help you prioritize that list. Because that's kind of why the leaders and directors get recommendations because they're in those meetings. They go to the community input meetings. They host them. They're trying to let you know things they hear about in their region. But a lot of times all those recommendations aren't accepted and y'all go in a different direction and then that's where we start getting bogged down in some of our agenda issues, if you will, because maybe now we have an agenda item where we can't get people involved as far as testimony or alerts. Or maybe we missed something that was really important as opposed to this other issue. So I think having more people that make that decision involved in the community input aspect of it really helps when it comes to that decision-making time.

ERICK TAYLOR: Not to cut you off while you're talking,

but is that something we can come here regardless of what is basically going on and cause as a council as a member that's on the board. I pause regularly to see if it's anything I think would be attended to and see what's going on. Is it something specifically here, the dates and times on it. Because if I have that physically in my hand I can actually set this day up. Okay, I need transportation. I can make transportation and say okay, as a board member I can be here because I have date and a time to be there.

BRENTON ANDRUS: So we don't have dates lined up right now. So some of the things we're talking about don't happen until late summer, early fall. So we don't have dates for those yet. But those will, usually at the end of June or whenever we have our debriefing with leaders, that's when we talk about these community input meetings and that's when they get scheduled. So they're going to say hey, we're going to do one on this day, this time. One day this time. And they can get you that information and where it's going to be. Sometimes it's virtual. Sometimes it's in person. A lot of them try to do it at different times as well. They may do a virtual on a Saturday and an in-person at 5 p.m. on a Wednesday to really try to help with time options for different schedules. So those you will have dates and times and things that we'll also push out and share. Our leaders and our Families Helping Families centers are sharing this information when it gets scheduled. But I don't actually have a document right now that I can give you.

ERICK TAYLOR: But you understand what I'm saying.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Yeah. Right.

ERICK TAYLOR: I'm dedicated to the board.

BRENTON ANDRUS: And that's why we urge our leaders, and I think they do a pretty good job at it, of don't decide on Monday that you want to have a meeting on Tuesday or Wednesday. Decide on Monday that you want to have a meeting in two weeks. Now that does get complicated with things like legislative visits and yellow shirt days because those are harder to schedule a long time out. And so historically our council has not been as involved in like legislative visits or yellow shirt days if you have other jobs and responsibilities but it hasn't been one. It's been a little better than it's been. But even things like action alerts. You can do that from your house. You create it, but you don't even write anybody about this

agenda. So you create an agenda but you're not even pushing it out there. That's what we're trying to solve.

JILL HANO: So if we don't know how to respond to an action alert can we call like staff or our LaCAN leader. My LaCAN leader is actually very helpful with that. And when there are yellow shirt days she'll call me and be like hey, do you want a ride.

BRENTON ANDRUS: And that's exactly what should happen. So props to your LaCAN lead for that. That's awesome. That's what we have our LaCAN leaders for. When we push out an alert it even says on our alert if you need help with this alert here's your LaCAN leader contact information. Call them. Email them. If you know where they live go knock on their door, whatever it may be, because that's what they're there for.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Also, Mr. Erick, I started a nonprofit in New Iberia for autism. When we had our kickoff I invited Families Helping Families and LaCAN to our event for families on weekend, it was a weekend thing, and a lot of people went and talked to Nicole, you can attest to that, that people who never heard of Families Helping Families before. And even though they don't commit to something else during the week they were able to speak to them at the weekend event. So if I know an event that's going on you can invite them to that event so that can be a participation event and if they can make it they probably will go. You can ask them to come to that certain event to participate.

JILL HANO: Like years ago my sister invited me to Touch a Truck with her kid and I'm like oh, this is an FHF event.

LAUREN WOMACK: I was reading the bylaws and is it true that people don't have to be on the council to be appointed to a committee? So if we had people that were interested who maybe wanted to attend or be part of a committee how does that work? Because perhaps they could start coming to the self-determination committee meeting even if they're not council members.

EBONY HAVEN: So that's for ad hocs, Lauren.

LAUREN WOMACK: Okay.

EBONY HAVEN: If we formed an ad hoc committee members outside of the council members, according to the bylaws right now, can be appointed to those committees. As far as standing committees--

JILL HANO: As the chair of the bylaws committee I do

want to try to make that a little more clear.

LAUREN WOMACK: Is there in the budget maybe for council members for transportation. Can anybody speak to that? Reimbursement.

EBONY HAVEN: For like yellow shirt days, yes. We can help out with travel reimbursement for things that are council related.

LAUREN WOMACK: That might be if you want to attend something. I know it's hard with just regular transportation sometimes.

CHRISTI GONZALES: And if you just have a good rapport with your LaCAN leader they are very open and very willing to carpool. If you get in touch with them earlier or just attend any function that's reasonable in their vicinity.

LAUREN WOMACK: And when LaCAN members have their meeting with staff and stuff like that are those private or can council members go to those too?

CHRISTI GONZALES: Yeah, you can attend.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Which meeting? Like your community input meetings? But the kickoff and debriefing is just us with our LaCAN leaders and Families Helping Families.

SPEAKER: Our processes, it's almost like we have a disconnect. A lot of (inaudible) involved with us based on our agenda that you guys give us. And as LaCAN leaders we schedule these meetings and we give you guys at least two weeks' notice. Like we were going to hold the input meetings say starting in August. Give a couple weeks' notice. We just scheduled one for August. (Inaudible) minimum, probably more. And then we're going to schedule other ones too. So you'll probably get an email if you're on our email list, an action alert. If you get the action alerts that contains our information on the meetings usually. And as LaCAN members send it out to our members as well. We all have our regional member base and we email it to everybody. Now on some days we'll pick up and call our most active members. Like your leader calls you. Hey, Jill, do you need a ride. I will call my frequent flyer people that I know need extra help or who reach out and who are interested. I'll call and say hey, do you want to ride along. But you have that list. I know all of us reach (inaudible) and a lot of it is how to get involved as just member base. The council, usually by the time you're a council member you've already been involved with LaCAN in some facet or you're a family member so you're getting on

our email list. But it's almost like part of that presentation that we did is telling you to watch the email alerts because if the council sends out an alert and then I personally will turn around and clarify a simple version that this is what this means and this is our contact for our region. Our region seven reps. And I will give you a simpler version of what we're really talking about. But we do, as leaders, do try to reach out to all of our member base. (Inaudible).

CHRISTI GONZALES: Thank you.

MELINDA PERRODIN: Like with LaCAN and the action alert is it something that they can add to the new council member orientation so that way when they see the action alert they'll know it's something to respond. I know it would help me to respond to some of them is looking at the PDF file. I usually go on the Louisiana council website and I look at that PDF file. And there are things that I didn't know that you could actually do. I didn't know you could send a public comment ahead of time. I think a brief introduction of the PDF file to the new member orientation would be very beneficial.

And also about the community input. Is there any way we could do like a survey. Because I was looking at the LaCAN survey last night. Is there any way we can make it available on the website to where people could go in and complete the survey. Like just to help with the community input. Like have a survey available ahead of time so people who share their input. And being that we work with various organizations and departments if we can work together with them and ask them if they could put it on their website so that way a lot of people would be aware of it.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Okay. Thank you, ma'am.

BROOKE STEWART: I work with Christina Martin which is the New Orleans area's LaCAN. She helps me a lot when I need to complete those action items. If she's like oh, send an email. And sometimes, you know, you're a mom, you're working. She always helps me out sending me like a little template of what I can say. She'll write it up for me and just be like Brooke, just copy it and forward it to me after you're done just to show like proof that she did. They will even go so far to send you like a little template. They're really doing the legwork. They just need you to hit the send button from your account.

SPEAKER: Kind of what Brenton was saying. Correct me

if I'm wrong. What we're talking about now is kind of post (inaudible). Like I'm thinking to me it sounded like we needed a little shift in culture. A shift more towards responsiveness, accountability and involvement and that kind of happens pre-assignment or pre-acceptance. Whatever you want to call it. So it sounds like recruitment of our membership needs to include hey, we expect this high level of involvement verses hey, you're here now this is what we expect. So working with the boards and commissions councils and stuff we can recruit with the highest standard verses we have a vacancy in region four. Okay, are you a parent, an individual or professional. Four standards there. But then when they get here we see that they're not involved. It's because we've said we have quarterly meetings and do you live in this region and do you fit this demographic. Not we have a culture of responsiveness, accountability to one another. That sort of thing. So we may kind of look at that part of the process.

And also talking about Partners and LaCAN and all that we know we're missing people in some of those organizations and some of those groups. So we kind of may not want to just focus on-- be that a hyper specific I guess. Looking at who we're bringing to the table we want to cast our net a little bit wider. And again, with that understanding of transportation needs, we've got all these things that kind of play into this picture. But I think post warm body in a seat is not the time to start saying hey, we need you to do these things.

JILL HANO: Let's say now I roll off and reapply to the council I may not be eligible.

BROOKE STEWART: I am on the Membership Committee and I do think like part of that interviewing process is when we know we do have a culture of that. When we explain to them we have the accommodations available. I know that's like our last question. Like do you need any accommodations. If so, what kind so we can make that aware, make that person aware of what the council has. But also it's up to the person once they're on the committee to decide whether or not. It was a lot for me. It was very eye opening for me. I thought I was a great advocate until I got here. And I'm like wow, this is a lot more than I thought. So it's like I do feel like the questions they ask. And again, we don't even have a lot of people to



interview or when we do interview they're not completing their interview or answering the phone. I do think you all have done a great job with letting our applicants know what's expected.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Do we have any recommendations to bring to the council in regards to our legislative advocacy kickoff agenda?

BRENTON ANDRUS: Can I just make a quick statement. I do think we did cover a lot of great things and how to get council members more involved, some things that we could look at. One of the other things we were hoping to accomplish today, which we didn't so I guess this is going to have to come back, is the actual process of developing this agenda. Because right now we are on track with the same process we've been doing. Which we get a lot of complaints, a lot of issues out there that folks are aggravated with our process or how we're doing things so we really want to try to see if y'all had ideas. I guess that lives to see another day.

EBONY HAVEN: Yeah. Because we're already over time. The next meeting starts at 10:15.

CHRISTI GONZALES: All right. Is there any further business? Public comment.

SPEAKER: Do you have any in the chat?

CHRISTI GONZALES: They're checking.

BRENTON ANDRUS: The chat is used only for those that have an ADA accommodation submitted to us. Not just for public input, public comment.

KATHY DWYER: That was me that commented in the chat because I had been patiently waiting with my hand raised. And I wanted to add that as previous chair of the OCD State Advisory Committee, but still a member and a member of the Jefferson Parish Regional Advisory Committee. These are two committees that I think DD Council members would benefit from greatly. You start learning in more detail about the disability services and how they work. I think had more people had more knowledge of-- including LaCAN members. If they attended these meetings and had more knowledge of the DD service system and how it works I think there would not have been the confusion about the wording for the pay raise for direct support workers because that's definitely set I think our whole DD community back by not addressing that. Anyway. So I would encourage everybody to attend those meetings.

I also agreed with a commenter that said that there needs to be a certain amount of responsibility and accountability. I have said that to my SAC members that they're not there just to attend meetings. That we are here to represent our community. We are supposed to bring forth any issues or problems from the community. That means we need to reach out to them. One thing I have done and I encourage members to do is share meeting information on social media or whatever so that all your community can attend and provide public input because you are there to serve the DD community. That's the whole purpose of the DD Council to make sure all their needs are met.

Lastly, just a matter of procedure. I would like to request more attention be made to those that are having to attend virtually. The virtual accommodation is an ADA accommodation to accommodate people with disabilities. I feel like, and I may be wrong, and I apologize if I am. I'm not necessarily making accusations, but it just seems like we sit here and wait and wait and wait and don't get to comment in the important part of the conversations that are being had when others outside of the executive committee or council that are present seem to get preference over those that are raising hands virtually. If there are public members present then whoever raises their hand first be it virtually or present at the meeting should be called upon. Not use the virtual meeting as last people to call on. I just wanted to point that out.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Just for an additional point of clarity. The protocols that the council voted on and accepted April 3rd does say that our virtual attendees will be able to raise their hand to provide comment. But as covered in the beginning of this meeting and within our protocols we handle committee members that are in the room first, then committee members that are attending virtually. Then we handle public that is in the room and then we go to public that is attending virtually. So I think what was done today follows the protocols that was established by the council. Just wanted to clarify.

JILL HANO: I do have a question. I'm sorry. Can we, these virtual protocols that we made, can we fit them in the bylaws somewhere?

EBONY HAVEN: I'm sure we can. Okay, wait. I'm getting clarification from our Parliamentarian.

NICOLE LEARSON: In the policy and procedure, that's

fine.

EBONY HAVEN: We can put them in the policies and procedures but not the actual bylaws.

REKEESHA BRANCH: Chair, we have two hands raised. The first one is Mylinda Elliot.

MYLINDA ELLIOT: Thanks for recognizing me. So do I have to inform you that I need ADA accommodations or is this good enough that I ask to speak?

CHRISTI GONZALES: Yes.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Yeah. If you need something outside of what we're able to provide we would need to have that request so we could put it in place. But if we're just meeting virtually and doing as you're doing now, raising your hand, speaking, those aren't things you have to notify us for now that the new rules have been published for the public meetings virtually.

MYLINDA ELLIOT: Okay. Got you. Thank you.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Go ahead, Ms. Dwyer.

KATHY DWYER: Thank you. I just typed it in chat too just for the record. I would like to request the committee to consider revising the protocols. I find it very disrespectful to people with disabilities who cannot attend to have to wait longer than public who are present. I think there's no reason why you can't watch for people who raise their hands that need the accommodation to use the virtual meetings so that they are called upon in order with other public whether they are virtual or present.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Okay. Thank you for that statement. Any other business? Hearing none, if there is no objection we will adjourn the meeting. This meeting is now adjourned.