

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Executive Meeting
April 3rd, 2024

EBONY HAVEN: We have a quorum and we are now live on YouTube so we're ready to get started whenever you are.

JILL HANO: Okay. Y'all ready? Okay. Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to this executive committee meeting. Today is April-- can we play like this never happened. Good afternoon, everyone. It's 2:39 in this April 3rd, 2024, meeting of the executive committee for the Louisiana DD Council is coming to order. Ebony, will you please take roll.

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

JILL HANO: Here.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Brooke Stewart.

BROOKE STEWART: Present.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Renoda Washington. Ms. Angela Harmon.

ANGELA HARMON: Present.

EBONY HAVEN: Okay. You have three and you have a quorum, Jill.

JILL HANO: Okay. Great. Thank you, Ebony. Before we get started I just wanted to remind you all of a few rules for attendees. Please wait to be called on, recognized by the chair before speaking. Committee members will be allowed to make comments first and then I can recognize any public comment. Also, to help this meeting run smoothly, please keep side conversations to a minimum and comments related to the topic at hand. Also, comments about a person's character will not be allowed.

So the first item of our agenda is to approve last meeting's summary. Which everyone should have a copy of the November 29th meeting summary in their packet. That was sent via email. If there are no objections we can approve this by unanimous consent. So any objections? Hearing no objections the November meeting summary is passed by unanimous consent.

Okay. So onto the next business, item of business. Of course the main reason we have our meeting this afternoon is to consider our new set of protocols for conducting virtual meetings as LDH just passed the final rule on the

virtual meetings in line with ADA requirements. So Ebony, would you like to get us started?

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, I sure would. As Jill said, LDH finally released their rule in the March registrar or the March Louisiana registrar and it is attached to the agenda. So if anybody would like to view the rule. Hopefully our committee members have already looked at the rule. But if any members of the public want to view the rule it is attached to the agenda. It's the second item.

So based on the rules that LDH released the staff and I came up with a draft protocol for the committee and council meetings moving forward. And we're here just to discuss those protocols. So if you look at the top part-- and I'll pull it up. While we're going through it if you guys see any corrections or any changes that you want to make we can make those as well. Let me stop sharing and then I'll share again just in case you guys want to make changes I will be able to make them in real-time.

So you guys should be able to see my screen. I'll just enlarge it to make it a little bigger. So according to the actual law, Act 393, it has in the law on page five any public body that is strictly advisory or that primarily focuses on issues dealing with disabilities or assisting military families may conduct successive meetings via electronic means without limitation and shall to the extent practical publish a schedule of its meetings indicating which upcoming meetings will be conducted via electronic means and which will be conducted only in person.

So if you look at the top part of the draft that we created we put some language in there that's similar to the language in the law. So given that the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council, or the council primarily focuses on issues dealing with disabilities, there is no limitation as to the number of successive meetings via electronic means that may be conducted. Therefore all council meetings shall be accessible via Zoom and live streamed on YouTube. All meetings shall be recorded, maintained and available for at least two years on the council's YouTube channel. And that is part of the law as well that the meetings be recorded and maintained for at least two years. I think we have meetings that are older than two years on our YouTube channel. We haven't deleted any. But we will be following that part of the law as well. So I just want to start off by saying all of our

meetings will be, they will be accessible via Zoom. So that means that they'll be accessible to not only our council members, but also members of the public via Zoom and live streamed on YouTube. So there won't be a need for members of the public to request accommodations because we're going to-- our meetings will all be accessible via Zoom. So we'll make sure that the information is included on our agendas and our meeting notices when we send those out as well. Does anybody have any questions about that particular portion of the protocol?

Okay. Great. So we move to the second part. Council member participation via teleconference or video conference. So this is specifically for council members only. We haven't gotten to members of the public yet. So in order for-- and we pulled this straight out of the bill and out of the rule that LDH published in the registrar in March. So quorum for council and/or committee members who participate via Zoom shall be considered present and count towards a quorum when they display a live feed video of their face with their first and last name. So all members of the council, whether participating from the anchor location or via electronic means, shall be counted for the purposes of establishing a quorum. So that particular rule we just want to make sure that anybody that's counted towards the quorum, just for transparency purposes, if you're participating via electronic means that we can see you and that your name is displayed on the screen.

Another rule is have microphones muted unless called upon by the chairperson. Electronically raise your hand to request the chair recognize them to speak. Once recognized to speak by the chair their microphone shall be turned on and after speaking the microphone shall be returned to mute. And you guys will have that capability to do that.

Committee or council members shall notify staff if they experience any technical problems. Now this portion it gets a little technical because we have to recess the meeting just in case committee or council members are having issues with accessing the meeting electronically. So if a member experiences technical problems the presiding officer will recess the meeting until the member is able to reconnect or resolve the technical problem. These can't be changed. This is part of the rule that LDH put out and I think it is also part of Act 393 as well. If a

committee or council member when they're experiencing those technical problems causes the quorum to be lost then no further action shall be taken and the meeting will be recessed until the member is able to rejoin the meeting.

So I had a suggestion right here to combine these next two. So I'm going to combine that because that's saying if a quorum is lost because of technical issues. So if the member is unable to rejoin after one hour of the time connectivity was lost the meeting shall be adjourned. So after one hour if that person is unable to get back on because of connectivity issues and the quorum is lost then we can't continue the meeting and it will have to be adjourned.

If the quorum is not lost because of someone that is participating or a committee or council member participating virtually because of the technical problems the presiding officer shall recess the meeting for at least 15 minutes to give the member participating via Zoom time to reconnect. And if after that 15 minutes the member is not able to reconnect the meeting may continue only if a quorum is present. So if we have a quorum in person or if we have a quorum with the members that are in person plus the members that are not having connectivity issues via Zoom we can resume the meeting after that 15-minute time period that you all recess.

And then the last portion of the quorum protocol would be if the anchor site or the anchor location experiences technical problems that cause a loss of quorum the presiding officers shall recess the meeting and if the technical problem can't be resolved within one hour the meeting shall be adjourned. So do you guys have any questions about that portion?

BROOKE STEWART: Staff is going to let us know?

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, Brooke. The staff will make sure that we keep track of the quorums throughout the meeting to make sure that you guys are in compliance. And if we lose a quorum we'll make sure that we notify the chairs. So this is going to be particularly important for our chairs. I know Christi and Renoda aren't here, but Brooke like for the Self-Determination and Community Inclusion Committee and any other committee-- I know the chairs aren't here, but this particular portion is going to be very important. And yes, staff will make sure that we are monitoring Zoom and monitoring the actual room itself to

make sure you guys have a quorum. Do you have anything to add, Hannah? Okay. Does anybody else have any questions about this particular portion?

JILL HANO: No, ma'am.

EBONY HAVEN: Okay. Great. Thank you so much for turning on your camera Angela. I noticed you turned it on after I read that first part.

Okay. So we'll go down to the voting portion of the protocols. So voting, and this is for council and committee members again who participate via Zoom, shall be allowed to participate and vote when they display a live feed of their face with their first and last name. Note all members of the council, whether participating from the anchor location or via electronic means, may vote. And as I was sitting here reading that I just remembered another thing that we have to include in this portion because it's in the law. For votes from here on out we can't vote by unanimous consent. We will have to have a roll call vote for every vote that you all take. And that is actually in the law. It states that any person that's participating via electronic means has to have their name displayed and their face displayed when they're voting. And we'll have to call a roll call vote for each vote. So I'm going to add that right now. We can fix the wording. So do you guys have any questions about the voting portion? Nope. Okay.

All right. So we'll move down to the public participation via teleconference, video conference. So this portion says members of the public may participate via Zoom or observe meetings live on the council's YouTube. Again, we will not require the public to submit accommodation requests. We're just going to allow them to get the link, register for the meetings. And this is how we did it during Covid as well. Members of the public were just allowed to register for the meeting and attend. So it was a hybrid meeting. And it will be the same. So we're required to still have our anchor location and our presiding officer must be present. So I wanted to make sure that I stated that for all of our chairs for our committees, and of course the chair of our council, you have to be present in person. So I am trying to get clarification from LDH currently on that just because there is language in the actual law itself that allows individuals with disabilities to participate virtually and I'm not sure why that doesn't include presiding officers.

So I am in contact with LDH legal. And so I have even been in contact with our state ADA coordinator to get her opinion on that particular portion of the law so I'm still waiting to hear back from LDH legal. But as of right now they are telling me that presiding officers have to preside in person. Does anybody have any questions about that part?

So just going back to the public participation. At least 24 hours prior to the meeting-- and if you guys think that that should be greater than 24 hours just let me know and we can change that. I want to make sure I get y'all's opinion on that. Jill, I see your hand.

JILL HANO: What does open meetings law require? 24 hours?

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, 24 hours prior to the meeting. But if you guys want to make it a little--

JILL HANO: I think that's a little rushed but I'm the minority in that. But if everyone is okay with 24 hours. Can I debate?

EBONY HAVEN: Yes. I don't know if you remember in that training that Nicole did for you guys, Jill, but if the ad hoc committee is less than 12 members then the chair is allowed to debate, vote and everything.

JILL HANO: Okay. And now I have no train of thought. I would do more than 24 hours. But also we've got to remember the staff isn't there to-- like it took me years to learn this, but the staff isn't there to make notes available on the website. I didn't know if that was something y'all wanted to discuss. But like of course it can't be any less than 24 hours. But again, remember on the Tuesday remember that the staff is putting four or five or six agendas up at once. So that's just my opinion but, I mean, we can't do any less than what open meetings law requires. But if y'all want to do more that is at the discretion of this committee today.

EBONY HAVEN: Right. So I think when we were discussing this as we were drafting this protocol for you all one of the staff members thought it should be 48 hours. So we should at least put our meeting notices, detailed information how members of the public can participate and submit written comments at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. I'm sorry. At least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

JILL HANO: I also think that there's, and correct me if I'm wrong, but there's a difference between notice and

agendas too. So again, whatever y'all decide. Y'all can discuss and we can keep it at the 24 or change it to 48 or whatever's beyond 48. Any opinions? Or are we talking about this part or do you want to continue reading, Ebony?

EBONY HAVEN: No. Y'all can talk about this part. And you do have a hand that's raised.

JILL HANO: Let me see if I can-- can I take public comment now or do we discuss this? Or is it at my discretion?

EBONY HAVEN: It's at your discretion. But Angela is part of the committee and usually the committee members are allowed to speak before public comment. So if you want to take Angela's comment first and then the public comment you can do that.

JILL HANO: So Ms. Kathy, a committee member does have her hand raised. And Robert dictates committee members are allowed to speak before public comment. So Angela Harmon, you are recognized by the chair.

ANGELA HARMON: Thank you, Jill. I just had a quick question. And I'm reading here it says at least 24 hours. So do we have to really specify? If somebody wants to send something in prior to 24 hours it's not that we're going to negate it, right? It's just they have up until that time. We can't go less than 24 hours. Am I understanding correctly, guys?

EBONY HAVEN: Yeah, you're understanding that correctly. And Angela, I'll just say as staff it is our goal to make sure that we can post notices and agendas as soon as possible. So yeah, you're right as in we have to do it at least 24 hours, but it's our goal to do it way before then.

JILL HANO: That was kind of what I was getting at. The only call for discussion I did have was if y'all wanted to make it more than 24 hours because like 24 hours is of course the minimum. Brooke, you have a question, yes?

BROOKE STEWART: Yes. So Jill, you were bringing up the fact that you think 24 hours may just be too much on the staff. Like that's not enough time for the staff?

JILL HANO: A lot of people know this. I'm very weird about notes. So I don't want to say I feel like, because I'm weird about that, that I don't want to say either way. But yeah, I was just thinking that that was something to consider. But then Ebony was saying that the staff actually prefers early. Because I only can say because

I've been on Self-Determination Committee the longest, but I know Brenton gets his out like ASAP. So it's, again, not to be repetitive, but if y'all want to make it more we can. Does that answer your question, Brooke?

BROOKE STEWART: Yes, thank you.

JILL HANO: Angela thumbs up, thumbs down? Ms. Dwyer. Can I call public comment?

EBONY HAVEN: Yes.

JILL HANO: Ms. Dwyer, you have the floor.

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Jill. I think there's several different issues that need to be decided on individually. Posting meeting notices and detailed information about how to participate in the meeting, that's one thing and that right now the draft says is 24 hours. I think that should be more. I would say at least 72 hours because then you want to give people time for the last item under that section to submit written comments regarding the agenda. If they just get to see the agenda 24 hours before that doesn't give the public a whole lot of time to submit comments. Or anyone for that matter. So I would say at least 72 hours. I think the council is here to serve the community so you want to make this community friendly. When I was chair of the SAC I tried to get all our agenda minutes out a week or two ahead of time just so that everyone had time to review them and so forth because we know everybody's lives are pretty busy any occupied with caring for themselves or their loved ones.

Then the second one, public comment, that one I think needs to remain the same as in the draft because you definitely want the public to be able to submit comment. I don't think that one needs more time. If you make it more time then that's more restrictive. You can't be more restrictive than state law. And I think that's all I had comments about.

JILL HANO: Thank you so much, Ms. Kathy. Okay. Now Ebony, I need help. Sorry.

EBONY HAVEN: So you guys can discuss it more if you want to make it higher. You want to go 48, 72, that's for the committee to discuss.

JILL HANO: Is 72 three days?

EBONY HAVEN: Yes.

JILL HANO: Okay. I was thinking-- I don't know. Okay, Brooke. I saw your comment first. I'm actually interested in your opinion. Okay, Ms. Kathy, we are

talking about the notice. Brooke, I do especially want your input as a chair.

BROOKE STEWART: I would like to put it at 72 hours prior to the meeting.

JILL HANO: Ms. Harmon. Hold on one second. Ms. Harmon, I think I need a verbal confirmation.

ANGELA HARMON: Yes. I was getting ready to speak. I wasn't sure if you had recognized me. Thanks, Jill. Yes, I agree with Brooke. That's why I put my hand up. I do think 72 hours would help serve the public a little bit better. Like you said, to get the information disseminated out earlier would be easier for everyone. Thank you.

JILL HANO: So Ebony, can one of you put this in motion.

EBONY HAVEN: Yes. So I just changed it. On the version that's up on the screen right now it's the Word version so I'm just changing it as you guys make changes.

JILL HANO: Okay.

EBONY HAVEN: And then you can make a motion at the end to accept all of the protocols.

JILL HANO: Okay. Then moving on. Ebony, can you continue?

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, ma'am. I can. So I just want to go back at least 72 hours prior to the meeting the council shall post the following on the website. The meeting notice and agenda and detailed information regarding how members of the public may participate in the meeting via electronic means including the applicable video conference link and/or teleconference phone number. And within that 72 hours submit written comments regarding matters on the agenda prior to the meeting. So everybody's in agreement? Okay. So we can move to the last portion which would be public comment.

JILL HANO: I do have a question.

EBONY HAVEN: I'm sorry. Go ahead, Jill.

JILL HANO: Because I never quite understood how that worked. Like how can you-- like I never know what I'm going to say just by looking at the agenda. So how, like how does that work to submit it pre-meeting?

HANNAH JENKINS: Jill, I believe that would be if someone is unable to attend the meeting but they see an agenda item they have something they would like to share then they can submit that way since they won't be able to attend the upcoming meeting.

EBONY HAVEN: And I think like if you look at the agenda items, and I'll just take y'all's last, the Executive Committee agenda from the January meeting. I know you guys weren't able to meet, but the bylaws. So there was an agenda item about the bylaws. So if a person is looking at that agenda and they're seeing that the Executive Committee is going to be discussing the bylaws if they have any comments that they want to make sure that the Executive Committee receives before you guys discuss that agenda item they can formulate whatever comment they want and then write that out and make sure that you guys get it before you discuss that item. So it would be the same for like committees at the legislature. So whenever you're looking at a committee agenda for the legislature and you see a bill is coming up and you want to make sure-- I can't make that meeting but I want to make sure that my public comment is taken into consideration on that particular agenda item you just write your public comment based off that agenda.

JILL HANO: Okay. Thank you so much, Ebony. So you can continue.

EBONY HAVEN: Okay. So we'll go down to that last portion about public comment. Prior to the meeting written public comments may be submitted until 12:00 p.m. noon the day prior to the meeting. A public comment form will be made available on the meeting notice and agenda. So just to kind of elaborate on this particular part. The written public comments that we were receiving prior were through chat, email, YouTube and a lot of times the YouTube comments were delayed. So by the time we received those comments the committee had basically went onto maybe another topic. Another issue was the chat. So a lot of times in the Zoom chat there are comments that may be made and the committee has discussed the item for like ten minutes but the comment that was made was pertaining to something that was discussed at minute number three. So a lot of the times the chat itself was delayed as well. And a lot of times the chat is members just going back and forth with each other sharing information and it may not even be relevant to the conversation that the committee or the council is having. So we thought this would be a better way to receive written public comment would be prior to the meeting. And since we're going to have to post our agendas and meeting notices at least 72 hours in advance members of the public should have an opportunity to view the agenda

and if they want to submit any written public comments they'll have to do it by 12 the day prior. And that's to give the staff time to make sure that we're able to print those public comments to make that the committee or the full council gets those comments before the meeting. And if we have committee or council members that are attending virtually that we're able to email that information out as well. So that was, I guess, the thinking behind that particular protocol. And just trying to make sure that we have a public comment form that will be on the meeting notice and the agenda as well. So it will be a link and the person can click the link either on the meeting notice or the agenda and it will take them to a form, an electronic form on the council's website. They type in their name, the meeting that they're trying to make the public comment on. What else was included, Hannah?

HANNAH JENKINS: Yeah. The meeting and then what their public comment was.

EBONY HAVEN: And what their public comment was. So once they submit that form it will go to council staff and we will make sure that members of either whatever committee it is or the full council receives that comment at least 72 hours before the meeting. Does anybody have any questions on the committee? Or Jill, do you have any questions about that particular part?

JILL HANO: No, ma'am.

EBONY HAVEN: You have Ms. Dwyer has her hand raised.

JILL HANO: Committee thumbs up, thumbs down? Okay, Ms. Dwyer, you have the floor.

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Jill. I understand making these recommendations. I guess my only question is you're still going to allow the chat to be used, yes?

EBONY HAVEN: According to this protocol the chat would not be used.

KATHY DWYER: And I understand what you're saying but that in itself would be an ADA violation. There are people with disabilities who need the chat. For instance, someone who is Deaf and cannot speak. They can type. They can read your captions but they can only comment by typing. So if they raise their hand they can't speak so you need to allow that chat as an ADA accommodation. I think you can say ahead of time part of the meeting, what do you call it when you go through-- housekeeping. I think you can say that you request anyone that wants to speak or comment that

is able to to raise their hand. Anyone who needs to use the chat as an ADA accommodation use the chat. If you wanted to cut back on the chat that's what I would suggest doing.

EBONY HAVEN: So we did take that into consideration when we were suggesting or making the draft and if someone needed that accommodation we still have in our public meeting notices and on the agendas if someone requires an accommodation they are to let Bridgette Talley know at least three business days in advance. So if that was an accommodation that was needed they would be able to request that accommodation. Because if you go to the next portion during the meeting public comment will be taken before all votes and during designated times on the agenda. At the discretion of the chair public comment may also be heard when applicable. Any member of the public may make a comment by electronically raising their hand to request to comment. And then, similar to our council and committee members they will be recognized by the chair. Their microphone will be turned on by staff. After they speak their microphone will be returned to mute. So if a member of the public did require that accommodation where they needed the chat we would grant that accommodation.

JILL HANO: Ms. Kathy, did you want to respond?

KATHY DWYER: Yes, I do. I still think that's not accommodating a person who may need the chat. Unless you're going to have to put specific instructions in all your notices with examples that if you need the chat to communicate you need to let us know as an accommodation. I think you're going to miss people that might need to use that. I think a general housekeeping rule upfront would be better. If they need to make a comment in the chat as an ADA accommodation you can still expect them to raise their hand and then they can type what they need to type in the chat. The DD Council should be setting the example to make things as accommodating as possible for the community. I think having them to request ahead of time something that is already available is a bit much. I understand requesting ahead of time if you need a sign language interpreter because you need to contract with them and make those arrangements. But the chat is already there. It's not like it's something you have to make arrangements for. I think it would fit better more under housekeeping as to what you expect people to do. As people

learn what the rules are you may have to remind them please do not have private and personal discussions in the chat. It's solely for ADA accommodations. Raise your hand if you want to speak. I think everybody will learn after a couple meetings. Otherwise, I think you would be setting a poor example.

JILL HANO: I don't know but if we crack down on the for ADA purposes only then, I mean, like I'm not opposed to that. But the chat gets severely out of hand. But from an ADA and setting example standpoint, I get that too. Angela, you're recognized by the chair.

ANGELA HARMON: Thank you, Jill. In light of that I think that's correct that we need to leave the chat open. I understand that sometimes we get a lot of clutter and a lot of chatter but there are people that's going to need to utilize that. And if I think about people that I know that are disabled they do benefit from being able to access the chat as opposed to sending a form or a card or submitting something prior to the meeting. So I think as well I don't know if we can vote, whatever that we should remain having the chat open. Thank you.

JILL HANO: I don't know. I also think that we would have to put parameters on that because I really do see the ADA benefits, but also it can be abused because the chat was way too much clutter. I do like that idea, but does anyone else have any thoughts? Okay. Ebony or Hannah, do y'all have any thoughts about that?

HANNAH JENKINS: I do have one alternative thought, Jill, because I totally agree with you that there's pros and cons. One thought, because like you said, the chat does get very congested with questions and back and forth and even just small things like I agree and then 15 minutes later we don't know what that person agrees to. But one thought could be the Q and A and that would differentiate an actual public comment verses the random discussion and hey, what page are we on. The Q and A could be an alternative that you click on the Q and A, you type in your public comment and submit it and then it's read aloud whenever the chair ask for public comment. So just a thought.

JILL HANO: I don't know enough because I've never understood the difference between the chat and the Q and A. So because of that I don't think I understand what you're saying.

EBONY HAVEN: I can type something in the Q and A.

HANNAH JENKINS: So Ebony is going to type something into the Q and A and you're able to see how it comes up. It basically shows up in a different manner. The chat is when people are-- as you can see with the chat right now.

EBONY HAVEN: I don't think I can do it. It's showing me the same thing because we're hosting.

HANNAH JENKINS: We're hosting the meeting. We're not allowed to ask the question. But at the bottom next to the chat button there's a Q and A button. And as opposed to back-and-forth discussion-- so it pops up. It should pop up for all the council members the question.

JILL HANO: I guess, Hannah, what does it do if someone clicks answer live?

HANNAH JENKINS: Just like this, if you were going to answer that question live it just lets Ms. Kathy know that you're going to read that aloud.

JILL HANO: I kind of like that because then you know what chat needs to be addressed. Ms. Kathy, test it again. Does it have a timestamp?

HANNAH JENKINS: Yes. Here's the answers, questions. And so at the end you would be able to have a list of all the public comment that was read and answered with a timestamp.

JILL HANO: Quickly, are there pros and cons to this? Because I'm really doing the ADA thing and like when you said it was to set an example really resonates with me. But at the same time like are we just going to be in the same position?

EBONY HAVEN: I think the Q and A is a little different, Jill, because since we're able to say if a question is going to be answered live we also have the option to just answer the question. So if it's something as simple as what page are you on or what are you guys discussing on the agenda at this moment, staff can answer that question right away and it doesn't have to be answered live. Or let's say a member of the public is having technical issues, staff can address those issues as well. So I think that is one of the pros is that if people are just having just random questions that they need answered the staff can answer those right away. But if it's something that does need to be addressed by the actual committee based on what you all are discussing at that moment then we're able to say that question will be answered live and we can go back and make

sure the committee gets the comment or the question.
Renoda has a question.

RENODA WASHINGTON: I just asked how are we going to tell the public, you know, just tell them what the chat is for, tell them what the Q and A is for so it won't get, I guess, mixed up so they can have a clear understanding on what they're using the chat for and what they're using the Q and A for.

JILL HANO: Can I answer my thoughts or was that for staff?

EBONY HAVEN: You can answer your thoughts, Jill.

JILL HANO: Because I thought that's what we're doing is making some new protocols for this kind of second, or like a better term, second phase of Zoom usage. And I think that the protocols they're alike on every agenda except for this one. I thought there was a link to say review council-- like review Zoom protocols and then like maybe since we are thinking about reviewing a website there might could be maybe like a button to write down our protocols. I don't know. That's just off the top of my head.

EBONY HAVEN: So can I help you, Jill?

JILL HANO: Please do.

EBONY HAVEN: So whenever we were in Covid times and the council was meeting virtually on the top of every agenda we included the protocol but you can also whenever you start the meeting as chairs of those meetings you all can go through the protocol to make sure the public knows how they can use the chat, if you guys keep the chat feature, how they can use the Q and A and what the difference between the two would be.

And after you are done with this draft and you guys vote on it the plan is to send it out to the full council, of course, but also to the public so that they are aware of what the protocols are going to be for this upcoming April council meeting.

JILL HANO: So when all is said and done and we agree on these protocols and public comment and the full council can we put like maybe an effective date on it?

EBONY HAVEN: So yeah, at the top, Jill, we could put established and effective if you would like.

JILL HANO: Okay.

EBONY HAVEN: Because, I mean, to me after you guys have all agreed I think that it would be effective after today.

JILL HANO: Okay.

EBONY HAVEN: And we really need it to be because the council meetings are coming up.

JILL HANO: Okay. That's true. All right. Okay. Cool. Everyone happy, smiling?

EBONY HAVEN: Well, before we get happy I just want to let you guys make a decision about the chat and the Q and A. Are we keeping both, are we only doing the Q and A. Like what's the decision of the committee?

JILL HANO: Angela, you're recognized by the chair.

ANGELA HARMON: That's a toughie but I feel like I like to have options and having both I know it may be hard to pinpoint everything we're trying to do while we're in the meeting. It means someone has to man all these things but I just feel like if we're going to take something away I'm not sure if that's the best thing to do right now. So I'm not sure. That's my opinion. I would hate to negate one thing and some people don't understand the Q and A part even though you put the rules and stuff sometimes it just depends on your concept or your processes that you can understand what someone is saying. So if they're accustomed to being able to use the chat and to do the things they want to do because they participated before I would hate to take that away from someone that's accustomed to utilizing the meeting that way. That's just my thought. Thanks.

JILL HANO: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Harmon. You said could we maybe try both for this committee meeting and then make aware that our intentions are to phase it out?

EBONY HAVEN: Phase out which one?

JILL HANO: The chat and just keep the Q and A.

EBONY HAVEN: So your suggestion is to allow the chat for the April meeting. I think we would have to put a deadline on it if we did it that way, Jill. So if we were going to allow it for the April meeting I guess when would be the time that you would phase it out? Y'all chime in.

JILL HANO: I don't want to go against-- I don't want to, like I want to find a solution that will make everyone happy. And that's like always my goal in life or especially in these meetings. I want to be known as the happy medium person but this is nerve wracking. Brooke, you're awfully quiet. Are you good?

EBONY HAVEN: I think she might have had to step away for just a second. But Angela has her hand raised. And I thought Ms. Dwyer did but I think she put it down.

JILL HANO: I'm sorry. Ms. Angela, you have the floor.

ANGELA HARMON: Thank you. The (inaudible) decision overall for everyone. And so I guess my next question, because I don't know the protocol, if we were to go ahead and keep both of them, like Jill said, keep them both open so then you could say effective October we're going to disengage the chat. I don't know is that still being restrictive. Is that still not being accommodating. That's my only question. I feel like for April, yes. I'm going to vote to keep both. But until everybody gets accustomed to the new protocol. But what does that look like if we decide to switch it up in October. Is that a violation. I really don't understand that part of it. Thank you.

JILL HANO: That is a good point. Continue Angela.

ANGELA HARMON: I was pretty much done. I was just kind of wondering if we kept both for the April meeting and say when we have our next quarterly meeting you make the notice saying April meeting come effective October whatever, whatever we're going to discontinue the chat. So is that a problem. Is that a violation. Is that being too restrictive. I don't know what other people-- I really don't know that part of the law. This is what I'm asking. Because we don't want to discriminate. Like she said, we're supposed to be the DD Council providing people with every opportunity that they can to fully participate in everything that we do. So if we start nixing certain things I don't want it to come back on us as not being engaging or involving everyone. Does that make sense y'all?

SPEAKER: That makes sense.

EBONY HAVEN: Jill, can I say something.

JILL HANO: Please. Then Ms. Kathy, I will get to you. But please let me know what's in your head, Ebony.

EBONY HAVEN: Okay. So Angela, just to kind of answer your question if you all would be in violation of any rules. So the rule right now is very, very, very simple. There's only two things written for public comment and it says if you go to page 396 of the rule that LDH released for public comment it says written public comments may be submitted electronically either prior to the meeting or during any meeting via electronic means. Oral public comments may be made by members of the public during the meeting. Those are the only two rules that they gave us for public comment. We were just trying to provide a little bit more structure

with the public comment just because in the past when we were doing things hybrid, like we've said, the chat was a little overwhelming. Sometimes whenever the chair was recognizing the chat it would be stuff that had been said for things that y'all might have discussed three hours prior. And I'm exaggerating but I'm just using that as an example.

JILL HANO: I was there during the origins of Covid and I don't think you were exaggerating.

EBONY HAVEN: Another thing is so this is brand new again for us. We haven't had a hybrid meeting in approximately a year because last year we had to stop in April when we were told by LDH we couldn't conduct those hybrid meetings. So this is something new for everybody and this is going to be new for everybody at this April meeting. So we're establishing the rules now. So whenever you say people are accustomed to it, and they may be accustomed to it from other platforms or other commissions or boards where they are able to use the chat. But then we're doing something different. So I just wanted to address that there's only two things we were just trying to make sure it was structured in a way that it's taken so that you guys can make sure that you are taking everybody's comments into consideration in like a timely and orderly manner if that makes sense. We weren't trying to restrict anybody or we weren't trying to make it harder or anything else. We were just trying to make sure that the council is able to have structure and conduct the meetings in like a timely manner. Because sometimes the chat was getting us off time. You guys were having longer meetings. We weren't able to get to certain things sometimes. So I think that was sort of the thought process whenever we were coming up with this draft.

JILL HANO: So y'all, just point of order. Which is just putting this out there. It is 3:54 and the agenda says 4:00. But, I mean, we are kind of nearing the end because I feel like this is a breeze discussion. Ebony, do we have a hard 4:00 stop or can we finish this?

EBONY HAVEN: You can finish it, Jill. Honestly, I think that was a mistake on my part on the agenda. It should have said 4:30. That's how long we set the Zoom for and I think that's how long we had it on the website.

JILL HANO: Okay. Cool. My chairperson notes does say 4:30. Okay. We're caught up. So we have another

public hand raised. Not seeing any council members. Renoda, you're still good? Because you're very small on my camera. So you're still good?

RENODA WASHINGTON: I'm thinking, Jill. I do have something that I want to say though. Is that okay?

JILL HANO: Yes, ma'am. Sorry I suck at this.

RENODA WASHINGTON: No, you don't. You're good, Jill. Okay. After listening to everything and considering what Ebony just stated in regards to this will be something that's new for everyone. And so I do understand that people do not always like change but since it has been quite some time we are trying to establish protocols and things. I know that the chat can be chaotic. I see it all the time in meetings. And so if this is something that's going to make us a little bit more structured I do think that we could give what's written here by public comment a try since it is something new. I did hear what Angela stated and I do see the concerns in that too. But since this is something-- I mean, Covid was what? How long ago? It was like four years ago. So I think everyone's mind should be a little fresh and willing to, you know, that was kind of like in the past. So if we're moving forward I do, now since I'm looking at this, I do think that this is something that we could, and I know that we're not going to be able to please everyone, but I do see that it could be something that would be a little more structured. And I think that we'll be able to probably receive a little more. We don't want to miss anybody either when we're doing the chat. So I do think this is something that we could make changes with the chat and just give it a try.

However, when it is sent out to the public it has to be clear. It has to be concise. It has to be all of that just to relay what we're trying to do. And it has to be something that is going to be consistent and that we all feel comfortable and agree with. And I think what Ebony stated in regards to we're not trying to take away from anybody. We're still accommodating. I think we need to stress that too. It's still accommodating everybody it is just structured a little different. So I do think that the changes for public comment is probably needed because I know that it can definitely be chaotic. So I do think that, if the council agrees, I think it's worth giving it a try. And maybe if at all, like for instance, let's just say they submitted their comments prior to. Even if it's something

that they think about during the meeting maybe the Q and A could be a little where if they forgot something or they thought about something maybe they can just submit it there. I don't know. But I don't want to just give so much because then it can turn chaotic once again. If that makes since. What do you guys think?

JILL HANO: Angela.

ANGELA HARMON: Hey, everybody, again. I agree. I'm not disagreeing what you guys are saying. What I'm saying-- I was just saying we have to be mindful of everyone. That's all I was saying. So if we're going to do this-- and are we going to try to enforce this in April or are you going to just try to ease people into it. That was the only caveat I was bringing to the table. I agree because I've been on a lot of those meetings where the chat is lit up and it's crazy and it's chaotic. And especially when Mr. Rashad was there. I'm not saying we can't move forward. Yeah, we need to move forward. We need to be progressive about a whole lot of things at the DD Council. So therefore I'm okay with going forward. I just didn't know how we would implement that. Are we just going to April you disconnect the chat piece or we going to say hey, this is what we're doing in April but come effective blah, blah, blah next quarterly meeting we're not doing that. That's the point I was really trying to make. I wasn't against the change in piece. Because it is. It gets to be a lot. And entertaining sometimes but it's a lot. Thank you.

RENODA WASHINGTON: Angela, I didn't think you were against it or anything. I'm just giving my opinion. I didn't think you were against it. I got what you were saying. Whatever you stated I definitely understand that concern too. It's just so many different things to consider with this to be honest with you. And with you saying that I do know-- what's today, April 3rd. I do think that it is kind of sudden to make these changes for the April meeting. I think it should probably be the next one possibly because either way we're still going to-- still going to be something said behind it. But I do think that it may be too sudden maybe. Especially when you're trying to implement change. You have to do like a little, you know, trial run with some things. And I think when you're implementing change, and that's anywhere, you want to give people time to process that too. So the meeting is in what,

two weeks? So I definitely agree with that, Angela, for sure. That may be too soon for people.

JILL HANO: Right. I think implementing that now would not-- Ms. Kathy, I see you. I promise I just talk so much. I think disabling it for the April meeting is almost out of the question. And I do think that my big point that I want to drive home is that we just need it to be noticed, just like to have people-- or we need to discuss when it's stopping. I'm very big on phasing it out. Like have okay, it's April. We're doing the chat. Ebony, are you trying to get my attention?

EBONY HAVEN: No. I'm sorry. My computer, my battery is low so I'm trying to get Hannah to pull up the document for you guys. Sorry.

JILL HANO: Okay. And I just think it's important. So I think we need to let people know we're having the chat now. It will be disabled whether we want to do it in July or in October, but we need to give people a heads up now that it will be phased out. So Ms. Dwyer, you have the floor.

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Jill. I think everybody's pretty much saying the same thing and I think this can be solved so easily. Pick either chat or Q and A. After hearing your discussions I think the Q and A would be better. Apparently, you know, council members get the notice and they can kind of control the questions and answers and so forth. At the first meeting maybe let both be enabled, but you have your script that you always read at the beginning of the meeting for housekeeping, add to that script about the purpose of the chat, let's say for the April meeting and the purpose of the Q and A. And that the chat will be disabled after the April meeting. But the Q and A will always be available for public comment. And especially for people with disabilities who cannot speak. You can set your rules in your housekeeping. Say we ask that everyone save the Q and A for just those who need it as an ADA accommodation. Or unless somebody let's say their mike is not working they can say my mike is not working so I'm asking the question here, you know. And as long as you do that in your housekeeping there shouldn't be any problem. I guess I'm not seeing the concern as long as we make sure we're in compliance with ADA and ADA supersedes state law. So to me you have to have one or the other. Chat or Q and A. You have to have a means a person who

cannot speak is able to type in their question. And you can simply say that in advance. Here are our new rules along with the new virtual meeting rules and we ask that everybody please comply. You're going to have a few people come in later or whatever that may forget. That's okay. Just do a reminder during a break of what those tools are supposed to be used for and anyone that wants to comment raise their hand. Personal conversations in the chat are not allowed. It's just that simple. You're just setting up the rules and just have to enforce them. Cause it's not really the chat that was causing the problem. It's the people who were using the chat. It would be the same as if they were in person having side conversations. Side conversations are asked to be kept to a minimum. Same thing with chat. Chat is just another tool. Instead of your mouth it's the keyboard. So I think it can simply be solved by sticking that in your housekeeping rules, in meeting notices explaining about the new rules. And just give it a couple meetings, everybody will understand what has to be done.

JILL HANO: Thank you, Ms. Kathy.

EBONY HAVEN: So Jill, if you look at the screen I just added something in the protocol. If you guys just wanted to keep it in the housekeeping rules I can take it out of this protocol. If you want to keep it here I can. I was just putting it in here just so you all could see it.

JILL HANO: I think it should be under the protocol that way it's in black and white forever. Or I don't know.

RENODA WASHINGTON: I agree with what she wrote.

JILL HANO: Okay. Yeah, I do too. I agree with that as well. I think it looks good. Other members yay, nay? Ready for supper, ready for bed, ready for tea, family reunion? I didn't say that. You said that.

ANGELA HARMON: I agree with it.

JILL HANO: Okay. Brooke? Looks good?

EBONY HAVEN: She might have had to step away for a second Jill.

JILL HANO: All right. So I agree with that as well. So Ebony, now what do I do?

EBONY HAVEN: Okay. So now if you guys are all in agreement I think the only changes that you all made was here where we added the at least 72 hours prior and the information at the end about the Q and A and the chat features. But if you all are in agreement with this

protocol we can have a motion to accept this as the council protocol for conducting virtual meetings. If somebody, if you want to accept a motion at this point Jill.

JILL HANO: Before I get onto that I did have a question about public comment. But of course like right now I'm kind of shaky on Act 393 and then what LDH says. I don't know what the rules are and I don't even know if this is possible, but can we maybe set a limit, like take seven public comments per agenda item or is that not in compliance with the law?

EBONY HAVEN: So the law, again, only says that you have to take public comment before a vote. The council has to take public comment before a vote and it has to be a designated time on the agenda. You all have decided to select your designated time at the end of the meeting. But again, we have in the protocol that the public are allowed to submit comment prior to the meeting written. But there is nowhere that says that you have to take public comment other than those times. Other than before a vote and at a designated time on the agenda. So this is why we included the information that in the protocol right here-- let me try to move over a little bit. During the meeting public comment will be taken before all votes and during the designated times on the agenda. At the discretion of the chair public comment may also be heard when applicable. So it doesn't have to be taken any other time than before all votes and during the designated time on the agenda.

JILL HANO: That was an idea I had last night. I hate to sound limity-- okay. Never mind. See, I wish it were the other way around because especially with people with disabilities, like I don't know if I can say what I need to say in three minutes because I don't talk as fast as you do. I wrote a comment in my head and answered it out loud. Sorry. So do y'all have any thoughts on that? Going once.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Kathy has her hand raised.

JILL HANO: I'm sorry. Ms. Kathy.

KATHY DWYER: Jill, I just wanted to make sure you understood if a person with a disability needs more time to speak it's at the chair's discretion to allow more time to accommodate that disability. It's not written in stone black and white that it has to be three minutes. Just keep in mind, you know, the DD Council is there to support people and the families of disabilities. Their voice is valuable. Their voice must be heard. If someone needs a

little more time than let's say the three minutes or let's say there's a lot of comments and you have to restrict public comments to one or two minutes. Still when there's someone with a disability the chair has the power to say, or not even have to say it, just to allow more time as an ADA accommodation. ADA is a federal law. It overrules state law. It overrules Roberts Rules. So you always want to make the accommodations for people with disabilities so they can participate.

JILL HANO: Thank you, Ms. Dwyer. And I hate to keep saying this, so Ebony, I really need help getting from A to B.

EBONY HAVEN: So Jill, just to let you know I took out the three minute since Ms. Dwyer did mention that it could go down to one to two minutes. So I did change it to say the chair has the discretion to enforce a time limit to public comment. If the rule is enforced the staff will keep track of the time by using a timer system. So I just took out like the actual minute itself or the minutes. And at the chair's discretion you can limit the public comment to however long you would like if it's getting to be too long. I think at this point if you guys are in agreement then you can make a motion.

JILL HANO: Okay. All right, girls. Are we ready for a motion? Okay. Have at it ladies. Did I do something wrong? That probably was unprofessional.

EBONY HAVEN: You didn't do anything wrong Jill. Hannah was just asking if we did the roll call but we can't do the roll call without the motion.

JILL HANO: Does someone want to make a motion to accept or not accept these new protocols? Brooke.

BROOKE STEWART: I would like to motion to accept these new protocols.

JILL HANO: Okay. Renoda, because this is a rather long motion will you please, after Ebony has typed it, will you please restate the motion if that is okay with you? Is that cool if I get Renoda to restate the motion?

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, that's fine with me Jill.

JILL HANO: Okay. So Brooke makes the motion and I need a second. I'm sorry. I read that wrong. Is there a second?

RENODA WASHINGTON: I second it.

JILL HANO: Okay. Seconded by Renoda Washington. Can you read the motion, Renoda, please.

RENODA WASHINGTON: Yes, ma'am. The motion states accept the teleconference, video conference protocols for conducting the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council virtual meetings made by Brooke Stewart, seconded by Renoda Washington.

JILL HANO: Okay. Is there any discussion amongst the committee? Any public comment? Wait. I do public comment before objections?

EBONY HAVEN: Yeah. You do discussion from the committee and then discussion from the public. Yeah, that's right.

JILL HANO: Okay. Ms. Kathy, public comment?

KATHY DWYER: Thanks again, Jill. Sorry, this comment, I had my hand raised before y'all made the motion but I guess y'all didn't see it.

JILL HANO: Sorry. I did not.

KATHY DWYER: I know. That's okay. I just wanted to add about the time limit. I believe Roberts Rules has five minutes for public comment. It is up to the chair's discretion. However, what I did and others do in committee meetings is we go ahead and set like a max time limit, let's say the five minutes, and put it on the agenda so the public sees in advance there's only going to be that amount of time. And during the meeting if the meeting's going too long or too short then you can adjust it and say we either have more or less time for public comments, okay. I just wanted to get that out there so you understood. It doesn't have to be in these protocols.

JILL HANO: Okay. Thank you.

EBONY HAVEN: So Jill, just to answer Ms. Kathy's comment. During the public comment on the agenda that's on all of y'all's agendas, even the one today, that public comment period is five minutes. So normally like let's say for full council meetings if someone wanted to give a public comment during that time they would fill out a card and then that time period would be the five minutes. So for this particular public comment it would be like the comments that are happening during the agenda discussions and then the chair would have the discretion to limit that. You can put it at five minutes. You can put it at one minute. Taking the actual time out of it just allows the chair more flexibility.

JILL HANO: All right. Any objections? Any abstentions? With that the motion carries. So now we are

onto public comment. Announcements. Any additional questions? Okay. Now the only announcement I have is that the next council meeting will be held April 17th and 18th which I believe is in two weeks from today. All council and committee meetings are hybrid with both virtual and in person options to attend. Now that the protocols have been accepted council staff will provide registration links and protocols for accepting public comment. Again, does anyone on the committee have any announcements or questions? Hearing none, if there are no objections we can adjourn the meeting by unanimous-- wait. Can we adjourn the meeting by unanimous consent? Any objections? Okay. Well, I will see y'all all Wednesday. So with that I hereby adjourn the meeting precisely on time at 4:30 p.m. Thank y'all so much. Have a great night.