

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Nominating Committee
July 2nd, 2025

ALAINA CHACHERE: Good morning. It is 9:04 and I would like to call the meeting to order. Ebony, would you please call the roll.

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, ma'am. Mr. Brian Bennett.

BRIAN BENNETT: Here.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Meredith Jordan.

MEREDITH JORDAN: Here.

EBONY HAVEN: Dr. Meda.

LAMARTINE MEDA: Here.

EBONY HAVEN: And Ms. Alaina Chachere.

ALAINA CHACHERE: Here.

EBONY HAVEN: You have four and you have a quorum.

ALAINA CHACHERE: I just want to remind everyone of a few rules. For the committee members and members of the public attending-- do we have anyone from the public attending?

EBONY HAVEN: Yes.

ALAINA CHACHERE: 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 your microphones muted unless called upon by the chair. Electronically raise your hand and 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 Q and A is to only be used by those needing an ADA accommodation to participate in the meeting. Public comment will not be accepted via the Q & A 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 Q and A will be addressed last. As with all hybrid meetings it can be difficult to keep track of all those wanting to speak in person and virtually so please be patient. All comments and questions from committee members and the public may be limited to three minutes or less should we run into time constraints so please keep that in mind. All 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 this time.

We're here today because this committee will be discussing and considering council members who have expressed interest in being part of the new executive committee of the council who will serve from October 2025 to October 2027. The positions on the executive committee include the chairperson, vice chairperson, the chair of the self-determination and community inclusion committee, chair of the education and employment committee and member at large. By the end of the meeting today the committee will make a recommendation for the members of the next executive committee for the full council to vote on at the July council meeting.

EBONY HAVEN: Jill has her hand raised so I'm not sure if she has a question. Do you want to recognize her?

ALAINA CHACHERE: Yeah. Hey, Jill, you have the floor.

JILL HANO: Thank you. Hi everybody. I was looking at the applicants and I see that some people are being considered for two positions. How is that there?

EBONY HAVEN: Well, Jill, he actually-- I think you're referring to Tony. Whenever he expressed interest he did express interest for both the chair and the vice chair so it's up to the committee if they decide to I guess vote on one. So it's really up to the nominating committee whether or not they want to consider him for both the positions or just one. I just wanted to make sure I gave the committee the information that I received.

JILL HANO: I didn't know that that was allowed. Okay. Thank you.

ALAINA CHACHERE: Thank you Jill. So first on the agenda is the consideration of council members interested in positions on the executive committee. All council

members were given until June 11th to express interest in the positions on the executive committee. At this time, Ebony, can you please display all the members who have asked to be considered for the positions on the executive committee.

EBONY HAVEN: I know that's kind of small so I'll try to blow it up. Give me just a second. I don't know if that's big enough. Can you see it Brian?

BRIAN BENNETT: Yes, I can.

EBONY HAVEN: Great.

ALAINA CHACHERE: So we have three members interested in chair. Two members interested in vice chair. And one member interested in the self-determination community inclusion chair. One member interested in education employment committee chair. And no one interested in the member at large position. There were two individuals who expressed interest after the deadline including Pasqueal Nguyen and Erick Taylor. One of the members interested in chair, Vivienne Webb, also stated that she would be interested in any position on the executive committee. So the committee will take those individuals into consideration for recommendations as well.

I would like to also point out that the council bylaws have been included in the committee packets which list the duties and responsibilities of the council officers and the executive committee. These duties can be found in article five and article seven of the bylaws. Ebony, would you please give us more details about the information included in the chart.

EBONY HAVEN: Yes. I tried to include everybody's role if they were either a self-advocate or a parent advocate, what role they played on the council. I know a lot of the committee members here are still fairly new and you guys haven't had an opportunity to meet everyone. So I wanted to make sure I gave you as much information as possible. I also wanted to point out the appointment dates for everybody that wanted to be considered for a position. I know you guys are kind of wondering if their term expires this year how are they able to run. Well, according to our bylaws if they have an officer position, even if their term expires, they're allowed to continue until their officer term expires or their term on the executive committee expires. So I don't want you guys to worry about term expirations. If you guys recommend to the council someone

whose term is about to expire if the council accepts that person the term will be extended until the end of their appointment on the executive committee.

Also I kind of wanted to point out attendance because I think that's important to consider whenever you guys are looking at officers. So if they missed a council meeting it's in there. These are meetings that they have missed. So Tony, if you look at Tony, for example, I won't go through everyone, Tony missed three council meetings and one committee meeting. However, if you look at the bottom I have two stars by one of the council meetings. That was a council meeting in January 2024 where we had an ice storm and it was very difficult for a lot of the council members to attend that meeting. We actually had to cancel all of the committee meetings on the Wednesday before the full council met. And so a lot of members were, especially the ones up north, they had a hard time driving down. So if you'll notice Vivienne Webb who's in the Shreveport area, she wasn't able to drive down. Renoda Washington who's in the Lake Charles area she wasn't able to get here either because of that ice storm. It was just icy conditions on the roads and members just felt not comfortable driving. So I did want to make sure you guys took that into consideration. So if they have two stars if they missed the council meeting that means one of those council meetings was that January 2024 meeting and you guys can take that into consideration that there was an ice storm then.

I also wanted to point out the LaCAN activity. Of course LaCAN is the council's advocacy network. And you guys choose an agenda every year. And so of course it is important that our council members participate in our LaCAN activities that happen throughout the year. And so just to point out a few activities that council members can attend. We have our legislative roundtables which occur usually at the end of January to about March right before the session starts. And then we also have legislative visits. We have a LaCAN leader in each of our regions. And our LaCAN leaders make sure that they reach out to our council members and let them know when the legislative visits are going to occur in their region to meet with their regional delegation. But also to make sure they make connections with their actual representatives and senators to build those relationships.

So legislative visits and then there's also action

alerts. We actually sent out an action alert yesterday because the senate did pass the reconciliation bill and it is going back to the house. So whenever you see action alerts this is an opportunity to call senators, representatives. We're doing it on the federal level so now we're reaching out to our federal representatives, our Congressman. So make sure you guys reach out to them about our Medicaid issue. But action alerts are just easy ways members can send either emails or make a quick phone call just to let a legislator know how an issue is going to affect them.

And then lastly, our yellow shirt days. So yellow shirt days are at the capitol. We had them all throughout session this year. And I could probably give you guys the total. I had that written down but I forgot it. The total so you guys would know how many yellow shirt days we had compared to how many like some members have attended. How many action alerts we had compared to how many members have responded to. So I just kind of wanted to give you guys like where everybody was. So again, I'll use Tony as an example. So he attended one legislative visit this past session. So that it's between this session was a fiscal only session so it started in April and ended in June. He had one legislative visit. He responded to three action alerts. Renoda compared to Tony, she attended her roundtable and she responded to one action alert. This is only LaCAN activity from 2025. I didn't take into consideration since they have been on the council. So let me go back to attendance real quick. That attendance is since they have been on the council. If you look at their appointment dates since they've been on this is how many meetings they've been absent for.

And then lastly, the last column was the leadership experience. If you'll notice I just kind of put some things that they might have mentioned because whenever we asked for interests we asked for individuals to put past leadership experience or give examples of past leadership experience if they wanted the committee to take that into consideration. And so these are what the people that are interested in these positions have given. So you guys can read through that there. Their leadership experience, some of them have been Partners grads. Some of them have participated in YLF. Or they've been staff at YLF.

And then just going back I do kind of want to give a

shootout for Jill. For attendance Jill has had perfect attendance for our council meetings. Congratulations Jill. I only looked for those four years. So yeah, she's had perfect attendance. So just wanted to give a shootout for that. So good job, Jill, on your perfect attendance. That's kind of all I wanted to explain. I can answer any questions if anybody has any.

ALAINA CHACHERE: Do we have any questions from the committee members? And are there any questions from the members of the public?

EBONY HAVEN: No.

MEREDITH JORDAN: I want to say it was really helpful to see, because the bylaws are very clear about the duties and the responsibilities. So like thinking about the importance of these roles too and what these roles entail I think are really important when putting together all of this information you gave us on the chart alongside like what the duty calls for has been really helpful Ebony. Just to feel like I have everything we need at our fingertips for today.

EBONY HAVEN: Great. I'm really happy it's helpful. I really wanted to make it easy for you guys. I know a lot of the committee members are still new so I wanted to kind of give you guys as much information as I could to help you guys make a recommendation to the full council. But it does look like we have a hand up. Did you have another question?

MEREDITH JORDAN: I was going to say for the member at large so no one applied voluntarily. For that member at large role first of all can you explain a little bit more what that role is for this purpose. And then could it be this committee's decision that even though there's no one who applied that out of these folks that we look at today and consider that if there is someone that we felt like as a committee would be a good representative could we bring that to the council. First of all saying to that person are you willing and then this would be our recommendation. We didn't have an applicant but we feel like this person would be a good fit for that role.

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, absolutely. And I did discuss it with the Parliamentarian yesterday because I wanted to make sure since no one expressed interest by the deadline of that June 11th deadline. She said yes, as a committee you guys could consider the individuals that asked to be considered

for any position. But you also can consider anyone that's on this list. Alaina also kind of spoke earlier about the other two individuals, the other two council members that expressed interest after that June 11th deadline. So I didn't get any of the information from them but it's Erick Taylor. And I could, if you guys go into executive session, I can go and grab his information as far as his appointment dates, his attendance, his LaCAN activity. And then Pasqueal Nguyen, she also expressed interest. So I could grab her information as well.

But just to give you a little bit more information about that particular position, Meredith. The member at large is the voice of the council on the executive committee. Since the executive committee has to meet at times when there's not enough time for the full council to meet that member at large, whenever they're discussing things within the executive committee or whenever they're taking a vote, they should be the voice of the rest of the council members who can't be there. So they should definitely take into-- they should be building those relationships with everybody on the council so if there is an executive committee called outside of a council meeting, a quarterly council meeting, that person has those relationships where they can call hey, we're going to talk about this issue. What do you guys think about this. So their vote can represent the vote of the full council. Does that kind of answer the question or give you a little bit more information? Okay.

I see we have a hand raised, Ms. Brenda Cosse. Okay, Ms. Cosse, you have the floor.

BRENDA COSSE: Good morning.

EBONY HAVEN: Good morning.

BRENDA COSSE: Thank you all for having this committee meeting. The chart is just excellent. Thank you so much. I did want some clarity on that attendance. Did you say this is just the attendance for 2025 or since they've been serving?

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, ma'am. It's since they've been serving. Which is why I included the appointment date so everyone could see when their appointment started and when it ends. So like for Renoda Washington, for example, her term started September 2022. So since she started she's missed two council meetings and two committee meetings. However, just keep in mind that one of those council

meetings was that January 2024 meeting when it was very icy conditions on the roads and some of the council members didn't feel safe driving down for that particular council meeting. So I just wanted to make sure that the committee could take that into consideration whenever they're looking at those absences or their attendance overall.

BRENDA COSSE: Okay. And I see the 2025 LaCAN activities. I did want to emphasize that when I served this is very important that we have leadership that is engaging on all levels of the LADDC. And that they are representing not just in their community, but on the state level. So thank you for that explanation of the at large position.

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, ma'am.

LAMARTINE MEDA: Should we take into account how long they have been serving? For example, 2023-25. And 21-25. So two years difference in the council.

EBONY HAVEN: So yeah, that's up to the committee. You can definitely take that into consideration. I will say that I think you're referring to Tony. Tony was on the council prior to this term that he's serving. And also he was filling a vacant position so that's why it's not a full four years. He was filling a vacant position. Just keep that into consideration too. But if you guys have other questions like that just let me know.

Jill, I saw your hand raised. You put it down so I didn't know if you still had a question. Thank you, Ms. Cosse. Did we answer all of your questions?

BRENDA COSSE: Yes, thank you.

EBONY HAVEN: You're welcome.

JILL HANO: I was on the phone when y'all gave me a shootout. Also it's no big deal, I just have no life.

EBONY HAVEN: Well, Jill, I wanted to make sure we gave you that shootout. That's a very great accomplishment to have perfect attendance.

JILL HANO: I work two days a week and I work on Thursdays so I got off every council meeting.

And I have another concern. I'm curious because I may change my position. If Brooke still wanted to be the SDCI chair I can move as an applicant for chair. I don't want to take over anybody's hopes and dreams. I don't know what that was. I don't know because I was kind of confused to why she was going for EE chair when she's on self-determination.

EBONY HAVEN: I don't think you're stepping on her toes Jill. She may just feel like she's interested-- I don't want to give information about people's personal lives but she is interested because she does have a stake in the education system right now. I'll just keep it at that. I don't think you're stepping on her toes or anything. And I think the committee will take that into consideration that you're willing also, as some of the other applicants, willing to take any position on the executive committee. But I don't think you're stepping on her toes.

JILL HANO: Okay.

EBONY HAVEN: Yeah, don't worry.

JILL HANO: Well, I didn't mean it like that. I'm sorry.

EBONY HAVEN: No, you're okay. You're okay. I just wanted to make sure you knew you weren't taking over her position or a position that she wanted.

JILL HANO: Okay. Perfect. Thank you.

EBONY HAVEN: You're welcome.

JILL HANO: And Erick Taylor member at large. That's all I got. Sorry, not sorry.

ALAINA CHACHERE: Next on the agenda is interviews and discussion of council members interested in executive committee positions. Since most of the members of this committee are fairly new council staff recommended the committee conduct interviews together rather than assigning each interested member to one individual on the committee. Interviewing together will allow the committee members a chance to get to know each applicant in order to make recommendations to the full council. Each interested council member has been scheduled a time to meet with the committee to conduct an interview. However, due to the sensitive nature of the discussion which could include information members may not want to share in a public meeting and discussion about a member's character I will now make a motion to move into executive session. Can somebody make a motion.

MEREDITH JORDAN: I will make a motion to move into executive session for this item.

LAMARTINE MEDA: Second.

ALAINA CHACHERE: Is there any discussion? Is there any public comment? Okay. Based on the updated public meeting law we will now do a roll call vote.

EBONY HAVEN: A yes vote is to move into executive

session. A no vote would be not to move into executive session. Mr. Bennett.

BRIAN BENNETT: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: Mr. Bennett, yes. Ms. Jordan.

MEREDITH JORDAN: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Jordan, yes. Dr. Meda.

LAMARTINE MEDA: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: So that is three to zero.

ALAINA CHACHERE: The motion to move into executive session has passed by a vote of three to zero.

EBONY HAVEN: So we'll let the public know once the committee moves back into the public meeting. And Brian, I'll send you the link for the executive session.

{Executive Session}

ALAINA CHACHERE: Okay. We are so sorry that we ran over. We had a lot of questions and things we were deliberating while we were trying to make our decision. So it is 12:51 and we are back from executive session. The committee has completed all interviews and discussion. We had a great time interviewing all of the council members and we have collected enough information to consider all the members for each position. We really took into account everyone's activity, LaCAN activity and their attendances to the meetings. And their involvement in their communities, their leadership experience was all the things that, along with other things, but those were the things that we really focused on as we were trying to make our decisions.

Are there any questions from the public? The nominating committee is ready to move forward with making our recommendation. As the nominating committee we can make one recommendation for all the positions to send the full council for consideration. So at this time I will entertain a motion from the committee.

LAMARTINE MEDA: Yes, I move to recommend the following members. For chair, Renoda Washington. For vice chair, Angela Harmon. For self-determination, Jill Hano. For education and employment, Brooke Stewart. And for member at large, Vivienne Webb.

ALAINA CHACHERE: Is there a second?

MEREDITH JORDAN: I'll second.

ALAINA CHACHERE: Is there any discussion or any public comment?

MEREDITH JORDAN: Alaina, I'll just add that we really

appreciated the public comment that we heard prior to. And just personally really enjoyed interviewing and talking with all of the applicants. We just have such a really strong council and it's so exciting to just have the people who want to serve in these leadership roles alongside the council. So I just really enjoyed the whole process.

ALAINA CHACHERE: Okay.

EBONY HAVEN: Just repeat the motion one more time and then I'll do the roll call.

ALAINA CHACHERE: So the nominating committee recommends the following members for the executive committee. Chairperson Renoda Washington. Vice chairperson Angela Harmon. Self-determination and community inclusion chair Jill Hano. Education and employment chair Brooke Stewart. And member at large Vivienne Web.

EBONY HAVEN: So I will do the roll call vote. A vote for yes is to send this recommendation to the council. A vote for no would be not to send this recommendation. Mr. Bennett.

BRIAN BENNETT: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: Mr. Bennett, yes. Ms. Jordan.

MEREDITH JORDAN: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Jordan, yes. Dr. Meda.

LAMARTINE MEDA: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: Dr. Meda, yes. So that is a vote of three to zero.

ALAINA CHACHERE: Okay. Motion passes by a vote of three to zero. Next on the agenda is public comment. Do we have anyone wishing to share public comment?

EBONY HAVEN: I don't see any hands raised.

ALAINA CHACHERE: Can I entertain a motion to adjourn the meeting? Is that what I do next?

EBONY HAVEN: There's some announcements.

ALAINA CHACHERE: Announcements. Our council meeting is July 30th and 31st at the Bluebonnet Library in Baton Rouge. There was an announcement shared earlier today with the full schedule and how to register to attend. Does anyone on the committee have any other announcements to make? I hereby adjourn the meeting at 12:56.