LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

Self-Determination and Community Inclusion Committee Meeting Summary

Wednesday, October 28, 2026
04:15 PM – 6:00 PM
4354 S. Sherwood Forest Blvd., Ste. 200, Baton Rouge, LA 70816
You can watch the meeting here: https://www.youtube.com/user/LADDCouncil/videos

View meeting transcript.

Members Present: Ashley Allen, Patti Barovechio, Ayden Blunschi, Alaina Chachere, Cheri Crain, Brian Bennett, Landon Hanks, Jill Hano, Cherie Kelly-Adulli, Robby Smith, Gearry Williams

Members Absent: Frank Macaluso, Karen Xu

Staff: Brenton Andrus, Taylor Barber, Rekeesha Branch, Lauren Brown, Stephanie Carmona, Ebony Haven, Bridgette Tally

Others Present: Stephanie Ashford, Adrienne Burns, Bernard Brown, Brenda Cosse, Erin Downing, Mylinda Elliott, Lynsey Hebert (CC), Casey Henry, Chanel Jackson, Erika Joseph, Bambi Polotzola, Susan Riehn, Kristen Reed, Ashley Volion, Renoda Washington

Call to Order & Quorum

Jill Hano called the meeting to order at 04:45PM. A quorum was established, meaning enough members were present to make decisions.

Meeting Summary Approval

Motion to approve the July Meeting Summary made by Ayden Blunschi, second by Gearry Williams, passed with no objections or abstensions.

Non-Contractual Activities

Brian Bennett (Medicaid), Gearry Williams (Office of Aging and Adult Services) and Bernard Brown (Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disability Supports) shared multiple updates about their departments. Some of these updates can be found in their agency reports which are included in your Council meeting packet and on the Council's meeting page.

Brian Bennett provided a few updates from Medicaid. At the end of this year, Medicaid's contract with Healthy Blue will end. Letters have been sent out to Healthy Blue participants informing them of the special enrollment period for from October 15th to November 16th. Mr. Bennett has also created a one-pager to include important facts about Dental Services for the public. This form will be shared with OIDD to be pushed out to Support Coordination and families.

Geary Williams from OAAS provide multiple updates. Due to the RFI (Request for Information) for PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) a PACE center will be opening up in Shreveport. They are hoping to start a build-out soon and possibly begin providing services in 2028. OAAS is in the process of reviewing 6 additional RFI proposals received in hopes of adding a center in Regions 8, 9, and 6. Townhall meetings were held and some feedback was received showing support in changing to the new process for Community Choice Waiver slots. Stakeholders expressed, they would like to see more engagement from the Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs and Louisiana Hospital Association. OAAS has started the process of engagement by reaching out and providing information.

Bernard Brown from OIDDS provided several updates. Derick's Promise taskforce has been put in place to study gaps in acute care supports and services. Everyone is encouraged to join the next meeting scheduled for November 17th. DSW Pay Rate increases were partially approved through House Bill 1; providing a 3% increase. This increase went into effect October 1st. OIDDS is currently in process of doing another adequacy study. They are currently accepting cost reports from providers to help in this study. The deadline for providers to submit their cost reports to LDH is November 30th. The Office of State Healthcare Facilities became enacted effective October 1st. This office will be responsible for having administrative control over all state facilities. OIDDS also informed everyone that, effective April 1st, all Early Step intakes will be completed in LGE regional offices.

Contractual Activities

The committee received multiple updates on contractual activities including Partners in Policymaking (PIP), LaCAN, Families Helping Families Resources Centers (FHF) and other initiatives of the Council that began with the Fiscal Year 2026 Action Plan. Additional information about these activities can be found in the Council's quarterly Status of Planned Activities Report under goals one and two in addition to reports linked in the committee's agenda.

LSU did not meet the requirements of Heart (Sex Education) or Her (Women's Health) Initiative. The contractor has not been paid for any service since July and understand they are now outside of their Federal Fiscal Year for payment. The contractor has requested to continue working on these projects without payment and have given themselves a deadline of 12/15/2026.

Meeting was adjourned at 06:03 PM.