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|  | State of Louisiana  **Office of the Governor**  **council on the Status of grandparents raising grandchildren** |  |
| **John Bel Edwards**  Governor | **Dr. James Gilmore**  Executive Director  Children’s Cabinet |

**Council on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**

**July 13, 2016**

**East Baton Rouge Library**

**Minutes**

**Present:**

James Vidacovich

James Gilmore

Jolan Jolivettte

Kathleen S. Richey

Amanda Vrunson

Latrese LeCour

Toni Buxton

Marlene Nelson

Dot Thibodeaux

Juanita Washington

Mary Norris

John McAuliffe, Jr

Stacy Mills

**Greetings and Introductions**

Chair Juanita Bates-Washington called the meeting to order at 10:42 followed by detailed introductions of the members serving on the Council.

**Council Members Affirmation and Vacancies**

Dr. Gilmore opened up the meeting by asking if any members or attendees had questions about any legislation or activities that transpired during session.

He explained to the Council that the overall purpose in revisiting the legislation was to increase stakeholder and agency engagement in efforts to ensure we address the outcomes needed for grandparents.

Dr. Gilmore expressed that the Governor’s Office is asking for assistance with filling the vacant seats on the Council, and shared with members the list of current member seats and the number of vacancies so members could discuss potential applicants to fill those positions. He also shared with members that the goal moving forward is to have the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren meetings on the same day as the Children’s Cabinet Meetings starting in August. Currently there are 27 members on that council, and to date, there are not any representatives from grandparents with grandchildren

who have mental disabilities, and members might want to consider that in making their recommendations.

Dr. Gilmore asked for member input about date and time preferences and availability to schedule the next meeting, as previous meetings have been held in the afternoon. The members suggested they would rather have the meeting in the morning before the Children’s Cabinet Meeting because it would make it easier for them to come to both meetings. Dr. Gilmore agreed to schedule future meetings at 9:00am. The council discussed the best locations for meetings to be held and expressed concern over parking issues at the Capitol and Claiborne buildings. The council inquired about getting a room in the library on Bluebonnet or at the Municipal building. Dr. Gilmore said he will check to see if ten parking spots could be reserved for their meetings if they are held at Claiborne.

**2016-2017 Strategic Direction**

Dr. Gilmore reviewed the Strategic Directions that were presented to members and explained that the goal is to create a one or two page outline that delineates the purpose, structure, communication, and operation with the public as well as policy recommendations that will result from council meetings. One example of a recommendation was creating a program for children aging out of foster care, as that is on the Governor’s agenda and is scheduled to be addressed. Dr. Gilmore stated he is eager to accept feedback and ideas about what the members want for the strategic directions moving forward so that action plans can be formulated. The council responded by expressing the need to inform grandparents about the call for their input, so they have an opportunity to contribute to the discussion an overall plan. Dr. Gilmore closed by saying the August meeting will address where the council wants to go in addition to addressing high priority Items.