**Governor’s Advisory Council on Disability Affairs**

**December 16, 2020, 12:00pm**

**Minutes**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **GACDA MEMBER** | | | **PRESENT** | | **PROXY** | **PROXY NAME** | | **ABSENT** |
| Kathy | Allen | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Amber | Boykin | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Mary | Breaud | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Walter | Carpenter | |  | |  |  | | X |
| Karen | Collins | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Katie | Corkern | |  | |  |  | | X |
| Timothy | Delaney | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Sharon | Delvisco | |  | |  |  | | XX |
| Beau | Ellerbee | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Lynette | Fontenot | |  | |  |  | | X |
| Robert | Garcia | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Kirsten | Gladen | |  | |  |  | | X |
| Tarj | Hamilton | |  | |  |  | | XX |
| Elaine | Harmon | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Sharon | Hennessey | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Linda | Kocher | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Andrew | Kuyoro | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Andrea | Lowe | |  | |  |  | | XX |
| Jessica | Michot | |  | |  |  | | X |
| Kelly | Monroe | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| John | Moran | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Mark | Raymond, Jr. | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Christopher | Rodriguez | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Karen | Scallan | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Tabatha | Taylor | |  | |  |  | | XX |
| Erica | Wallace | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Jerrie | Williams | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| Nicole | Williams | |  | |  |  | | XX |
| Gerald | Boudreaux | |  | |  |  | | X |
| Malinda | White | | √ | |  |  | |  |
| **Attendees** | | **Agency/Affiliate** | | **Attendees** | | | **Agency/Affiliate** | |
| Melissa Bayham | | LWC-LRS | | Karen Artus | | | LaCAN | |
| Michelle Guillory | | GOEA | | Konstance Causey | | | LaCAN | |
| Amy Dawson | | GOHSEP | | Brenda Cosse | | | DD Council member | |
| Dr. Fernando Lopez | | LDH- OAAS | | Harlon Cowsar | | | People First | |
| Elizabeth Adkins | | LDH- OAAS | | Kristie Curtis | | | LaCAN | |
| Dr. Ashley Jefferson | | LDH- OBH | | Anne Jayes | | | Lighthouse LA | |
| Julie Foster-Hagan | | LDH- OCDD | | Ashley McReynolds | | | Arc of LA | |
| Erin K. Downing | | LDH- OCDD | | Tory Rocca | | | Disability Rights LA | |
| Kevin George | | LDH- OCDD | |  | | |  | |
| **Staff** | | **Title** | | **Staff** | | | **Title** | |
| Bambi Polotzola | | GODA Director | | Jamar Ennis | | | GODA Asst. Dir. | |
| Jessica Lewis | | SILC Director | | Lillian Dejean | | | GODA Intern | |

**CALL TO ORDER**

The GACDA meeting was called to order. The roll call determined that a quorum was established. Vice-Chairperson Dr. Kathy Allen provided opening remarks to members of the GACDA Council and the guest in attendance. Due to social distancing requirements, the meeting was held via Zoom.

Karen Scallan made a motion and Mark Raymond seconded the motion to approve the September 17, 2020 GACDA minutes, which was approved by the Council without any abstentions or discussion.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**Legislative:** Christopher Rodriguez provided an overview of items discussed during GACDA’s Legislative Committee which took place on December 15, 2020. The complete committee meeting minutes are below. The final approved version of the GACDA Position Statements are on the last page of these minutes. A motion to accept the GACDA Position Statements was made by Amber Boykin and seconded by Karen Collins.

The action items of the Legislative Committee are as follows:

* The Committee will make edits to the proposed policy/legislative position statements.

**Education**: Amber Boykin provided an overview of items discussed during GACDA’s Education Committee which took place on December 15, 2020. Please see the meeting minutes relative to this committee below. A motion to accept the report was made by Jerrie Williams and seconded by Kelly Monroe.

The action items of the Education Committee are as follows

* The Education Committee will finalize a letter to Dr. Brumley in response to a letter sent to Chairperson Lynette Fontenot earlier in 2019. This letter will also include additional concerns relative to: ASL school interpreter qualifications, ASL interpreter pay in schools, transparency.
* Members of the Committee will share the COVID-19 survey for parents and educators within their networks to garner more participation.
* Determine leadership over the ASL Interpreters in LDOE.
* Set goals and objectives in subcommittees.

**Transportation:** Beau Ellerbee provided an overview of items discussed during GACDA’s Transportation Committee which took place on December 15, 2020. The complete committee meeting minutes are below. . Mark Raymond made a motion, Amber Boykin seconded the motion to accept the transportation committee report.

The action items of the Transportation Committee are as follows:

* + Discuss concerns with rideshare companies Uber and Lyft
  + Identify key agencies and parties to participate in meetings and activities.
  + Will meet every six weeks to discuss progress of goals.

**Accessibility:** Andrew Kuyoro provided an overview of items discussed during GACDA’s Accessibility Committee which took place on December 16, 2020. The complete committee meeting minutes are below. A motion to accept the report was made by Jerrie Williams and seconded by Christopher Rodriguez

The action items of the Accessibility Committee are as follows

ADA Coordinator Proposal:

* The Civil Rights Division of the State be contacted participate in this endeavor.
* Identify ADA Coordinators in Louisiana’s State agencies.
* Monitor areas of improvement in regards to ADA compliance.
* Create a Subcommittee to further develop the ADA Coordinator proposal.

Digital Accessibility:

* needs assessment/audit on digital assets
* committee meet with IT coordinators to discuss Accessibility Committee concerns
* Send survey to state agencies to determine the needs and gaps of digital accessibility.
* a strategic plan be discussed with stakeholders for input.

Schedule meetings to strategically plan for Digital Accessibility and ADA coordinator legislative proposals.

**Housing:** Sharon Hennessey provided an overview of items discussed during GACDA’s Housing Committee which took place on December 15, 2020. The complete committee meeting minutes are below. Jerrie Williams made the motion, Linda Kocher seconded the motion to accept the Housing Committee’s Report.

The action items of the Housing Committee are as follows:

* A subcommittee will create a map of funding jurisdiction (Baton Rouge). The co-chairs, Sharon Hennessey and Tarj Hamilton as well as Jerrie Williams and Gordon Levine volunteered to participate in this project.

**UPDATE ON EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES**

**Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS):**

Melissa Bayham provided an update regarding employment initiatives on behalf of Louisiana Rehabilitation Services. The department is conducting business via virtually and in person depending on what the consumers are comfortable with. There is a strong initiative to expand pre-employment transition services. LRS is having success on getting more contracts into schools. LRS will begin to work on the VOICE grant, which will improve services for consumers who suffer from mental illness. The VOICE initiatives will have pilot programs at the Baton Rouge and Houma offices, there will be plans to expand to other regions.

**Office of Behavioral Health (OBH)** presented by Dr. Ashley Jefferson

The department is partnering with LRS to implement their pilot programs. Some of their plans have been interrupted by COVID-19 and the hurricanes of 2020.

**Governor’s Office of Disability Affairs (GODA)** presented by Bambi Polotzola

GODA continues to facilitate support for state agencies through the technical assistance grant as they have done for the past three years pursuant to the State as A Model Employer (SAME) Taskforce Executive Order signed by Governor Edwards in 2018. Currently, they are specifically assisting the state agencies connect with the appropriate employment programs. The annual SAME survey was sent to state agency employers to gain information from employees with disabilities. There is a webpage to provide more information and data regarding the SAME employment initiatives.

The responses from the SAME annual survey was transmitted to each state agencies for their respective employees. Each state agency submitted a SAME report for 2020 and a plan for 2021.

There is a legislative proposal to create the Combined Employment First and State As a Model Employer Council to be written into law to ensure the longevity of the aforementioned employment initiatives.

**Office for Citizens w/Developmental Disabilities (OCDD)** presentedby Julie Hagan

Some of the employment initiatives were delayed due to COVID-19. OCDD is currently working on ensuring all of the service definitions for employment services, specifically in regards to the three adult home and community-based wavers are aligned. The department may be required to amend waivers due to COVID-19. OCDD hopes to restart their employment initiatives in January 2020.

**LA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH UPDATES**

**Office for Behavioral Health (OBH)**

The department has created a resource guide, and has created a “Keep Calm Line” for individuals to call who would like to speak with a mental health care professional. The OBH website has additional links to gain access to resources. The tele-health flexibilities are still available. The Department is also ensuring that individuals continue to receive needed services. A flyer will be distributed for consumers, behavioral health outreach phone line for individuals who are in recovery and health care workers. OBH is fielding messages from consumers in regards to connecting them with assistance.

The Odyssey house in New Orleans is assisting people who have tested positive who are COVID-19.

**Office for Citizens w/Developmental Disabilities (OCDD)** presentedby Julie Hagan

Julie Foster Hagan provided a report of behalf of OCDD. The department is focused on the COVID-19 response. Most of the adult daycare programs continue to remain closed due to the concerns with COVID-19. A virtual day of rehabilitation was implemented and received favorable results from those who have participated in the pilot program. The purpose of the virtual day of rehabilitation program was to address the concerns about the lack of engagement of consumers. The department is slowly building activities for small group activity. Providers may be allowed to bill for the virtual day of rehabilitation. OCDD is focusing on allowing providers to bill for small group activities.

OCDD is working on appendix K submissions. The department has been focused on the safety of consumers, caregivers, and their families. The department has been working on allowing the family members to provide care to their loved ones to limit the contact with support staff. The appendix K exceptions have allowed OCDD to extend the plan of care of consumers. It is unclear whether or not CMS will allow for longer appendix K extensions after January 25, 2021.

OCDD will consider submitting another appendix K to advocate for the best interest of the consumers to ensure that they are safe.

OCDD has fielded questions regarding retainer payments. CMS only allows for three rounds of retainer payments.

OCDD has recently implemented hazard pay for individuals who are working directly with individuals who are COVID-19 positive or under quarantined conditions.

OCDD will participate on a conference call with ICF providers to help build a direct connection with the Office of Public Health.

The Office of Public Health is taking the lead on COVID-19 vaccine coordination. Furthermore, there will be a statewide plan and prioritization plan that is required to be in line with the federal guidance. OCDD will keep all interested parties abreast of all developments once they become available.

OCDD will continue to report data via the OCDD webpage in regards to COVID-19 and individuals who are receiving services. It was strongly encouraged that individuals needing assistance visit the OCDD webpage.

OCDD has a team of clinicians and COVID-19 materials to assist the community.

**Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS)** presented by Dr. F. Lopez

LDH is in the process of creating a business plan that will increase opportunities for consumer engagement. Stakeholders will be invited for an opportunity to provide input. There are hopes to have the plan finalized and published by March of 2021.

The department has made an effort to reduce the wait times for waiver services due to the CMS rule change. The waiting list has been reduced to 10,697 as of November 2020. The waiver slots which became available during the past to legislative sessions were rapidly filled. There is an effort to secure an additional 500 slots in 2021, and is dependent on increased funding.

Dr. Lopez provided an overview of the My choice Louisiana program, which is specifically aimed at serving individuals with serious mental illnesses.

Rate increases in the community choice waiver includes increases for PAS to 325 a unit. Support Coordination services for CCW were increased to 165 per month.

OAAS is pursing avenues to serve the traumatic head and spinal cord injury trust fund, and prevent the legislature from transferring funds from the balance.

There are much lower rates of COVID-19 infection in the community-based program settings. It was mentioned that less than 4 percent of individuals in waiver programs have tested positive for COVID-19.

The policy response and adaptations to the COVID-19 pandemic include the hazard pay for direct support professionals, retainer payments to providers, telehealth provisions, increase in hours for PCAs, home delivered meals.

Elizabeth provided a report on behalf of the department. The department is currently monitoring the adult day health centers who are able to open, although the vast majority have opted to remain close. Out of the 32 centers statewide only two are open.

**STATE AGENCY/ MEMBER UPDATES**:

**Governor’s Office of Elderly Affairs** presented by Michelle Guillory

The congregate meals services have been suspended until COVID-19 restrictions are lifted post phase III.

The ombudsmen are not allowed in the facilities to visit residents of long-term care facilities, but are working with the residents via telehealth and tele visiting. The ombudsman long-term care program created a project to help deal with the consumer’s social isolation, and partnered with local schools and children who painted rocks for the elderly.

The department has a stakeholder meeting with EMDAC to discuss the planning for the next potential natural disasters. The discussions will be centered around sheltering needs, personal care attendants, durable medical equipment, and medication.

There has been an extended enrollment period (until January 2021) for those who need to make changes and who qualify for Medicare and were impacted by hurricanes Laura and Delta.

**Emergency Management Disability and Aging Coalition (EMDAC)**

EMDAC will host a meeting on December 18 with a presentation by the Office of Public Health on the distribution of the vaccination for COVID-19.

**GOLD Awards and Inclusive Art Contest**

The GOLD Awards Ceremony was canceled due to COVID-19. The Inclusive Art Contest was successful, the theme was: “Better Together Celebrating the 30th Year Anniversary of the ADA.” Members of GACDA were encouraged to participate in the recruitment of participants for its program like the Inclusive Art Contest.

**Change in GACDA Committee Meeting Schedule**

Order of the committees will change at the next GACDA meeting in 2021. The committee meeting schedule will take place in this order: Education, Housing, Transportation, Accessibility, and Legislation.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jerrie Williams. The motion to adjourn the December 16, 2020 GACDA meeting passed, without any objections, abstentions, or discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm.

Governor’s Advisory Council on Disability Affairs

December 15, 2020, 10:00am

Legislative Committee Minutes

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Committee Members** | **Present** | | **Proxy** | **Proxy Name** | | **Absent** | **Agency/Affiliate/ Representing** |
| Amber Boykin\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Andrea Lowe\* |  | |  |  | | XX |  |
| Chris Rodriguez\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Elaine Harmon\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Erica Wallace\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Jerrie Williams\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Jessica Michot\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Karen Collins\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Karen Scallan\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Katie Corkern\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Kelly Monroe\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Sharon Delvisco\* |  | |  |  | | XXX |  |
| Sharon Hennessey | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Tabatha Taylor\* |  | |  |  | |  |  |
| Tarj Hamilton\* |  | |  |  | | XX |  |
| Allison Vuljoin | √ | |  |  | |  | LDH - OAAS |
| Anne Jayes | √ | |  |  | |  | Lighthouse LA |
| Brenton Andrus | √ | |  |  | |  | DD Council |
| Carol Lee | √ | |  |  | |  | LDH-OCDD |
| Lacey Gero | √ | |  |  | |  | LDH-OPH |
| *Lynette Fontenot\** |  | |  |  | | *X* | *GACDA Chairperson* |
| *Kathy Allen\** | *√* | |  |  | |  | *GACDA Vice-Chair* |
| *Bambi Polotzola* | *√* | |  |  | |  | *GODA* |
| **Attendees** | | **Agency/Affiliate/ Representing** | | | **Attendees** | | **Agency/Affiliate/ Representing** |
| Malinda White\* | | Representative | | | Erin Downing | | LDH-OCDD |
| Caroline Meehan | | Comm. Providers | | | Jill Egle | | DD Council Member |
| Carolyn Dragseth | | DCFS | | | Kristie Curtis | | FHF Acadiana/LaCAN |
| Celia Alexander | | DCFS | | | Tory Rocca | | DRLA |
| Clarice Gallegos | | Focus Clubhouse | | | Zac Lemoine | | Gov. Policy/Legis |
| **Staff** | | **Agency** | | | **Staff** | | **Agency** |
| Jamar Ennis | | GODA | | |  | |  |
| Jessica Lewis | | SILC/GODA | | | Lillie Dejean | | GODA Intern |

1. **Call to Order and Introductions**

The meeting was officially called to order by Co-Chairs Kelly Monroe, and Christopher Rodriguez. A roll call of members established a quorum.

1. **Discuss Committee Member Survey**

Kelly Monroe transmitted the survey to the 21 members of the Legislative Committee. It was mentioned that only 16 responses were received; all members are encouraged to participate in the survey.

1. **Position Statements**

The Position statements are meant for the public to understand where GACDA stands on particular policy and legislative issues. The members of legislative committee discussed possible changes and recommendations to GACDA’s Position Statements. The legislative committee will submit the below categories for GACDA’s consideration.

The basic policy areas in regards to GACDA’s Position Statements are:

* Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation- eliminate all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation perpetrated against individuals with disabilities in congregate settings and the community.
* Self-Determination- increase autonomy, independence and self-determination of all individuals with disabilities.
* Criminal Justice- support policies that guarantee adequate supports aimed at preventing circumstances that may lead to the incarceration of individuals with disabilities. Promote human dignity of individuals with disabilities residing in prisons, jails, and detention centers by ensuring access to appropriate treatment and rehabilitation opportunities.

* Disaster, Emergency Preparedness and Crisis Preparation and Response- support policies and legislation that ensure the safety and well-being of individuals with disabilities during natural disasters and emergency situation.
* Education- support policies and legislation that aim to provide children and adults inclusive, accessible and safe educational opportunities at all levels, including vocational schools, community colleges, and university settings.
* Economic Employment, Employment and Financial Literacy- increase the economic empowerment of individuals with disabilities, including opportunities to secure and maintain competitive integrated employment, equal opportunities and having access to banking tools and institutions.
* Healthcare and Long-Term Supports/Services- support policies and legislation that increase the availability of affordable and accessible healthcare, including community based long-term supports and services, and mental/behavioral health and substance abuse treatment.
* Housing and Transportation- support policies and legislation that increase affordable community based housing opportunities for individuals with disabilities and their ability to access transportation as independently as possible?
* Inclusion Policy Area: individuals of all ages should have the right to live in their communities.

Accessibility should be considered as a category. The Co-Chairs will make the necessary and recommended changes to the above position statements before presenting at the full GACDA meeting.

1. **GODA’s Policy Proposals**
   * + - 1. Employment First and State as A Model Employer.
         2. Allow for virtual participation in meetings under the supervision of the Board and Commission.
         3. Establishing an ADA Coordinator for the State
         4. Video Cameras in certain Special Education Classrooms upon request of parent
         5. Legislation to increase participation in voting
         6. Clean up legislation to improve services for individuals who are deaf for better access to participate in legislative sessions
         7. Law enforcement training for individuals with disabilities
         8. Restore the Medicaid Buy-In
         9. Shared services amongst agencies and waiver services
         10. Work with other agencies to improve legislation that involves foster children with disabilities.
2. **Agency/Organization Legislation**

Amber Boykin shared that the Autism Society of North Louisiana is working on developing legislation regarding early screening of autism.

The Legislative Committee will meet in February to consider the legislative agendas of other organizations and groups.

1. **Public Comments** There was no public comment provided.
2. **Adjournment** The meeting was adjourned at 11:26 am.

Governor’s Advisory Council on Disability Affairs

December 15, 2020, 12:00pm

Education Committee Minutes

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Committee Members** | **Present** | | **Proxy** | **Proxy Name** | | **Absent** | **Agency/Affiliate/ Representing** |
| Amber Boykin\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Andrea Lowe\* |  | |  |  | | XX |  |
| Chris Rodriguez\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Erica Wallace\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Jerrie Williams\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Jessica Michot\* |  | |  |  | | X |  |
| Karen Collins\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Katie Corkern\* |  | |  |  | | X |  |
| Kelly Monroe\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Mary Breaud\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Nicole Williams\* |  | |  |  | | XXX |  |
| Robert Garcia\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Tarj Hamilton\* |  | |  |  | | XX |  |
| Tim Delaney\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Alice Higginbotham |  | |  |  | | X | Dyslexia Assoc |
| Anne Jayes | √ | |  |  | |  | Lighthouse LA |
| Brenda Sharp | √ | |  |  | |  | LDH-OCDD |
| Brock Banos | √ | |  |  | |  | Special Olympics LA |
| Faith Boudreaux | √ | |  |  | |  | LDH-OPH |
| Kelli Peterson |  | | √ | Chauney McElwee | |  | LDE |
| Melissa Bayham | √ | |  |  | |  | LWC- LRS |
| *Lynette Fontenot\** |  | |  |  | | *X* | *GACDA Chairperson* |
| *Kathy Allen\** | *√* | |  |  | |  | *GACDA Vice-Chair* |
| *Bambi Polotzola* | *√* | |  |  | |  | *GODA* |
| **Attendees** | | **Agency/Affiliate/ Representing** | | | **Attendees** | | **Agency/Affiliate/ Representing** |
| Karen Scallan\* | |  | | | Jazmyne Lemar | |  |
| Ashley Jefferson | | OBH | | | Laureen Mayfield | |  |
| Brandi Robinson | |  | | | Liz Gary | | LSU HDC LEND |
| Brenda Cosse | |  | | | Sarah Barnes | | Lighthouse Louisiana |
| Jana Broussard | |  | | | Vanessa Magnon | |  |
| **Staff** | | **Agency** | | | **Staff** | | **Agency** |
| Jamar Ennis | | GODA | | | Melanie Washington | | SICC/GODA |
| Jessica Lewis | | SILC/GODA | | | Lilian Dejean | | GODA Intern |

**1. Call to Order and Introductions**

The meeting was officially called to order by Co-Chairs Amber Boykin, and Robert Garcia. A roll call of members established a quorum.

1. **Update on Survey**

Amber Boykin shared the updates regarding the Education Survey surrounding COVID-19. Two surveys were created- one for teachers/educators and one for parents. The survey has been shared with several parent advocacy groups and the community to help ensure that the education committee receives a wide-range of responses. The survey will remain active until January 2021. Amber Boykin suggested that the education committee members and members of GACDA share the link within their networks to gain more participation. 129 parents and 121 educators participated in the survey so far.

Certification survey was created and transmitted to the featured groups. The committee will work to collect the best data. There will be an effort to cast a wide net to secure participants.

1. **Update on ASL Interpreters**

Anne Jayes of Lighthouse Louisiana was introduced by Amber Boykin to provide an update as it relates to ASL Interpreters. Angela participated in the discussion and provided an overview of the barriers and concerns of the Caddo parish school system’s interpreting. Qualified interpreters are vital in the development of a child who is deaf. Angela further suggested that there be a pay raise for interpreters and that interpreters be certified at 3.5 EIA Level.

Jana Broussard of the Louisiana Commission for the Deaf gave a power point presentation regarding Sign Language Interpreters in our education system. There is a lack of qualified interpreters in the educational system. There is also a lack of training, professional development. Jana Broussard also provided information relative to BESE’s standards for interpreter qualifications and how interpreters are paid. It is unknown if the Educational Interpreter Handbook is currently supported by the Louisiana Department of Education. It is also unknown who would need to be in support of proposed guidelines for increased interpreter qualifications and for providing oversight and professional development opportunities for Educational Interpreters.

There should be standards that are in line with the national professional standards, provide clear guidance for Education Interpreters, recognize Educational Interpreters as Related Service Providers, Require Educational Interprets to provide evidence relative to their certification.

Amber Boykin would like to find out who is over Educational Interpreters in LDOE, request that LDOE works with the stakeholders to ensure that they work with stakeholders to ensure the delivery of services are provided properly.

1. **Review Letter for Superintendent**

Amber Boykin shared a draft of the letter GACDA directed to Dr. Brumley of LDOE. a letter was sent to Dr. Brumley within his first 100 days as the new Superintendent; however, his response did not address many of the questions that were asked in the initial letter. These questions include but are not limited to- Stakeholder input in Special Education, transparency of Data, Guidance of the use of IDEA funding/High Cost Fund, Guidance for Professional Services, Inclusion, Secondary Transition. Another letter addressing these additional concerns will be transmitted to Dr. Brumley.

1. **Strategic Goals Teams Overview**

Amber Boykin asked that members of the Education Committee participate breakout sessions to help work on the strategic goals of the committee. The Breakout Sessions are: Discipline, Vocational Training, Assistive Technology, Related Services, and Parent Education. It was encouraged by the committee co-chairs that participants of the breakout sessions create goals and set deadlines by the end of January 2021.

1. **Adjournment** The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 pm.

Governor’s Advisory Council on Disability Affairs

December 15, 2020, 1:30pm

Housing Committee Minutes

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Committee Members** | **Present** | | **Proxy** | **Proxy Name** | | **Absent** | **Agency/Affiliate/ Representing** |
| Andrea Lowe\* |  | |  |  | | XX |  |
| Jerrie Williams\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| John Moran\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Karen Collins\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Karen Scallan\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Kelly Monroe\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Kirsten Gladen\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Linda Kocher\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Sharon Delvisco\* |  | |  |  | | XX |  |
| Sharon Hennessey | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Tarj Hamilton\* | √ | |  |  | |  |  |
| Walter Carpenter\* |  | |  |  | | X |  |
| Celia Alexander | √ | |  |  | |  | DCFS |
| Cindy Obier |  | |  |  | | XX | SFM |
| Gordon Levine | √ | |  |  | |  | LHC |
| Janae Burr | √ | |  |  | |  | LDH-OCDD |
| John Schweitzer | √ | |  |  | |  | LWC-LRS |
| Robin Wagner |  | | √ |  | |  | LDH-OAAS |
| *Lynette Fontenot\** |  | |  |  | | *X* | *GACDA Chairperson* |
| *Kathy Allen* | *√* | |  |  | |  | *GACDA Vice-Chair* |
| *Bambi Polotzola* | *√* | |  |  | |  | *GODA* |
| **Attendees** | | **Agency/Affiliate** | | | **Attendees** | | **Agency/Affiliate** |
| Tabatha Taylor\* | |  | | | Jeanne Abadie | | OAAS |
| Ashley Jefferson | | OBH | | | Karen Artus | | LaCAN |
| Brenda Cosse | | DD Council Member | | | Kristie Curtis | | LaCAN |
| Clarice Gallegos | | Clubhouse | | | Michelle Guillory | | GOEA |
|  | |  | | |  | |  |
| **Staff** | | **Agency** | | | **Staff** | | **Agency** |
| Jamar Ennis | | GODA | | | Melanie Washington | | SICC/GODA |
| Jessica Lewis | | SILC/GODA | | | Lillian Dejean | | GODA Intern |

1. **Call to Order and Introductions**

The meeting was officially called to order by Co-Chair Sharon Hennessey. A roll call of members established a quorum.

1. **Louisiana’s Housing Crisis for Individuals with Disabilities**

Sharron Hennessey provided a brief overview and recap of the committee’s activities. The Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) and Public Comment will expand the opportunities for the Housing Committee to advocate for more accessible housing for individuals with disabilities.

1. **Next Steps- Development of an Education and Advocacy Guide**

Gordon Levin provided a brief overview of the QAP. The committee needs to determine the exact dates of the activities of the QAP. The public comment portion of the QAP is very influential and can compel builders to be more responsive to the needs of individuals of disabilities. The QAP’s public comments are published and will garner much attention.

Gordon Levine also briefly discussed the Consolidated Plan (ConPlan). The ConPlan planning process allows HUD to receive updated information from a particular jurisdiction. The ConPlan also requires public comment. The committee needs to determine exact dates for activities of the ConPlan for each jurisdiction.

The committee will need to determine the essential participants. Almost all public housing resources come from the Federal Government. There are three or four main sources to find housing resources – Local housing authorities, local homeless continuum of care, local community action agencies, and public libraries.

Due to the lack of understanding of housing in our state, it was suggested that there be specific direction be given to members to carry out the committee functions, and that there be some form of a pilot program that focuses on one area of housing.

Gordon suggested that one jurisdiction area should be the focus and that the committee should get to know that area completely. A model for public engagement should be created thereafter to tackle the other areas. It was suggested by several members of the committee that there should be a focus on Baton Rouge as a pilot area.

It was suggested that someone takes the lead before any calls are made. Jerrie Williams volunteered to assist in this effort. A small group within the committee be assembled to identify the necessary parties. Gordon Levine will assist whoever volunteers to participate in these efforts.

1. **Public Comment**

Gordon Levine said money is made available by HUD for homeless. The 2021 budget will not include an avenue for new project funding. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) will not be able to provide resources for new vouchers given the circumstances but will continue to fund existing PSH vouchers.

1. **Adjournment** The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 pm.

Governor’s Advisory Council on Disability Affairs

December 15, 2020, 3:00pm

Transportation Committee Minutes

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Committee Members** | **Present** | | **Proxy** | **Proxy Name** | | **Absent** | | **Agency/Affiliate/ Representing** |
| Andrea Lowe\* |  | |  |  | | XX | |  |
| Beau Ellerbee\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Elaine Harmon\* |  | |  |  | | XX | |  |
| Karen Collins\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Karen Scallan\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Kristen Gladen\* |  | |  |  | | X | |  |
| Linda Kocher\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Mark Raymond, Jr.\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Nicole Williams\* |  | |  |  | | XXX | |  |
| Sharon Hennessey\* |  | |  |  | | X | |  |
| Tarj Hamilton\* |  | |  |  | | XXX | |  |
| Walter Carpenter\* |  | |  |  | | X | |  |
| Amy Dawson | √ | |  |  | | X | | GOHSEP |
| Jamie Ainsworth | √ | |  |  | |  | | DOTD |
| Kevin George | √ | |  |  | |  | | LDH-OCDD |
| Melanie Doucet |  | |  |  | |  | | LDH- Medicaid |
| Teresa Frank |  | |  |  | | X | | LDH-OCDD |
| *Lynette Fontenot\** |  | |  |  | | *X* | | *GACDA Chairperson* |
| *Kathy Allen\** | *√* | |  |  | |  | | *GACDA Vice-Chair* |
| *Bambi Polotzola* | *√* | |  |  | |  | | *GODA* |
| **Attendees** | | **Agency/Affiliate** | | | **Attendees** | | **Agency/Affiliate** | |
| Anne Jayes | | Lighthouse LA | | |  | |  | |
| **Staff** | | **Agency** | | | **Staff** | | **Agency** | |
| Jamar Ennis | | GODA | | | Jessica Lewis | | SILC/GODA | |

1. **Call to Order and Introductions**

The meeting was officially called to order by Co-Chairs Mark Raymond and Beau Ellerbee. A roll call of members established a quorum.

1. **Discuss progress on Objectives**

The members of the committee provided the following comments and reasons for joining GACDA’s Transportation Committee:

* Louisiana Medicaid to participate in future meetings to discuss possible funding to bolster transportation resources and services to new areas.
* An expansion of paratransit services across the state and parish lines.
* Address Transportation needs in emergency situations
* Better understand transportation needs to better serve individuals with disabilities in emergency situations
* Provide greater resources in rural areas
* Have presentations from transportation contacts
* Provide a better understanding of the rural transportation options and contacts

The Transportation Committee will invite representation from DOTD, NEMT, Medicaid, DCFS, LDVA, LWC, and GOHSEP.

* + Jamie Ainsworth of DOTD provided a link relative to resources in rural parishes. It was mentioned that if certain agencies are not living up to expectations it should be brought to the attention of DOTD.

The committee will define what work needs to be done for each suggestion, comment, and reason.

* 1. Bring Uber and Lyft to the table
     1. The rideshare companies are making money off the citizens, and are not making their services accessible services. The legislature should be engaged to create laws to require rideshare companies to provide accessible transportation. The committee will look into how other states are handling the rideshare companies.
  2. Gather contacts for paratransit systems, Connect with Human Services Coordinating Committee operated by Metro Planning Organizations.
     1. Beau Ellerbee provided that he is working on compiling the contacts for the purposes of meeting with paratransit systems/companies.

Jamie Ainsworth provided information regarding the 5310/5311 programs’ services and challenges for meeting the transportation needs. It is difficult to find qualified providers in areas that need the services in some areas.

1. **Presentation by Anne Jayes of Lighthouse Louisiana**

Beau Ellerbee introduced Anne Jayes of Lighthouse Louisiana.

DOTD provided a new policy that any updates to existing cross walk signaling would be upgraded to accessible crosswalk signals. The Lighthouse Louisiana organization has developed a great relationship with RTA of New Orleans, and has improved in several areas of transportation accessibility. There are plans in the works with the mayor’s office of New Orleans in regards to ABS standards. Lighthouse Louisiana hopes to build better relationships with CATS of Baton Rouge. Anne further provided that Lighthouse Louisiana will continue to bring calls to action on issues relative to Transportation**.**

1. **Discuss frequency of meetings**

The members agreed to meet every six weeks to provide updates on assigned tasks.

1. **Adjournment** The meeting was adjourned at 4:06 pm.

Governor’s Advisory Council on Disability Affairs

December 16, 2020, 10:00am

Accessibility Committee Minutes

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Committee Members** | **Present** | | **Proxy** | **Proxy Name** | | **Absent** | | **Agency/Affiliate/ Representing** |
| Andrea Lowe\* |  | |  |  | | XX | |  |
| Andrew Kuyoro\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Beau Ellerbee\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Erica Wallace\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Jerrie Williams\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Jessica Michot\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Karen Collins\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Karen Scallan\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Katie Corkern\* |  | |  |  | | XXX | |  |
| Nicole Williams\* |  | |  |  | | XX | |  |
| Sharon Hennessey\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Tarj Hamilton\* |  | |  |  | | XXX | |  |
| Tim Delaney\* | √ | |  |  | |  | |  |
| Amy Dawson | √ | |  |  | |  | | GOHSEP |
| Brett Domangue |  | |  |  | | X | | LDH-OCDD |
| Celia Alexander |  | |  |  | | X | | DCFS |
| Cindy Obier |  | |  |  | | XX | | State Fire Marshall |
| Erin Downing | √ | |  |  | |  | | LDH-OCDD |
| John Schweitzer | √ | |  |  | |  | | LWC-LRS |
| Lyndee Leek | √ | |  |  | |  | | LDH-OCDD |
| Lynn Nolan |  | |  |  | | XXX | | Legislature |
| Lynette Fontenot\* |  | |  |  | | X | | GACDA Chairperson |
| Kathy Allen | √ | |  |  | |  | | GACDA Vice-Chair |
| Bambi Polotzola | √ | |  |  | |  | | GODA |
| **Attendees** | | **Agency/Affiliate/ Representing** | | | **Attendees** | | **Agency/Affiliate/ Representing** | |
| Kieara Beverly | | LSU Law Student | | | Jim Mitchell | | DOTD/OTS | |
| Steve Kauffmann | | DRLA | | |  | |  | |
| **Staff** | | **Agency** | | | **Staff** | | **Agency** | |
| Jamar Ennis | | GODA | | | Lillian Dejean | | SICC/GODA | |
| Jessica Lewis | | SILC/GODA | | |  | |  | |

1. ***C*all to Order and Attendance**

The Accessibility Committee meeting was officially called to order by Chairperson Andrew Kuyoro. A roll call of members established a quorum.

1. **ADA Enforcement Proposal**

Kiera Beverly, initiated the process of creating a survey to send out to all state agencies. This survey will identify:

* 1. Whether or not the agency has an identified ADA coordinator
  2. Who that ADA coordinator is
  3. What kind of role the coordinator plays in agency
  4. What type of accessibility issues the agency faces

A question of whether or not the State ADA coordinator would be a civil service employee, state employee, or state appointee was posed. Also, it was also asked if the coordinator would oversee issues within the education realm.

There was discussion pertaining to having the ADA coordinator oversee the legislative and judiciary branch, and not just the already-present agency ADA coordinators. Kiera emphasized that a state ADA Coordinator *can* be all-encompassing. But since most state agencies already have an ADA coordinator, it would likely be best to start out having the state ADA Coordinator oversee the agencies’ ADA coordinators’ work specifically, while extending their assistance to the legislative and judiciary branches periodically.

Andrew, Bambi, Jamar, and Kiera will schedule a meeting within the next month to outline what will be included in potential legislation. All committee members are invited to participate if available. Bambi has also already brought this issue up to Policy Team at the Governor’s Office.

1. **Update on identification of ADA Coordinators for State Agencies**

Bambi sent a survey to all state agencies to identify the ADA Coordinator. Below is a chart of the responses:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **State Agency** | **ADA Coordinator** | **Email Address** |
| Dept of Agriculture and Forestry | Melissa Hidalgo | mhidalgo@ldaf.la.gov |
| Dept of Children and Family Services | Valerie Clark | Valerie.Clark.dcfs@la.gov |
| Dept of Corrections | Melissa Steib | Melissa.Steib@la.gov |
| Dept of Education | Clarissa Adams | clarissa.adams@la.gov |
| Dept of Environmental Quality | Doug Bordelon | doug.bordelon@la.gov |
| Dept of Health | Lauren Guttzeit | Lauren.Guttzeit@la.gov |
| Dept of Justice | Sandra Schober | schobers@ag.louisiana.gov |
| Dept of Natural Resources | Rikki Nicole David | rikki.david@la.gov |
| Dept of Public Safety | Ginger Krieg | Ginger.Krieg@la.gov |
| Dept of Revenue | Christina Pagoulato | christina.pagoulato@la.gov |
| Dept of Transportation and Development | Jason Hooper | jason.hooper@la.gov |
| Dept of Veterans Affairs | Dustin Guy | dustin.guy@la.gov |
| Division of Administration | Christina Cardona | Christina.Cardona@la.gov |
| Economic Development | Dawn Thibodeaux | Dawn.Thibodeaux@la.gov |
| Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness | Amy Dawson and Beverly James | amy.dawson@la.gov; beverly.james@la.gov |
| Military Dept | Carol Hadley | carol.m.hadley.nfg@mail.mil |
| Office of Culture Recreation and Tourism | Julie Chapman | Jchapman@crt.la.gov |
| Public Service Commission | Sarah Carls | sarah.carls@la.gov |
| Secretary of State | Daniel David | daniel.david@sos.la.gov |
| State Civil Service | Samantha Harris | Samantha.Harris@LA.GOV |
| Workforce Commission | Debbie Parris-Thymes | DParris@lwc.la.gov |

1. **Digital Accessibility**

A survey was create to gauge accessibility of websites as it pertains to state websites. Audits relative to the overall accessibility of a state ran webpage were also performed. It revealed that websites who were audited could definitely use improvements. Specifically, many buttons on these websites were labeled incorrectly, which prevents individuals who utilize screen-reader technology from easily accessing the information they’re looking for.

There was discussion regarding the need for legislation to regulate accessibility in digital content. As a secondary focus, there is a need to reach out to various agencies whose websites are inaccessible and referencing the audits. The ADA Coordinator oversee and enforce digital accessibility.

Bambi emphasizes that any state agency with over 50 employees must have an ADA Coordinator. The ADA encompasses digital accessibility, so technically this is already within their scope. Everyone agrees there needs to be additional enforcement measures, though. There will be a separate meeting to further discuss this issue.

1. **State Building Accessibility Survey Results**

As part of the State As a Model Employer (SAME) Taskforce, an anonymous survey was sent out to all state employees with questions such as:

* + - * How many people with disabilities are present within the agency
      * What kind of disabilities
      * How this disability impacts the individual
      * How these individuals have experienced accessibility in and around state buildings

This survey garnered 2,000+ responses. Jamar inquired about linking individuals’ stated concerns with the appropriate agencies in order to enact change.

Steve Kauffman stated that state agencies are often underfunded. He suggests possibility getting funding from the legislature. Jim Mitchell said that the future ADA Coordinator needs to be involved in this.

1. **Public Comment** There was no Public Comment provided.
2. **Adjournment** The committee adjourned at 11:21 am.

