

**Full Council Meeting**  
**Wednesday, June 15, 2022**  
**1:00 PM to 3:00**

Meeting Recording: <https://bit.ly/GACDA2206>

GACDA MEMBER		PRESENT	PROXY	PROXY NAME	ABSENT
Kathy	Allen				X
Marsha	Andrews	√			
Gerlinde	Beckers	√			
Mary	Breaud				XX
Karen	Collins				X
Timothy	Delaney	√			
Sharon	Delvisco				X
Beau	Ellerbe				XX
Jamar	Ennis	√			
Nicole	Flores	√			
Lynette	Fontenot	√			
Robert	Garcia	√			
Kirsten	Gladen	√			
Tarj	Hamilton				XXX
Elaine	Harmon				X
Sharon	Hennessey	√			
Andrew	Kuyoro	√			
Andrea	Lowe	√			
Jessica	Michot	√			
Jim	Mitchell	√			
Kelly	Monroe	√			
John	Moran				XX
Pasquel	Nguyen	√			
Mark	Raymond, Jr.	√			
Tory	Rocca	√			
Karen	Scallan	√			
Tabatha	Taylor	√			
Jerrie	Williams	√			
Gerald	Boudreaux				XXX
Malinda	White				XX
Attendees	Agency/Affiliate/ Representing	Attendees	Agency/Affiliate/ Representing		
Amy Dawson	GHOSEP	Michelle Guillory	GOEA		
Brenda Sharp	EarlySteps	Caroline Meehan	CPA		
Celia Alexander	DCFS	Clarice Gallegos	Clubhouse		
Ebony Haven	DD Council	Harlon Cowsar	FHF		
John Schweitzer	LRS	Karen Artus	FHF Lacan		
Kathy Dwyer	OCDD SAC	Kevin George	OCDD		

Kristie Curtis	FHF Lacan	Lynette Bech	
Marley Clevenger	ULM	Myllinda Elliot	FHF
Susan Rhein	FHF	Teresa Frank	LDH-OCDD
Anna Harris	LDH-OPH	Ashley Jefferson	LDH-OBH
Elizabeth Adkins	LDH-OAAS	Jana Broussard	LDH-OPH-LCD
Melissa Bayham	LRS	Rikki David	State ADA Coordinator
<b>Staff</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Title</b>
Bambi Polotzola	GODA Director	Jordan Brisco	GODA Asst Director
William Romero	Governor's Fellow	Alishia Vallien	SICC Director

### **Call to Order & Roll Call**

On June 15, 2022, GACDA Full Council meeting was called to order at 1:07 p.m. via the virtual platform Zoom. Roll was called by Bambi Polotzola.

### **Approval of March 2022 GACDA Minutes**

Tabitha Taylor made a motion to approve the March 2022 meeting minutes. Mark Raymond seconded the motion. The motion to approve the March 2022 meeting minutes passed without any objections, abstentions, or discussion.

### **Education**

Dr. Gerlinde Beckers and Nicole Flores provided a report of the June 10, 2022 Education Committee meeting. There was a vote on drafting a letter about the Special Education Advisory Council best practices as well as developing an FAQs for the cameras in the classroom legislation. There were no oppositions or abstentions.

### **Transportation**

Mark Raymond provided a report of the June 14, 2022 Transportation Committee meeting. Jamar Ennis discussed Mr. Dinero's presentation to the committee. There was a suggestion to write a letter to DOTD to address rural gaps. The motion was made to write a letter to Dr. Wilson of DOTD. Jim Mitchell seconded this motion. An amendment was added by Jamar to include emergency management. There were no oppositions or abstentions.

### **Accessibility**

Andrew Kuyoro and Jim Mitchell provided a report of the June 13, 2022 Accessibility Committee meeting.

The chairpersons discussed the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program. It will provide \$42.45 billion to expand high-speed internet access by funding planning, infrastructure deployment and adoption programs. On May 13th

there was an announcement that created the guidelines and rules around the BEAD program. It is estimated that 1.1-1.3 billion dollars may be allocated to Louisiana. The five year spending plan needs to be submitted to commerce and must incorporate feedback and challenges as it relates to challenges to digital equity and inclusion. Veneeth plans to compile a rigorous stakeholder schedule and dive into a deeper spectrum of the survey conducted by the GACDA committee.

## **Legislative**

Kelly Monroe provided a report of the June 10, 2022 Legislative Committee meeting. The 2022 GODA Bill Tracking Masterlist was reviewed during the committee meeting. An overview of the budget was given during the full council meeting. The disability community was commended for funding resources. Please review the following link for additional information regarding the 2022 Legislative Session: ['22 GODA Bill Tracking Masterlist](#). Bambi Polotzola recommended compiling a list of a budget overview for provider increase to show changes that have occurred over time with advocacy.

### **Update on Employment initiatives (including but not limited to LRS, OBH, OCDD)**

Melissa Bayham provided an update on Louisiana Rehabilitation Services. LRS is actively hiring rehabilitation counselors to fill vacancies. Melissa encourages employment on the website. LRS had an increase in expenditures and other improvements.

STEMup Baton Rouge is a community-based, collaborative project designed to close opportunity gaps and strengthen local STEM talent pipeline by providing high-impact STEM mentoring and learning experiences that positively impact student attitudes about learning and empower them to problem solve, think creatively, use technology appropriately, communicate and learn from each other and mentors. LRS is partnering with Southern University and Michigan University to provide more job opportunities within the STEM field.

Dr. Ashley Jefferson gave a brief update for the Office of Behavioral health (OBH). There are ongoing webinars to further along ITS programs. The Office of Behavioral Health is working to improve their ITS programs along with other organizations.

### **La Department of Health updates (including but not limited to OAAS, OBH, OCDD, OPH)**

Elizabeth Adkins provided an update from OAAS. There were 500 applications submitted and 90% of these slots have been filled. OAAS is currently working to approve the remaining 10%. Beginning July 1, the office will begin filling 250 spots. The wait is currently 6 months for community choices waiver (if the applicant is only receiving this waiver). The money follows the person program assists with transportation and home health programs. This is a great program from someone who is transitioning from a nursing home to a residential home.

Dr. Ashley Jefferson gave a brief update for the Office of Behavioral health (OBH). She provided updates from the legislative session. [HB 334/Act 151](#)- Provides relative to employment with behavioral health services providers of peer support specialists. A direct three-digit line to trained National Suicide Prevention Lifeline counselors has opened the door for millions of Americans to seek help they need, while sending the message to the country that healing, hope, and help are happening every day. BH Immediate Resources: [LDH-OBH](#)

[Behavioral Health Immediate Resources](#). Also mentioned that we have posted resources for those families and individuals who were affected in any way by the Uvalde tragedy. These resources are also helpful for coping and connecting with family and children during times of tragedy. If there are any needs regarding coping, services, etc. related to BH - mental health and/or substance use disorders and treatment - please reach out to Dr. Jefferson and we will assist you.

Teresa Frank reported for the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities. She gave a brief update for the OCDD & provided updates from the legislative session

Jana Broussard reported for the Louisiana Commission of Deaf. Children's Special Health Services (CSHS) works to ensure that Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) in Louisiana have access to services that are designed to minimize their disabilities and maximize their ability to live as independently as possible. Jana provided a list of upcoming trainings that will be emailed to the council soon. One of the goals for this fiscal year of the Louisiana Commission for Deaf is to modernize their equipment and how to get access that best fits the needs of the community. The funding has also been increased for the hearing aid and looking to research how to meet the needs for various demographics. Deaf Blind Awareness Week will be held on June 26- July 2.

Anna Harris, Vaccine Equity Partnership Coordinator, presented on the in-home vaccination program. Please review the follow links for data and resources: [Louisiana Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Vaccination Information](#), [COVID-19 Information](#), [In Home Vaccine Registry Form](#)

### **State Agency/ Member Updates**

There were no updates from state agencies and members.

### **Governor's Office of Disability Affairs Annual Conference**

Bambi Polotzola provided the council with an overview of the upcoming GODA conference. The GODA conference will take place virtually via zoom on July 25- July 28, 2022. Conference session topics include: Alzheimer, Employment and Economic Empowerment, Higher Education, Home and Community Based Supports, Inclusive Disaster Preparation, Intersectionality, Mental Health and Voting

Please use the following link for [GODA Conference Registration](#)

### **Public Comment**

Michelle Guillory of Gov Office of Elderly Affairs: Today is Elder Abuse Awareness Day and the PSA that the Governor prepared for us is at this link. [Elder Abuse 2022](#).

Bambi Polotzola shared a google doc that is being used to update EMDAC members [LA EMDAC Info/Resource](#).

### **Adjournment**

Jim Mitchell made a motion to adjourn the June 15, 2022 meeting. The Motion to adjourn the June 15, 2022 meeting was seconded by Dr. Gerlinde Beckers. The meeting was adjourned at 3:19pm.

**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

**Friday, June 10, 2022**

**10:00AM - 12:00PM**

Meeting Recording: <https://bit.ly/GACDA2206Legis>

Committee Members	Present	Proxy	Proxy Name	Absent	Agency/Affiliate/Representing
Andrea Lowe*	√				
Elaine Harmon*	√				
Gerlinde Beckers	√				
Jerrie Williams*	√				
Jessica Michot*				X	
Jim Mitchell	√				
Karen Collins*				X	
Karen Scallan*				X	
Kelly Monroe*	√				
Nicole Flores	√				
Pasquel Nguyen	√				
Sharon Hennessey	√				
Tabatha Taylor*				XXX	
Tory Rocca	√				
Allison Vuljoin				X	LDH - OAAS
Anne Jayes	√				Lighthouse LA
Ebonee Haven	√				DD Council
Carol Lee		√	Erin Downing		LDH-OCDD
Lynette Fontenot*	√				Chairperson
Kathy Allen				X	Vice-Chair
Bambi Polotzola	√				GODA
<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Agency/Affiliate/Representing</b>		<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Agency/Affiliate/Representing</b>	
*Jamar Ennis			*Tim Delaney		
Shane Bates			Rikki David		
My linda Elliott			Marley Clevenger		
Teresa Frank			Susan Rhein		
Lynette Bech			Meredith Jordan		
Amy Dawson			Konstance Causey		
Brenda Bares			Kristie Curtis		
Ashley McReynolds			Karen Artus		
Michelle Guillory			Kathy Dwyer		
Keisha Hertzock			Regina		
<b>Staff</b>	<b>Agency</b>		<b>Staff</b>	<b>Agency</b>	
Jordan Brisco	GODA		Alishia Vallien	GODA/SICC	
Lillian Dejean	GODA				

[Please find GODA's updated 2022 Legislative Tracking Spreadsheet here.](#)

## **Call to Order and Roll Call**

### **Updates on GACDA's supported and opposed bills**

HB 1: Budget Appropriations for FY 22-23

- Discussion occurred regarding the EarlySteps rate increase, and other disability funding
- Current Status: Act 199

HB 55: Provides for Medicaid coverage of dental care for certain residents of intermediate care facilities

- Current Status: Sent to Governor

HB178: Provides relative to the right to vote

- GACDA opposed
- Current Status: Passed

HB 291: Requires all nursing homes to maintain in effect emergency preparedness plans approved by the LA Department of Health

- The LA Department of Health, however, does not explicitly have a responsibility to approve the emergency preparedness plans of nursing homes.
- Current Status: Sent to Governor

HB 307: Provides relative to coverage for a living organ donor

- Eliminated discriminatory insurance practices towards living organ donors
- Current Status: Act 146

HB 315: Provides for the Blind and Visually Impaired Student's Bill of Rights

- Current Status: Sent to Governor

HB 334: Provides relative to employment with behavioral health services providers of peer support specialists

- Current Status: Act 151

HB 384: Requires pediatric day health care facilities to provide for installation and operation of cameras at their premises

- Current Status: Sent to Governor

HB 524: Establishes a program for needs assessment and coordination of services for people with disabilities affected by disasters

- Current Status: Sent to Governor

HB 827: Provides relative to screening of children for autism spectrum disorder

- Current Status: Sent to Governor

HB 933: Provides relative to emergency preparedness among licensed nursing homes

- Expands responsibility of nursing homes for emergency preparedness planning
- Current Status: Sent to Governor

HCR 4: Increases Medicaid reimbursement to intermediate care facilities for resident leave of absence days

- Current Status: Sent to Secretary of State

HCR 38: Forms a working group to study the unique needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and co-occurring behavioral health conditions

- Current Status: Sent to Secretary of State

HCR 39: Requests a study and recommendations concerning barriers to hiring of direct support professionals who provide Medicaid-covered services to people with disabilities

- Current Status: Sent to Secretary of State

HCR 40: Requests the La. Department of Health to study and report on the costs of providing nursing services in certain Medicaid-funded programs and facilities for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities

- Current Status: Sent to Secretary of State

HCR 112: Requests local public bodies to allow the public to view and participate in meetings via electronic means to the extent practicable

- Current Status: Passed

SB 74: Provides relative to the qualification of poll watchers.

- Current Status: Act 178

SB 260: Provides relative to the Community and Family Support System Fund.

- Current Status: Act 242

SR 58: Creates a task force to study the implementation of a partnership between law enforcement agencies and behavioral health providers.

- Current Status: Sent to Secretary of State

SR 162: Request La. Workforce Commission to study the current rate structure for vocational rehabilitation services.

- Current Status: Sent to Secretary of State

HB 645: Establishes the Community Options Waiver Fund and provides for dedication of revenues and use of monies in the fund

- Current Status: Failed to pass, wasn't heard in Senate Finance

### **Public Comment**

Kathy Dwyer stated concerns regarding HB146 (not passed in session). HB146 provides relative to consent with regard to certain medical procedures. If passed, this law would have required court approval for abortion and sterilization procedures. The disability community had concerns regarding the impact on access to medically necessary procedures for individuals who are medically fragile and/or have disabilities, due to the cost and time required for legal approval.

Lynette Bech stated concerns regarding SB342. This is a bill that would ban abortion with no exceptions for rape or incest.

- Psychological and physical effects on people with disabilities
- Current Status: Sent to Governor

Andrea Lowe made a motion to send the Governor concerns from the committee about SB342.

- With 9 yeas, 1 nay, and 3 abstentions, the motion passes.

It was suggested that GACDA recognize legislators who have sponsored bills beneficial to the disability community.

### **5. Adjournment 11:30 AM**

Jim Mitchell motioned to adjourn and Lynette Fontenot seconded. There were no objections or abstentions. Motion passed.



**EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**Friday, June 10, 2022**

**1:00PM - 2:30PM**

Meeting Recording: <https://bit.ly/GACDA2206Educ>

Committee Members	Present	Proxy	Proxy Name	Absent	Agency/Affiliate/Representing
Andrea Lowe*	√				
Gerlinda Beckers	√				
Jerrie Williams*	√				
Karen Collins*				XX	
Kelly Monroe*	√				
Marsha Andrews				X	
Mary Breaud*	√				
Nicole Flores	√				
Pasquel Nguyen	√				
Robert Garcia*				X	
Tim Delaney*	√				
Anne Jayes				X	Lighthouse LA
Brenda Sharp	√				LDH-OCDD
Peter Hunt				XX	Special Olympics LA
Meredith Jordan	√				LDE
Melissa Bayham		√	Nicole Miller		LWC- LRS
<i>Lynette Fontenot*</i>	√				<i>GACDA Chairperson</i>
<i>Kathy Allen*</i>				x	<i>GACDA Vice-Chair</i>
<i>Bambi Polotzola</i>	√				<i>GODA</i>
Attendees	Agency/Affiliate/Representing		Attendees	Agency/Affiliate/Representing	
Jamar Ennis*			Susan Rhein	FHF	
Jim Mitchell*			Brenda Bares	FHF	
Konstance Causey	FHF		Ebony Haven	DD Council	
Erin Downing	OCDD		Rikki David		
Jodi Rollins			Myllinda Elliot		
Nicky Gilles			Marley Clevenger	FHF	
Marilee Andrews			Kristie Curtis	ULM	
Kathleen Canino			Keisha Hertzock	FHF	
Staff	Agency		Staff	Agency	
Jordan Brisco	GODA		Alishia Vallien	SICC/GODA	

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order and roll was called at 1:03pm by Bambi Polotzola.

### **Discuss Special Education Advisory Council ([HB946](#))**

This HB changed the membership and number of times Council meets annually. The Council has to post reports on the school district website and send them to the Louisiana Department of Education to be posted. These requirements will allow for more transparency from each Council by giving more public access.

The bill creating local SEACs passed in 2019. At that time, GACDA wrote a letter listing recommendations for implementations to school districts. Nicole Flores made a motion to draft a letter explaining best practices for special education advisory councils. Lynette Fontenot second the motion. Motion passed.

There will be a SEAC panel at the GODA Conference. Special Education Advisory Council Panel needs to increase diversity. Any person interested was asked to contact Bambi Polotzola..

### **3. Discuss teacher shortage**

[HB30](#) Retire, Rehire Bill - did not pass  
Teachers have to sit out for a year to be rehired.

[HB396](#) Student Loan/Scholarship  
HB396 awards scholarships to students in approved teacher preparation programs.

### **Legislation**

[SB45](#) Cameras in the classroom

SB45 requires all public school governing authorities to adopt certain policies relative to cameras in certain classrooms by December 31, 2022. It passed with eight million dollars in funding. The Governor has signed SB45.

Public schools have to have a policy adopted for cameras in the classroom. Much discussion was held on how to share information on the cameras in the classroom bill. Dr. Gerlinde Beckers, Mylinda Elliot, Pasquel Nguyen, Lynette Fontenot, and Kathleen Cannino will create a FAQ sheet to help disseminate information to parents regarding cameras in the classroom. Nicole Flores made the motion to create the FAQ sheet. Dr. Gerlinde Beckers seconded. Motion passed.

*Dr. Gerlinde Beckers expressed concern with April Dunn students college admissions procedures.*

- [HB649](#) - This bill did not pass. It prohibits any form of corporal punishment in elementary and secondary schools unless a parent or legal guardian provides written permission for the use of corporal punishment as a form of discipline for his child.
- [SB192](#) – This bill creates a Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund for funding programs for students with intellectual disabilities. One million dollars was put in the fund. It passed with no opposition. Dr. Gerlinde Beckers met with Southern, McNeese, Northwestern, and Grambling to determine interest in the program. Funding will go to the board of regions. The funds may become available on July 1st but won't be distributed until the council established in this legislation develops a process.
- [SB203](#) - This bill creates an education savings account for certain students but allows for the exclusion of students with disabilities. It has been sent to the Governor to sign.
- [HB315](#) - Blind and Visually Impaired Student's Bill of Rights
- [SCR 31](#) - Related Services Advisory Commission  
This resolution creates a commission to look at shortages of providers in the school system. Nicky Gillies is concerned about the lack of representation on the commission of service providers for deaf, blind and deafblind individuals.

### **Public Comment**

My linda Elliot commented that LaCan will be doing community input meetings about possible agenda items for the next legislative session.

### **Adjournment**

Nicole Flores made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:21.

Dr. Gerlinde Beckers seconded the motion. There was no opposition

**ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE**  
**Monday, June 13, 2022**  
**1:00PM – 3:00PM**

Committee Members	Present	Proxy	Proxy Name	Absent	Agency/Affiliate/Representing
Andrea Lowe*	√				
Andrew Kuyoro*	√				
Beau Ellerbee*				X	
Gerlinde Beckers				XX	
Jerrie Williams*				X	
Jessica Michot*	√				
Jim Mitchell	√				
Karen Collins*				XX	
Karen Scallan*	√				
Nicole Flores	√				
Pasqueal Nguyen	√				
Sharon Hennessey*	√				
Tim Delaney*	√				
Amy Dawson	√				GOHSEP
Brett Domangue	√				LDH-OCDD
Celia Alexander	√				DCFS
Erin Downing		√	Rosemary Morales		LDH-OCDD
Lynette Fontenot*	√				Chairperson
Kathy Allen				X	Vice-Chair
Bambi Polotzola	√				GODA
Attendees	Agency/Affiliate/Representing		Attendees	Agency/Affiliate/Representing	
Marsha Andrews*			Jana Broussard	LCD	
Abi Waldrupe	Natl Digital Inclusion Alliance		John Schweitzer	LRS	
Amy Deaville	DD Council		Veneeth Iyengar	GUMBO	
Cheryl Crain	GOEA		Michelle Guillory	GOEA	
Nathanael Willis	Delta Interfaith East Carroll Parish		Rikki David	State ADA Coordinator	
Lyndee Leek			Teresa Frank	OCDD	
Kevin George	OCDD		Terry Simoneaux	LDE	
Wanda Manning	DELTA INTERFAITH/DIGITAL NAVIGATOR		Carol Lee	OCDD	
Sherlyn Sullivan	OAAS		Clarice Gallegos	Clubhouse	
Kristie Curtis	LACAN Region 4		Harlon Cowsar	FHF Acadiana	
Frances Landry			Krishanda Sanders	East Carroll Library	
Staff	Agency		Staff	Agency	
Jordan Brisco	GODA		Alishia Vallien	SICC	
William Romero	Governor's Fellow				

## **Call to Order and Roll Call**

On June 13, 2022, GACDA Accessibility Committee was called to order at 1:04 p.m. via the virtual platform Zoom. Roll was called.

## **Granting Unserved Municipalities Broadband Opportunities (GUMBO)**

was presented by Veneeth Lyengar. Veneeth discussed the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program. It will provide \$42.45 billion to expand high-speed internet access by funding planning, infrastructure deployment and adoption programs in all 50 states, Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. On May 13th there was an announcement that created the guidelines and rules around the BEAD program. It is estimated that 1.1-1.3 billion dollars may be allocated to Louisiana. The five year spending plan needs to be submitted to commerce and must incorporate feedback and challenges as it relates to challenges to digital equity and inclusion. Veneeth plans to compile a rigorous stakeholder schedule and dive into a deeper spectrum of the survey conducted by the GACDA committee.

## **Digital Navigators**

Abi Waldrup informed the committee that the National Digital Inclusion Alliance is working towards building digital equity. Digital Navigators are a free group to join. This group is a model from community in 2020, an open source, and stacks multiple services together. The areas for the model addresses for digital equity in Affordable Broadband, appropriate devices, and digital literacy. This limits one-to-one interactions by employing disabled digital navigators in rural areas. Nathaniel Wills stated that digital navigators are made up of member institutions that already exist in the community. Wanda Manning, a digital navigator, explained her experience in the occupation and helping others with technology. There was also a brief conversation of mental health and assistive technology.

## **Updates from the LA Commission of Deaf ([SB 98/Act128](#))**

Jana M. Broussard discussed SB 98/ Act 128. This provides for inclusion of GODA ED added to Board, a deafblind commissioner added to Board. On August 1, the applications will be open for commission. The LA Commission of Deaf can now provide standards for interpreters. Region 9 is currently looking for a service center in the Northshore area. There will be more information provided at the full council meeting on Wednesday, June 15, 2022.

## **Updates from the State ADA Coordinator Office ([HB143](#))**

There are new ADA educational resources including training videos from vendors for global interpreting services. The Louisiana Workforce Commission is currently reporting failures to provide accommodations as well as presentations of Equal Opportunity Officers and LADDC Webinars. Rikki David also discussed HB143 which provides for development and implementation by state agencies of policies, training, and reporting relative to compliance with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is now Act 22 and has been signed by the governor.

## **Legislative Updates**

[HCR 14](#), authored by Rep. Matthew Willard and collaborated with Power Coalition, NAACP, League of Women Voters, was discussed by Bambi Polotzola. HCR 14 creates a task force to study and make recommendations relative to the voting rights of people with disabilities. The findings will be reported to the legislature by Feb. 1 and members should consist of at least three people with disabilities.

## **Public Comments**

Krishanda Sanders from East Carroll Public Library discussed that the parish will be creating an access point to an attorney for underserved communities. She also stated that there are 5 libraries included in the program with the Board of Regents. The East Carroll Public Library is beginning to offer services to the community and hands-on education on how to use technology.

## **Adjournment**

John Schweitzer made a motion to adjourn the June 14, 2022 meeting. The Motion to adjourn the June 14, 2022, meeting was seconded by Andrea Lowe. The meeting was adjourned at 2:46 p.m.

**TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**  
**Tuesday, June 14, 2022**  
**2:00PM – 3:00PM**

Meeting Recording: <https://bit.ly/GACDA2206Transp>

Committee Members	Present	Proxy	Proxy Name	Absent	Agency/Affiliate/Representing
Andrea Lowe*	√				
Beau Ellerbee*	√				
Elaine Harmon*				X	
Jamar Ennis	√				
Jim Mitchell	√				
Karen Collins*				XX	
Karen Scallan*				XX	
Kristen Gladen*				X	
Mark Raymond, Jr.*	√				
Pasqueal Nguyen	√				
Sharon Hennessey*	√				
Amy Dawson	√				GOHSEP
Jamie Ainsworth				X	DOTD
Kevin George	√				LDH-OCDD
Teresa Frank	√				LDH-OCDD
Lynette Fontenot*				X	Chairperson
Kathy Allen				X	Vice-Chair
Bambi Polotzola	√				GODA
Attendees	Agency/Affiliate/Representing		Attendees	Agency/Affiliate/Representing	
Ebony Haven	Ebony Haven		Ebony Haven	Ebony Haven	
DD Council	DD Council		DD Council	DD Council	
Staff	Agency		Staff	Agency	
Jordan Brisco	GODA		Alisha Vallien	SICC	
William Romero	Governor's Fellow				

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

Meeting called to order and roll was called at 2:02 pm

## **Sportran (Shreveport/Bossier Transportation System) - Deniro Washington**

Federal Grant for Public Trans Marketing Dollars was used to create a fare free system through 2023. They are utilizing American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds to support the free fare system. The only thing ARP funding could be used for is marketing. They are using the marketing of free fare rides to meet that criteria. They are in the process of sustaining the zero fare through community partners. They are in the process of completing "Vision 2022" which is total Fleet Replacement. Their oldest bus is now a 2017. The Governor and Dr. Shawn Wilson has been very helpful in accessing federal funds.

Recent project is providing access to the community to provide accessibility through a new transit resource center, which is a \$7 million project. New transfer facility will allow food court, retail stores, and additional services. This location provides mobility to the community.

The ADA approval office will be located in the new transit resource center. It will be similar to what Austin, TX has. There will be a physical therapist on staff to identify as well as help create plans for fixed routes and connections to ADA paratransit services.

There will be ADA staff in the center to assist ADA passengers to their connecting transit.

There will be a waiting area for an Amtrak Train which should be in the area in 2 to 3 years. Second floor center will have an operational control center that gives access to all cameras with DOTD. It will help to provide information to optimize transit. There will be a safety training center as well as simulated driving.

Sportan Ecolane On Demand App gives riders more power to select rides when they need by using regular vehicles such as Malibu, Dodge Charger, Dodge Caravan. Using the app, people set up a profile which allows them to set up what kind of vehicle is needed, similar to an Uber/Lyft. Gives priority with ADA clients. Ecolane is being replaced by an app called RideCo. Rideco interfaces with fixed routes to make the most efficient use of the transit system.

Before the fare free system was enacted, Sportran contracted with the public school systems for some students to utilize Sportran to commute to school. School utilized federal funds. Since the school system paid the monthly pass, this helped families because students could use the transit any time.

Discussion included Rural division within DOTD may need to review their overall operations plan. MPOs should address in human service coordinating meetings. Seems like no one wants to be responsible for coordination. Urban transit leaders met with Dr. Willson regarding connecting urban areas across the state but the system failed

The Louisiana Public Transit Association, which Deniro Washington is the current president, has had discussions about coordination but the discussions end without anyone taking responsibility.

**Adjournment** Motion to adjourn at 3:07 p by Jim Mitchell. Motion seconded by John Schweitzer