**Governance Board Meeting Minutes**

**Northwest Louisiana Human Services District**

**November 20, 2023**

1310 N. Hearne Avenue – Shreveport Behavioral Health Clinic – Shreveport, LA

Called to Order: By Trudie Abner at 5:30pm

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance: Invocation led by Doug Efferson. Pledge by Trudie Abner.

Roll Call: Crystal Rabo, Karisma Jones, and Trudie Abner were present. David Hoey, D. McCoy, and Kristie Copeland were excused. Bossier, Claiborne, DeSoto, Natchitoches, Sabine, and Governor Appointee #1 have no board representative at this time. A quorum of 3 out of 6 board members confirmed by Trudie Abner. Doug Efferson, Executive Director was present and informed the Board that Don Pledger, Board representative for Claiborne Parish, had to resign from the Board due to a conflict of interest arising from him taking a new job as the 988 Director at LACG. All agreed that Don will be a strong asset for LACG and wished him well in this new endeavor.

Approval of Agenda: Moved by Crystal Rabo to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Karisma Jones, and unanimously approved.

Approval of the Minutes for October 16, 2023: Moved by Crystal Rabo to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Karisma Jones, and unanimously approved.

Guest and Public Comments: Sharon Doyle, Director of Developmental Disabilities and JoElla Johnson, Waiver Supervisor were welcomed to the meeting as guest speakers.

Presentation by Sharon Doyle and JoElla Johnson on Developmental Disability Services: Sharon Doyle presented information on what conditions are included as a developmental disability, who is eligible for services, and the various programs in place for the provision of services. Individual Family Supports were highlighted as a very flexible service which frequently runs low on funding before the end of the fiscal year and that LDH is looking at increasing funding for this service as part of the FY24-25 budget. JoElla Johnson gave an overview of the four waiver programs, the elimination of the waiver wait list, the increase in waivers being granted, and the reason why an additional FTE has been requested for waiver services in the FY 24-25 budget. Sharon Doyle highlighted their involvement in PASRR assessments and their work in properly placing individuals in a home setting instead of a nursing home. Additionally, Sharon Doyle explained how they work with Early Steps to make sure a smooth and seamless transition occurs from Early Steps into the Developmental Disability services.

Executive Limitations: Doug Efferson gave a summary of his written report on Financial Conditions & Activities, Communication and Support to the Board, and Financial Planning/Budgeting. Of note was the Crisis Response Coalition Summit led by Shreveport Mayor Tome Arceneaux and LSU Health Shreveport Chancellor David Guzick, MD, PhD. where all present agreed to work with CADA, through written MOUs, on how they will support the promotion of, referral to, and use of community-based crisis services in northwest Louisiana. In addition, Doug Efferson reported on the success of the Annual HSIC meeting in Baton Rouge where all ten local governmental entities gave a presentation on their unique services and accomplishments. Also, Doug Efferson reported that Hope Connections recently opened their Solid Ground Safe Haven shelter at 2350 Levy Street, Shreveport, LA. 71103. This a low impact shelter (no drug screen required) is unique to the area. Of note is their plans to add pet care with veterinary services soon.

Board Business: Trudie Abner led a review of the Board Job Description policy. A brief discussion was held regarding the policy. Crystal Rabo motioned to accept the policy without changes, seconded by Karisma Jones, and unanimously approved. Trudie Abner encouraged board members to complete the EXCELerator online board training and highlighted how the training helps clarify Policy Governance format and function. The October Board Compliance Monitoring Summary Report was reviewed and accepted. The November Board Compliance Monitoring Tool was completed and given to Doug Efferson for summary. The next meeting date/time was agreed to be December 18, 2023 at 5:30pm.

Announcements/Acknowledgements: Doug Efferson thanked the Board members present for their attendance during the holiday week and assuring a quorum was achieved.

Adjournment: Crystal Rabo moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:40pm, seconded by Karisma Jones, and unanimously approved.

Minutes Prepared by Trudie Abner, Board Vice Chair