

**Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs**  
**State of Louisiana**  
**Office of the Governor**

**JEFF LANDRY**  
GOVERNOR



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**Executive Board on Aging**  
LESLIE LOUVIERE-KEEN CHAIRWOMAN

**MINUTES OF THE LA EXECUTIVE BOARD ON AGING (LEBA) MEETING**  
**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ELDERLY AFFAIRS**  
**Wednesday February 19, 2025 11:00 AM**  
**Galvez Building – Oliver Pollock Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Quarterly Meeting of the Louisiana Executive Board on Aging (LEBA) started at 11:00 AM by Ms. Leslie Keen, LEBA Chairwoman with Ms. Cheri Crain serving as Secretary, in person.

Pledge of Allegiance: Mr. Ricco Thomas

Invocation: Mr. Johnny Berthelot

**ROLL CALL**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Ms. Leslie Keen  
Ms. Blanche Wilks  
Ms. Ann Keene  
Mr. Charles "Buddy" Pugh  
Mr. Huey Beverly  
Mr. Johnny Berthelot  
Mr. Ricco Thomas  
Ms. Heather Prejean

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Ms. Worlita Jackson  
Mr. Terry Courville  
Mr. Donald Mallet  
Mr. Willie Lewis

**GUESTS:** Area Agency, Council on Aging Directors and staff

**GOEA STAFF:** Mrs. Amanda Smith, Executive Director, Ms. Cheri Crain, Secretary, Mrs. Kayla Doyle, Program Manager 1A, and Mr. Steve Kabel Legal Counsel

**ROLL CALL**

Chair, Ms. Leslie Keene asked Ms. Cheri Crain to call the roll. Members present eight.

## **READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the November 12, 2024 meeting were presented for approval. **MOTION:** Mr. Johnny Berthelot moved and it was seconded by Mr. Huey Beverly that the November 12, 2024 minutes be approved. Motion carried.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:**

Mrs. Amanda Smith reviewed the report with the Board. Some highlights from the report:

### **GOEA Staff:**

GOEA is close to being fully-staffed, which would put us at 84 employees. We have a few open positions in Elderly Protective Services, a few in Accounting & Finance, and one in Home & Community Based Services. We are anxious to fill the positions and to continue to provide great service for Louisiana's seniors.

### **Federal Updates:**

We continue to watch for updates regarding funding from federal sources. As of this time, we do not anticipate any issues with receiving funds from ACL, but we continue to get updates and have contingency plans in mind.

As of March 15, 2024, changes to the Older Americans Act were made effective, but due to the need for states to implement the new federal regulations in their own policies and procedures, regulated entities were given until October 1, 2025 to implement the new requirements.

GOEA has a working draft of our new Policies & Procedures Manual, incorporating required changes according to federal law. We have engaged the Councils and Area Agencies on Aging to give them notice of upcoming changes, and received valuable input from directors.

### **Services:**

See the attached service summary for a comprehensive list of services provided. In the second quarter of fiscal year 2025, 753138 Congregate Meals were served, along with 1,823,972 Home Delivered Meals. We are seeing changes in the needs of seniors and finding better ways to serve them. Our federal partners at ACL have enabled service providers to allow for "Grab and Go" meals, due to their flexibility and popularity. We will continue to encourage that the Councils on Aging, Senior Centers, etc. find ways to engage seniors socially, even if they do not sit and consume an entire meal at the facility.

### **Elderly Protective Services:**

EPS has assigned 3,024 elder abuse and neglect cases to investigators so far this fiscal year. We currently have 1,254 open cases. We are seeing some great results from adding on additional EPS investigators and supervisors. Only a handful of investigators have over 50 cases assigned, this is a huge improvement and relief to staff. We expect these numbers to continue to improve, as we finalize our hiring and train existing staff.

**Louisiana Legislative Session:** GOEA's budget is currently under review at the state budget office. As of now, we do not anticipate any cuts and have had positive feedback from our budget officers.

We only have one piece of legislation that directly pertains to us, which is a proposed minor change in the Adult Protective Services Act, which are the statutes followed by Elderly Protective Services. There is a conflict in state banking laws, which makes some banks hesitant to provide financial records needed in the course of an EPS investigation. We hope the change will make financial institutions less wary of liability.

Senior Day at the State Capital is set for Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Councils enjoy attending and bringing some of their clients to visit and tour the capitol building.

An email was sent out to those members that would like Ethics training. We didn't have anyone respond asking for training; however, Stephen can still provide the training if someone requests it.

**LEBA By-Laws:** Board members reviewed recommended updates to the LEBA By-Laws and adopted all suggested changes.

**Membership:** Board members discussed member absenteeism and declared Worlita Jackson's position vacant.

**LACOADA:** Presented by Mr. David Lewis: Discussed the Spring Conference the dates are April 21st – April 24th, 2025 at the Hilton in Baton Rouge. Senior day at the Capital would be on April 22nd.

Al Robichaux discussed funding for seniors. Currently they are paid \$2.50 and will be asking for \$4.00 which is an increase of \$1.50 per senior. We have Senators to support and introduce the bill in session.

**LANA:** Presented by Ms. Leslie Keen: The annual conference was a success and they are looking into setting dates for later this year. More information will be forthcoming.

**Public Comment:** Mr. Martin from New Orleans Council on Aging spoke to the LEBA Board members about some statistical census data specific to people aged 60 and older.

New Orleans has 79,200 people older than 60 years old. Of the 142,158 households in Orleans Parish, 58,545 have at least one senior living in them with 34,132 households having a senior living by themselves. 8,313 seniors are currently raising their grandchildren.

The local population has decreased from 82,000 to 79,200. Some of the reasons for this decline are:

- New Orleans had a higher mortality rate amount hose aged 60 and older as a result of the pandemic

- Lack of resources
- A higher cost of living in New Orleans

In the last few years, New Orleans has become first in the nation in several negative areas as related to Older Americans:

- The metropolitan area has risen to first in the nation of the largest population of seniors who are food insecure or have a very low food security.
- The metropolitan area has risen to first in the nation for the largest population of seniors living in poverty.

For the Fiscal Year of 2022-23, The New Orleans Council on Aging provided the equivalent of over \$4 Million in services to the City's older adult population.

Mr. Martin provided a brochure with additional statistics and you can contact the New Orleans Council on Aging if you would like a copy.

**SCHEDULE QUARTERLY MEETINGS:** The tentative dates scheduled for 2025:

The next LEBA meeting will be held on April 24, 2025.

August 20, 2025  
October 15, 2025

**ADJOURN:** Motion to Adjourn: Mrs. Blanche Wilks moved and Mr. Charles "Buddy" Pugh seconded it. Meeting adjourned at 12:07 PM.

Prepared by Ms. Cheri Crain, Compliance & Planning Program Manager 2, Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs.