

**Council on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
December 8, 2015 at 10:00AM
Claiborne Building, Thomas Jefferson Room 1-136B
1201 North 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70806**

Minutes

Members Present:

Toni Buxton, Department of Children and Family Services
Mary Norris, Department of Health and Hospitals
Leslie Hill, Legislative and Community Liaison
Amanda Brunson, Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana
John "Eddie" McAuliffe, Louisiana Bar Association
Dana Hunter, Louisiana Children's Trust
Dot Thibodaux, President of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
Kathy Coleman, Grandparent citizen committed to raising grandchildren
Rita Hathorne, Grandparent Committed to raising grandchildren
Stacy Mills, Office of Elderly Affairs
Brittni Ghoran, Legislative Assistant for Representative Regina Barrow

Others Present:

LaTrese LeCour, Department of Children and Family Services

Members Not Present:

Representative Regina Barrow, Louisiana House of Representatives
Senator Sharon Broome, Louisiana Senate
Donna Bowie, Office of Juvenile Justice
Christie Smith, Children's Cabinet
Carmen Weisner, National Association of Social Workers
Kathleen Richey, LA CASA
Anthony Recasner, Agenda for Children

Participants were present in the meeting room at the **Claiborne Building, Thomas Jefferson Room 1-136B; 1201 North 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70806**

A quorum was not present, so minutes from August 28, 2013, November 20, 2013, March 25, 2014, May 9, 2014, August 12, 2014, December 8, 2014, March 17, 2015, September 21, 2015 were not able to be approved.

- 1) Toni Buxton led discussion on the agenda items, including the legislated purpose of the council.
- 2) Amanda Brunson stated the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board has added the focus of grandparents. The group recommended the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Council be moved under the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board and make the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Council an ongoing agenda item.
- 3) Ms. Dot discussed the GRG is an important topic and the issues need to be addressed. She indicated there is no statewide interest, no forum setup to discuss issues further.
- 4) Members recommended to Ms. Ghoran from Rep. Barrow's office to write a resolution to transfer the GRG to the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board with the understanding and the GRG meeting would not end until it has been successfully transferred to the Children's Cabinet. Other group members indicated they would like to continue the GRG for another year until it is successfully transferred to prevent the issue from being lost.

- 5) Mr. McAuliffe suggested the council to utilize conference calling in order to increase participation. DCFS will obtain further information regarding this from our Bureau of General Council. He also indicated he could provide an alternate meeting location in Baton Rouge for the upcoming meetings.
- 6) Ms. Brunson advised that due to the change in governors, the previously scheduled Children's Cabinet Advisory Board meeting was cancelled and the next meeting has not been scheduled. She also indicated that the Executive Director will be changing as well.
- 7) Members requested DCFS contact the legislatures and request that they contact each agency to require their agency to participate in the council meetings.
- 8) Members agreed that they would like an updated members list, strategic plan and grandparents' fact sheet for Louisiana.
- 9) Kathy Coleman stated the Annual Grandparents Meeting will be on April 22, 2016 from 8am to 3pm at Holiday Inn in Baton Rouge.
- 10) DCFS discussed the annual report is due to the governor in January 2016, so the next meeting may not be included in the annual reporting. However the annual report will be distributed to council members when it is finalized.
- 11) The next meeting was tentatively scheduled in March 2016 with a new location with accessible parking. DCFS will notify all members of the location, date and time of the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned.

