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

**September 18, 2018**

**Minutes**

Attendance

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **AGENCY** | **GACDA MEMBER** | **PRESENT** | **PROXY** | **PROXY NAME** | **ABSENT** |
| GOHSEP | Amy Dawson |  |  |  | X |
| OBH (LDH) | Ashley Jefferson | √ |  |  |  |
| LaCAN/Parent | Ashley McReynolds | √ |  |  |  |
| DCFS | Christopher Kirby |  |  |  | X |
| Fire Marshall | Cynthia Obier | √ |  |  |  |
| Provider/Parent | Donna Breaux | √ |  |  |  |
| Senator | Gerald Boudreaux |  |  |  | X |
| Advocate | Jamie Karam |  |  |  | X |
| LDE | Jamie Wong | √ |  |  |  |
| DOTD | Joshua Hollins |  | √ | Tina Anthalone |  |
| OCDD (LDH) | Julie F. Hagan | √ |  |  |  |
| FHF/Parent | Katie Corkern | √ |  |  |  |
| Arc of LA | Kelly Monroe | √ |  |  |  |
| Providers | Laura Brackin | √ |  |  |  |
| LASEA | Laureen Mayfield | √ |  |  |  |
| LRC | Libby Murphy |  | √ | Anne Jayes |  |
| Parent | Linda Kocher | √ |  |  |  |
| LDVA | Linda Theriot |  |  |  | X |
| **Chair** / Advocate | Lynette Fontenot | √ |  |  |  |
| Representative | Malinda White | √ |  |  |  |
| Higher Education | Mary Breaud | √ |  |  |  |
| LWC - LRS | Melissa Bayham | √ |  |  |  |
| GOEA | Michelle Guillory |  |  |  | X |
| Advocate | Pam Darby |  |  |  | X |
| Deaf/DB/HoH | Paula Rodriguez | √ |  |  |  |
| SILC | Roszella Viltz | √ |  |  |  |
| DD Council | Sandee Winchell | √ |  |  |  |
| People First | Sharon Hennessey | √ |  |  |  |
| Advocacy Center | Stephen Kauffman | √ |  |  |  |
| OAAS (LDH) | Tara Leblanc |  |  |  | X |
| LATAN | Yakima Black |  | √ | April Rollins |  |
| **ROLE** | **STAFF** |  |  |  |  |
| Exec Director | Bambi Polotzola | √ |  |  |  |
| Asst. Director | Jamar Ennis | √ |  |  |  |
| Coordinator | April Dunn | √ |  |  |  |
| SILC Director | Jessica Lewis | √ |  |  |  |
| SICC Director | Melanie Washington | √ |  |  |  |
| **AGENCY** | **GUESTS** |  |  |  |  |
| DOTD | Jamie Ainsworth | √ |  |  |  |
| LHC | Chaunda Jackson | √ |  |  |  |
| Legislature | Lynn Noland | √ |  |  |  |

1. **Call to Order and Introductions**

The GACDA meeting was officially called to order at 10:35. The Advisory Council members briefly introduced themselves in their official capacities. Quorum was established.

A motion was made by Rose Viltz to approve the June 19, 2018 meeting minutes as amended; the motion was seconded by Melinda White. The meeting minutes were approved without opposition.

1. **Overview of the Public Transportation Section DOTD**

Jamie Ainsworth representing DOTD, provided an overview via PowerPoint presentation of the services offered by DOTD and how it impacts the various departments and individuals with disabilities. Council members asked questions regarding 5310/5311 programs, and the range of services for accessible transportation for persons with disabilities across Louisiana. Ainsworth provided council members with pamphlets relative to Louisiana’s transit infrastructure and services and her contact information. Ainsworth also mentioned that she will send the electronic version of the PowerPoint presentation to Executive Director Bambi Polotzola for dissemination to the GACDA members.

1. **Overview or the Housing Programs: Presented by LA Housing Corporation**

Chawuna Jackson of the Louisiana Housing Authority provided an overview of services offered by the Louisiana Housing Corporation. Jackson provided information to members of the council relative to the: Voucher Based Program, the various Louisiana Permanente Supportive Housing Programs that serves individuals with disabilities and the elderly. Jackson discussed the partnerships between Louisiana Medicaid and the Louisiana Department of Health that enables the Louisiana Housing Authority to streamline services. Jackson also provided physical copies of the application for Permanent Supportive Housing Program. Council members asked questions relative to the number of individuals served under the discussed programs. Jackson mentioned that there are approximately 5,000 individuals with disabilities on the waiting list for services. The committee members also expressed interest in seeing an audit relative to how the money for the aforementioned services are being spent. Jackson mentioned that there are audits performed on the state and federal level, and there is a compliance department to conduct inspections. GACDA members expressed a concern for the lack of housing opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The committee also asked for a one-pager of programs and services for individuals with disabilities. Jackson will provide this one-page document to Disability Affairs and the members of GACDA so that referrals can be made to constituents.

1. **Committee Reports and Discussion**
   1. Education

The Education Committee meeting was held with a quorum, and the minutes were approved as amended. The committee reviewed data relative to alternative assessment. Jamie Wong will provide the necessary data. The committee would like to determine how many students with disabilities not taking alternate assessment are enrolled in applied courses and not receiving Carnegie Units. The committee reasoned that it is important that the aforementioned students receive Carnegie Units because it is a requirement for them to receive a high school diploma. The Committee also discussed the DCAI calculation, and how it should be used to determine how many students with disabilities are on pace to graduate with the necessary Carnegie Units to graduate in four years with a high school diploma.

The Education Committee also discussed the abuse of students in self-contained settings, and how this problem can be addressed. It was mentioned that advocates across the state are calling upon the legislature to mandate cameras and microphones in the classroom. The committee discussed inclusion vs. segregation.

The Education Committee passed two motions:

(1) ***Ask the Governor to support any legislation that will allow cameras and microphones in any self-contained special education class rooms.*** The members of GACDA passed the first motion by majority with Jamie Wong, Ashley Jefferson, and Mary Breaux abstaining from the vote.

Some Education Committee members expressed concerns with unfunded mandates in regard to placing cameras and microphones in the classroom, which other expressed that it will be a cost savings to school systems in terms of preventing the cost of litigation and settlements if an incident of abuse/neglect can be prevented by the installation of the cameras/microphones. The DD Council will consider this course of action in its legislative agenda, in addition to seeking the Governor’s support.

(2) ***Ask the Governor to support continued discussions and efforts to monitor LRE in Louisiana’s public schools.*** The members of GACDA passed the second motion by majority with Jamie Wong abstaining from the vote.

* 1. Accessibility

The committee meeting minutes from June 19, 2018 were not available. A motion was made to defer the approval of the June 19, 2018 meeting minutes at the next GACDA Meeting. This motioned passed without any opposition.

Linda Nolan, ADA Coordinator of the Louisiana State Capitol participated in the Accessibility Committee to provide updates regarding the accessibility concerns at the capitol. Steve Kaufman and Sharon Hennessey will meet with Mark Moses of Facility Planning before the next GACDA meeting to address the various concerns with accessibility of the State Capitol and will provide an update at the next meeting.

Alario Hall is not fully accessible, and is problematic for individuals with disabilities. The signage at Alario Hall will be changed, and it was recommended that signage that provides directions to Alario Hall be changed and visible in the parking lot. It was also recommended that a “call box” be placed at the bottom ramp so that a capitol staff worker may allow an individual to enter. It was also determined that there are the correct number of parking spaces for accessible vans; however, it was also determined that many individuals illegally park in the restricted spaces.

Linda mentioned that funds for captioning and sign language were collected via taxes to provide captioning services. The Louisiana Department of the Treasury will accept the money, and will be tendered to Louisiana Commission for the Deaf to render services. Committee members discussed how this funding should be dispersed among agencies to ensure that services are rendered properly. Committee members had many concerns with how the money from the Telecommunications for the Deaf Fund is being released, collected, and used. It was advised by committee members that LCD be invited to the next meeting to express their concerns.

GACDA members mentioned that often times the interpreter cannot be seen during public broadcast of press conferences during emergencies or natural disasters. Cindy Obier made a motion to ***request the governor’s communications department to assist with contacting local media in regards to including ASL interpreters in their broadcast during emergency situations.*** Rose Viltz seconded the motion. The motion was approved by the members of GACDA without opposition.

1. **Update on Employment Initiatives**

The SAME members have been working diligently to work with stakeholders and state agencies in an effort to diversify employment in state employment. The survey relative to self-identification received nearly 12,000 responses. The survey has received mostly positive reviews. SAME task force will determine how to use the data from the survey. State agencies who are participating will create a plan how they will increase employment of individuals. GACDA members discussed the importance of training ADA Coordinators and key staff to effectively accommodate individuals with disabilities on job sites. State agencies and LRS will work together to help place individuals with disabilities in state employment. The employment resource guide has been uploaded to the LWC website.

1. **LA Department of Health Updates**

Ashley Jefferson of OBH provided updates relative to the DOJ, Mental Illness, and Homeless. OBH is in the midst of getting their center of Hope open. The Act 378 committee will meet to discuss how to use the aforementioned funds.

Hagan of OCDD provided an update regarding the department’s personnel changes, goals, and objectives. There are major initiatives regarding Opioids and Hepatitis C that are being sponsored by the department. There will be language to include populations that are underserved. The department is also looking into fraud, waste and abuse, and how to make the best use of their funds. The “Money Follows the Person” has helped OCDD; the federal level is considering extending the funding for MFP funding. Hagan provided an overview of tiered waiver services, and statistics relative to the number of individuals served.

Paula Rodriguez mentioned that there should be more services for the deaf community.

1. **Agency/Member Updates**

Anne representing Lighthouse Louisiana reported that there will be an event on October 5, 2018 entitled “Overcoming Barriers to employment” in recognition of disability employment awareness month.

Sandee Winchell of the DD Council reported that a social media campaign will take place with the hashtag “#Hiremystrength” in recognition of disability employment awareness month. The DD Council is accepting applications for the next class of Partners in Policy Making.

Rose Viltz of the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) reported that SICL will have a statewide tour and social media campaign regarding the importance of voting via the “RevUp” Campaign” in October.

Paula Rodriguez of Deaf Focus reported that on September 27, 2018, the “Eat, Drink, Sign” event will take place and will be hosted by Deaf Focus.

1. **Discussion Legislative/Budget Priorities**

Ashley Jefferson of OBH mentioned that her agency is managing the Louisiana Opioid Response Grant to address five targeted populated groups of people including: the under and uninsured, pregnant woman or infants with withdrawal systems, and school age children. Promoting the Integration of primary and behavioral health care services is also a priority. Maintaining the hospitals under their jurisdiction and Coordinated System of Care are also priorities.

The DD Council will not have updates or legislative agenda until October after their meeting.

Ashley Reynolds mentioned that there are struggles finding families to come to the table to testify on behalf of LRS during legislative session. Ashley stated that she would like for GACDA to do something to improve housing in the next legislative session.

Dr. Brackin mentioned that she would like to have housing experts to participate in the next GACDA meeting.

Sandee Winchell made a ***motion that the employment committee be dissolved, and that a housing committee be created in its place.*** Laura Brackin seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the members of GACDA.

1. **Inclusive Art Contest/ GOLD Awards**

The Gold Awards will take place on November 28, 2018 at 1:00pm at the Old State Capitol. The Governor and First Lady will be participating. The Inclusive Art Show Contest will take place first, this year’s theme is “Working Together”. The Governor’s Office of Disability Affairs would like to receive nominations from all areas of the state. Online applications for the 2018 GOLD Awards are being accepted.

1. **Other Business**

There was no discussion under Other Business.

1. **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Rose Viltz. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Kelly Monroe. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously without any opposition. The GACDA meeting officially adjourned at 2:54.