FAYETTE *Press Release*

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

THREE OPEN POSITIONS ON THE REGION SIX MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, AND ADDICTIVE DISEASES REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The **Region Six Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Addictive Diseases Regional Advisory Council**, formerly known as the Planning Board, is a volunteer body composed of three members appointed by the Fayette County Board of Commissioners and by other members appointed by the governing authorities of thirty other counties located in central-western Georgia.

The duties of the Regional Planning Board include, but are not limited to, assisting the Region Six Regional Office in preparing an annual plan for the provision of all disabilities services in the Region Six area. This assistance may include consulting with families, customers, providers, and advocacy groups in order to identify local needs, gaps in services, and recommended priorities.

The Regional Advisory Council typically meets every other month, on the second Wednesday of the month, from 1:00 until 4:00 p.m. These meetings usually occur at the Upson County Senior Center, which is located at 302 South Bethel Street, Thomaston, Georgia. **This position has an attendance requirement. Two or more consecutive council meetings may result in the council considering the seat vacated.**

The Fayette County Board of Commissioners would like to notify interested Fayette County citizens that three positions on the Region Six Advisory Council are available to be filled with a three-year term beginning –
Position #1: **July 1, 2024 and expiring June 30, 2027**
Position #2: **July 1, 2025 and expiring June 30, 2028**
Position #3: **October 1, 2026 and expiring September 30, 2029**

Interested applicants must be Fayette County citizens and shall be a consumer of disability services, a family member of a consumer, an advocate for disability services, or a local business leader or businessperson with an interest in behavioral health and developmental disabilities.

The Fayette County Board of Commissioners will be accepting applications with resumes for this position. Applications can be obtained by visiting www.fayettecountyga.gov; Public Notices section of the website, or County Clerk Tameca Smith at tsmith@fayettecountyga.gov. All in-person applications must be returned to 140 Stonewall Avenue West, Suite 100, Fayetteville, Georgia. Deadline for submission; **OPEN UNTIL FILLED**

Contact: Tameca P. Smith, County Clerk
Office: (770) 305-5103

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT
Fayette County Region Six Mental Health Development Disabilities and Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD) Regional Advisory Council

Thank you for your interest in being considered for appointment to the **Region Six Mental Health, Development Disabilities, and Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD) Regional Advisory Council**.

The Region Six MHDDAD Council members are appointed by thirty counties to terms lasting three years each. Meetings are typically held every other month, and are generally held on the second Wednesday of said month from 1:00 until 4:00 p.m. The meetings take place at the Upson County Senior Center located at 302 South Bethel Street, Thomaston, Georgia.

Please take a few minutes to complete the form and answer the questions below and return it with a resume, if available, to Tameca Smith, County Clerk, at tsmith@fayettecountyga.gov or 140 Stonewall Avenue, West, Suite 100, Fayetteville, GA 30214 by **OPEN UNTIL FILLED.**

If you have any questions, please call (770) 305-5103.

NOTE: Information provided on this form is subject to disclosure as a public record under Georgia Open Records Law.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

TELEPHONE (home) _____
(cell) _____

(email address) _____

_____ _____
Signature Date

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT
Fayette County Region Six Mental Health Development Disabilities and Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD) Regional Advisory Council

1. How long have you been a resident of Fayette County?

2. Why are you interested in serving on the Region Six MHDDAD Council?

3. What qualifications and experience do you possess for appointment to the Region Six MHDDAD Council?

4. List your recent employment experiences to include name of company and position.

5. Do you have any past experience relating to the Region Six MHDDAD Council? If so, please describe.

6. Are you currently serving on a commission/board/authority or in and elected capacity with any government?

7. Have you attended any Region Six MHDDAD Council meetings in the past two years and, if so, how many?

8. Are you willing to attend seminars or continuing education classes at county expense?

9. What is your vision of the county's future related to the duties of the Region Six MHDDAD Council?

10. Would there be any possible conflict of interest between your employment or your family and you serving on the Region Six MHDDAD Council?

11. Are you in any way related to a County Elected Official or County employee? If so, please describe.

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT
Fayette County Region Six Mental Health Development Disabilities and Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD) Regional Advisory Council

12. Describe your current community involvement.

13. Have you been given a copy of the county's Ethics Ordinance?

14. Is there any reason you would not be able to comply with the Ethics Ordinance?

COUNTY OF FAYETTE

STATE OF GEORGIA

ORDINANCE NO.

2016-04

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA; TO REWRITE THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA; TO PROMOTE THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA, AND IT IS HEREBY ENACTED PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY OF THE SAME THAT DIVISION 3 OF ARTICLE IV OF CHAPTER 2 OF THE CODE OF FAYETTE COUNTY GEORGIA BE DELETED IN ITS ENTIRETY AND REPLACED WITH A NEW DIVISION 3 OF ARTICLE IV OF CHAPTER 2 OF THE CODE OF FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. By deleting Sections 2-200 through 2-208 which comprise the Code of Ethics in their entirety and by enacting the following Code of Ethics to be numbered and to read as follows:

Sec. 2-200. Purpose.

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to:

(a) Encourage high ethical standards in conduct by Fayette County officials ("County Officials");

(b) Establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all County Officials by setting forth those acts or actions that are incompatible with the best interests of Fayette County (the "County");

(c) Maintain public trust through transparency by requiring disclosure by County Officials of private financial or other interests in matters affecting the County or in matters that affect their ability to act in the best interests of the County; and

(d) Serve as a basis for disciplining those who do not comply with its terms.

Sec. 2-201. Scope.

The provisions of this Code of Ethics shall be applicable to all County Officials. Further, the County Purchasing Director shall develop procedures for individuals, corporations and other entities seeking to do business with the County to disclose financial, familial or other relationships with any person who comes within the scope of this Code of Ethics and who is also required to disclose such relationships. Such disclosures must be made prior to presenting a recommendation of award to the Fayette County Board of Commissioners (the "Board of Commissioners") or, if Board of Commissioners approval is not required, prior to execution of a contract in excess of $10,000. The obligation for an individual, corporation or other entity seeking to do business with the County to disclose the aforementioned relationships is ongoing and shall be enforced as a prerequisite to any action by a County Official or other person covered by this Code of Ethics to renew, extend or otherwise modify a contract after award.

Sec. 2-202. Definitions.

The following words and phrases as used in this Code of Ethics shall, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, have the meanings as follows:

(a) *County* means Fayette County, Georgia.

(b) *County Administrator* means the individual who serves as County Administrator of Fayette County.

(c) *County Official* includes County employees, members of the Board of Commissioners, the County Administrator, the County Clerk and the County Attorney. County Official also includes all individuals appointed by the County Administrator and the Board of Commissioners to County authorities, commissions, committees, boards, task forces, or other bodies.

(d) *Gift* means the transfer of anything of economic value, regardless of form, without adequate and lawful consideration. "Gift" also means a subscription, membership, loan, forgiveness of debt, advance or deposit of money or anything of value, conveyed or transferred.

(e) *Ethics*: the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation – Merriam Webster

(f) *Immediate family* means the spouse, mother, father, grandparent, brother, sister, son or daughter of any County Official related by blood, adoption or marriage. The relationship by marriage shall include in-laws.

(g) *Person* means an individual, a business entity, or other similar type organization.

Sec. 2-203. Prohibitions.

(a) No County Official shall use or secure confidential information for any purpose other than his/her official duties.

(b) No County Official may participate or vote on any matter before the Board of Commissioners or other County body where such County Official has a substantial interest in the

outcome of such matter. For purposes of this Code of Ethics, a substantial interest is found where the County Official receives a pecuniary interest due to the outcome of the vote.

(c) No County Official shall act as an agent or attorney for another in any matter before the Board of Commissioners or other County body.

(d) No County Official shall enter into any contract with the County except as authorized by state law.

(e) No County Official shall solicit or accept other employment to be performed, or compensation to be received, while still a County Official if the employment or compensation could reasonably be expected to impair such County Official's judgment or performance of County duties.

(f) No County Official shall disseminate confidential information to someone other than another County Official, unless otherwise authorized by law.

(g) No County Official shall solicit or accept gifts, loans, gratuities, discounts, favors, hospitality, or services from any person for himself/herself, or any member of his/her immediate family, under circumstances from which it could reasonably be inferred that a major purpose of the donor is to influence the performance of the County Official's duties.

Sec. 2-204. Conflict of Interest.

(a) No County Official may participate in a vote or decision on a matter affecting an immediate family member or any person, entity, or property in which the County Official has a substantial interest.

(b) A County Official who has a relationship with any entity which receives funding from the County shall disclose such relationship prior to participating in any action for such funding.

(c) A County Official shall never discriminate by the dispensing of special favors or privileges to anyone, whether or not for remuneration.

(d) No County Official shall engage in any business with the County, or allow any member of his/her immediate family to engage in any business with the County which is inconsistent with the conscientious performance of his/her governmental duties.

(e) Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, a County Official shall disclose, prior to discussing or taking any action on any matter involving the donor, any gift or campaign contribution (cash or in kind) received by him/her, or any member of his/her immediate family, greater than $100.00. Receipt of gifts and campaign contributions within the current election cycle valued at $250.00 or more by a County Official, or member of his/her immediate family, will prohibit the County Official from participating or taking action on any matter involving the donor.

Sec. 2-205. Enforcement and administration.

(a) All allegations of violations of the Code of Ethics must be filed with the County Clerk, in writing, signed by the complainant, no later than 45 days after the alleged act occurred unless the complainant, by exercising reasonable diligence, failed to discover the alleged violation of the Code of Ethics within such 45-day period. In such case, a complainant must file an Ethics Complaint with the County Clerk no later than 45 days after the complainant discovered the alleged violation.

(b) In no event shall an Ethics Complaint be filed with the County Clerk more than six (6) months from the date of the alleged violation of the Code of Ethics.

(c) The complainant may withdraw the Ethics Complaint at any time in writing.

(d) Within 30 days of receipt of an Ethics Complaint the Board of Commissioners will review the Ethics Complaint to determine whether same is on its face unjustified, frivolous, patently unfounded or fails to state facts sufficient to invoke disciplinary jurisdiction. A majority of the full Board of Commissioners must agree that a sufficient basis has been given to warrant a public hearing. Certain violations alleged against County Officials who are employees may be referred through the proper channels consistent with the Employee Handbook's disciplinary procedures. A majority of the full Board of Commissioners shall make the determination of whether or not a review board should be impaneled.

(e) If a complaint is received by the Clerk which alleges a violation of the Code of Ethics by a member of the Board of Commissioners, a determination of sufficiency of the complaint will not be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners. The County Attorney of any county within the Griffin Judicial Circuit, or any circuit abutting the Griffin Judicial Circuit, other than the County Attorney for Fayette County, shall make the determination of whether or not a review board should be impaneled.

(f) If a review board is needed, three (3) county attorneys, other than the County Attorney for Fayette County, within reasonably close geographic proximity of the County will be requested to conduct a public hearing based upon the complaint. A majority vote based upon clear and convincing evidence will determine the existence of the violation or lack thereof. Should the review board find a violation has occurred, the review board will assess the commensurate penalty for the violation. A written decision shall be issued within 15 days of the conclusion of the public hearing. County Officials are subject to the following penalties and action for violations of the Code of Ethics:

(1) Written reprimand or public censure;

(2) Recovery of value transferred from or received by the County;

(3) Cancellation of the contract or rejection of the bid or offer;

(4) A monetary fine not to exceed $1,000.00; and

(5) Demotion or termination.

(g) Any County Official adversely affected by any final decision of the Board of Ethics may appeal as provided in this subsection.

(h) An appeal by certiorari may be commenced in the Superior Court of Fayette County within 30 days after the decision becomes final.

Secs. 2-206 – 2-220. Reserved.

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the Fayette County Board of Commissioners.

SECTION 3. All other ordinances or parts of ordinances which are in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 4. In the event any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance shall be declared or adjudged invalid or unconstitutional, such adjudication shall in no manner affect other sections, subsections, sentences, clauses or phrases of this ordinance, which shall remain in full force and effect as if the section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase so declared or adjudged invalid or unconstitutional were not a part thereof. The Board of Commissioners hereby declares that it would have passed the remaining parts of this ordinance if it had known that such part or parts hereof would be declared or adjudged invalid or unconstitutional.

SO ORDAINED this 25th day of February, 2016.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA

(SEAL)

By: _____
CHARLES W. ODDO

ATTEST:

_____
Floyd L. Jones, County Clerk

Approved as to form:

_____
County Attorney

BYLAWS—8/26/16
DBHDD Region 6, Regional Advisory Council for Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases

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Revised: September 2016

Approved: _____
Frank W. Berry
Commissioner, DBHDD

09/29/2016
Date

ARTICLE I – NAME

1.1 Name. In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 37-2-4.1, there is created a Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) Region 6, Regional Advisory Council (RAC) for Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases, identified hereafter as the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council.

1.2 Principal Office. The current office of the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council is 3000 Shatulga Road, Building 4, Columbus, Georgia 30197. The DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council may conduct official business anywhere within Region 6 or the State of Georgia, in accordance with Georgia's Open Meetings Act.

1.3 Geographical Area. Region 6 is a geographical area encompassing the following 31 counties:

Butts	Henry	Schley
Carroll	Houston	Spalding
Chattahoochee	Lamar	Stewart
Clay	Macon	Sumter
Coweta	Marion	Talbot
Crawford	Meriwether	Taylor
Crisp	Muscogee	Troup
Dooly	Peach	Upson
Fayette	Pike	Webster
Harris	Quitman	
Heard	Randolph	

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

2.1 The DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council shall engage in disability services planning within its region and may perform other functions as may be provided or authorized by law in accordance with the minimum standards and procedures established by the Department. In addition, the RAC is to assist DBHDD in improving services to individuals with mental illness, developmental disabilities, and addictive diseases within Region 6 by identifying gaps in services, considering strategies for addressing these service gaps, and participating in follow-up efforts to encourage service improvements.

2.2 The work of the RAC supports the DBHDD vision and mission.

ARTICLE III - FUNCTIONS

3.1 Priority Function. The priority function of the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council is to inform regional disability services planning through the provision of recommendations to DBHDD for the Department's coordinated and comprehensive planning for Region 6 in accordance with the minimum standards and procedures established by the Department. These functions will include but are not limited to:

1. Inform DBHDD of local needs and priorities;
2. Organize local input of natural supports;
3. Recommend community improvements to DBHDD;
4. Provide input to DBHDD regarding the local perspectives of consumers, families, and community stakeholders;
5. Encourage DBHDD's work with prevention programs;
6. Identify DBHDD service gaps within its region using existing data and community and assist the DBHDD Statewide Leadership Council in identifying statewide priorities;
7. Consider and communicate recommendations for addressing these gaps; and
8. Participate in follow-up efforts to encourage service improvements.

3.2 Additional Functions. DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council may perform other functions such as:

A. All DBHDD Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) may conduct Community Awareness Forums. The forums will be facilitated by both a representative of the local RAC and a representative of DBHDD. When DBHDD resources are available and regional needs recommend additional forums, these may be conducted by joint agreement. Minutes of the forums will be taken and synthesized into recommendations to the DBHDD, if there are any.

B. Recommendations, if there are any, are to be given to the DBHDD Director of Community Relations or designee, who in turn, shall distribute the recommendation(s) to the appropriate entities within DBHDD.

C. All RACs will allow public comment as a standard part of any meeting it conducts.

D. Documentation of public comment for each meeting shall be summarized and submitted to DBHDD through its representative at least two (2) times annually.

E. The DBHDD Director of Community Relations or designee shall facilitate follow-up where needed with and between the appropriate parties.

3.3 Participation in Leadership Council. The DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council will serve on and cast up to three votes on the DBHDD Statewide Leadership Council.

ARTICLE IV - POWER AND AUTHORITY

4.1 Advisors on Local Needs and Priorities. The DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council has the power and authority to provide recommendations to the Department to inform its planning for regional disability services.

4.2 Communication. The DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council will communicate its recommendations to the following entities at least once a year:

1. DBHDD Statewide Leadership Council
2. DBHDD Region 6 field office
3. County governing authorities for the counties represented on the RAC
4. Commissioner of DBHDD.

4.3 Council Member Role. Members of the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council are appointed volunteer advisors to DBHDD.

4.4 Orientation. Members of the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council will receive orientation materials after their appointment to the Council.

4.5 Education. Annual training on DBHDD programs and services provided to all members.

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Number of Appointments. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 37-2-5, each county in the region with a population of 50,000 or less according to the most current United States decennial census will appoint one member to the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council. Each county with a population of more than 50,000 according to the most current United States decennial census will appoint one member for each population increment of 50,000 or any portion thereof.

5.2 Appointment Authority. The appointment(s) for each county will be made by the county governing authority.

5.3 Majority of Appointments. The majority of appointments to the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council will be individuals with disabilities and/or family members/caregivers of individuals with mental illness, developmental disabilities, and/or addictive diseases.

5.4 Demographics. Pursuant O.C.G.A. § 37-2-5, in making appointments to the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council, the various county governing authorities will consider the cultural and social characteristics, including gender, race, ethnic, and age characteristics of the regional and county populations. County governing authorities are encouraged to ensure that each disability group is viably represented on the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council. In identifying potential appointees, county governing authorities may consider suggestions from clinical professional associations as well as advocacy groups, including but not limited to the Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network, People First of Georgia, the Georgia Parent Support Network, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the American Association for Retired Persons, Voices for Georgia's Children, Mental Health America of Georgia, Georgia ARC Network, and the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse and their local chapters and affiliates.

5.5 Elected or Appointed Officials. A county governing authority may appoint an elected or appointed official to serve on the council, provided that such person is not ineligible based on 5.6 below and such appointment does not violate O.C.G.A. Title 45, Chapter 10.

5.6 Ineligibility. A person is not eligible to be appointed to or serve on the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council if him/her:

1. Resides in a county other than the one being represented; or
2. Is a member of a community service board which serves that region; or
3. Is an employee or board member of a private or public entity which contracts with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the Department of Human Services, or the Department of Public Health to provide health, mental health, and/or addictive diseases services within the region; or
4. Is an employee or board member of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the Department of Human Services, or the Department of Public Health; or

5. Has a spouse, parent, child, or sibling who is a member of the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council or a member, employee, or board member specified in 2-4 of this subsection.

5.7 Ineligibility to Serve on Community Service Board. No person who has served a full term or more on the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council may be appointed to a community service board until a period of at least two years has passed since the time such person served on the council. No person who has served on a regional planning board and becomes a member of a regional advisory council after June 30, 2015, may be appointed to a community service board until a period of at least two years has passed since the time such person has served on the regional planning board or regional advisory council.

5.8 Terms. The initial term of a new member of the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council will be determined by the Commissioner in order to establish staggered terms on the council. Once the terms are staggered, the term of a member of the council will be for a period of three years and until the member's successor is appointed and qualified. A member may serve no more than two full consecutive terms unless his/her first term was less than three years. A member who serves an initial term of less than three years may be reappointed for two consecutive three-year terms following the initial term.

5.9 Absences. An excused absence from a council meeting is an absence caused by a prior commitment, illness, or personal emergency and communicated to the regional field office prior to the meeting. The unexcused absence of any council member from two or more consecutive council meetings may result in the council considering his/her seat vacated. Once a member has been given at least a 7-day notice by mail or email the Council will consider action at its next meeting, the Council may vote to notify the governing authority of the constructive abandonment of the seat and request a new appointment, as soon as reasonably possible, of an individual to fill the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment.

5.10 Vacancies. The term of a council member will terminate upon resignation, death, or inability to serve due to medical infirmity or other incapacity. The appropriate county governing authority will be notified immediately of any vacancy created by a member unable to serve his/her full term. The council will request that the county governing authority appoint, as soon as reasonably possible, an individual to fill the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment.

5.11 Reimbursement. Upon approval of the DBHDD Director of Community Relations, each member of the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council may receive reimbursement for actual expenses incurred in carrying out the duties of such office in conformance with rates and allowances set for state employees by the Office of Planning and Budget and the same mileage allowance for use of a personal car as that received by all other state officials and employees, or a travel allowance of actual transportation cost if traveling by public carrier.

5.12 Ethics. Members of the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council will abide by Georgia's Code of Ethics for Members of Boards, Commissions, and Authorities and the Conflict of Interest Statute, O.C.G.A. §§ 45-10-3, 45-10-20 and as reflected in DBHDD Policy 22-1201 Standards of Conduct and Ethics in Government.

ARTICLE VI - QUORUM

6.1 Quorum. Thirty (30) percent of the appointed membership of the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council will constitute a quorum. The action of a majority of a quorum present at any meeting will constitute the action of the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council, except as otherwise provided in these bylaws. Vacancies on the council will not be counted in determination of the membership that constitutes a quorum.

ARTICLE VII-OFFICERS

7.1 Chairperson. The chairperson is the principal officer of the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council. The chairperson presides over all meetings of the council and its executive committee, calls special meetings as needed, and generally supervises and directs all actions of the council consistent with DBHDD policy and the law. The chairperson will be elected from amongst the members of the council to serve a term of one year, with the option of re-election for an additional one-year term.

7.2 Vice-chairperson. The vice-chairperson will lend positive assistance to the chairperson in the conduct of the business of the council, and will, in the absence or inability of the chairperson, perform all duties of the chairperson. The vice-chairperson will be elected from among the members of the council to serve a term of one year, with the option of re-election for an additional one-year term.

7.3 Executive Committee. The executive committee for the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council will include the chairperson, vice-chairperson, and three general members. A secretary position may substitute for one of the general member positions. The three general members will be elected from amongst the members of the council to serve a term of one year, with the option of re-election for additional one-year terms.

7.4 Election. The election of officers and will be held at the June/July meeting of the council. A nominating committee with three members from different counties will be elected by the council sixty days prior to the election. The nominating committee will present a ballot of officers to the council at the June/July meeting. Additional nominations will be taken from the floor and added to the ballot prior to the election. Any council member may nominate himself/herself. The newly elected officers and general members of the executive committee will take office at the next scheduled meeting following the election.

7.5 Election of Statewide Leadership Council Representatives. The chairperson of the Region 6 Advisory Council or his or her designee will serve as a voting representative to the Statewide Leadership Council. Two additional voting representatives will be elected at the June/July Region 6 Advisory Council meeting following the election of officers. The Region 6 Advisory Council chairperson may appoint additional members as alternates to the Leadership Council, but these alternates will be designated as first alternate, second alternate, etc. so that the Advisory Council abides by the three vote limit at any Statewide Leadership Council meeting. The Advisory Council chairperson will appoint individuals as needed to fill incomplete terms of Statewide Leadership Council representatives. Representatives to the Statewide Leadership Council may be re-elected for unlimited additional one-year terms.

7.6 Removal from Office. Officers may be removed from office for good cause at any time by vote of a majority of the membership of the council; provided that notice of the intended vote is given in writing to each member of the council at least ten (10) days prior to any meeting at which the vote is to be taken. Upon removal of an officer, the council shall elect a successor to serve the remainder of the unexpired term. Any council member may nominate himself/herself.

7.7 Vacancies. If the office of the chairperson or vice chair-person becomes vacant other than by removal, in accord with Section 7.4 of these bylaws an election to fill the unexpired term will be held as soon as reasonably possible. Any council member may nominate himself/herself.

ARTICLE VIII-MEETINGS

8.1 Frequency. The DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council will meet at least once every four months during the fiscal year which begins July 1 and extends through June 30. A meeting schedule will be publicly announced at a minimum on the DBHDD website and in conformance with the provisions of Georgia's Open Meetings Act, O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq.

8.2 Public Comment. At each of its regularly scheduled meetings, the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council will reserve time for public comment. The council may set a time limit for each speaker. Members of the public may submit written comments to be shared at the meeting in lieu of attending or presenting at the meeting. The primary focus of each comment will be included in the meeting minutes.

8.3 Special Meetings. Special meetings may be called for any purpose by the chairperson or the vice-chairperson in the event of the chairperson's inability; upon the written request via postal service or email of one-third of the members of the council; or upon written request via postal service or email of any agency, organization or individual whose request is deemed appropriate by the chairperson of the council. The chairperson (or designee) of the council will notify all members of the council by phone or email of the date, time, and place of the special meeting at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting's start time. Public notice shall be provided in accordance with Georgia's Open Meetings Act, O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq.

8.4 Cancellation. When it is necessary for the council to reschedule, relocate, or cancel a meeting, such action will be in conformance with pertinent provisions of Georgia's Open Meetings Act, O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq.

8.5 Minutes. Written or digital minutes will be maintained of all meetings of the council including the executive, standing, and special committees. Copies of all council meeting minutes will be distributed by email or printed copy to the members of the council prior to the next scheduled meeting. Once the council approves the minutes of its general meetings, digital or printed copies will be delivered to DBHDD and will be made available upon request to members of the public. Records will conform to the requirements of Georgia's Open Records Act, O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq.

ARTICLE IX – CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

9.1 Confidentiality and Privacy for Advisory Council Members/Relatives. A member who is participating on the Council as an individual or relative of an individual seeking, receiving, or having received disability services is not required to disclose confidential, privileged or protected health information concerning him/herself or his/her relative to the Advisory Council or to any member during any open or closed meeting, in any document, or for any purpose, other than to provide a basis for his/her membership on the Council. Any further disclosure(s) by the member of his/her own confidential, privileged or protected health information shall be considered to be knowing and voluntary, and shall be presumed to be a disclosure(s) to the general public, unless the member clearly indicates otherwise in advance in a signed Authorization for Release of Information.

9.2 Confidentiality and Privacy of Relatives and other Individuals. The Council or any of its members may receive, in the course of Council meetings or business, written or oral disclosures of confidential, privileged or protected health information from individuals who are seeking, have received, or are receiving disability services from or funded in part by DBHDD. This includes disclosures from members concerning their relatives. It may also include disclosures concerning individuals in the general public from their guardians, family, or other representatives.

a. The Council and each of its Members will maintain all such information under physical and electronic security and confidentiality at all times.
b. No confidential, privileged or protected health information may be disclosed, presented or discussed by the Council or any of its Members in any meeting of the Council, unless the individual (or court-appointed guardian, or parent of a minor individual, as applicable) has in advance signed a DBHDD Authorization for Release of Information allowing such disclosure to the general public.
c. No confidential or protected health information of such individual(s) that relates to treatment or services by or funded in part by DBHDD may be disclosed by the Council or any Member to DBHDD, its Field Office staff or authorized agent, without specific prior authorization. The Council may confirm with the DBHDD Office of Legal Services whether a person or entity is an authorized agent of DBHDD.
d. Neither the Council nor its Members may request or receive confidential, privileged or protected health information from DBHDD, its employees or authorized agents, concerning any individual unless the individual (or court-appointed guardian, or parent of a minor individual, as applicable) has in advance signed a DBHDD Authorization for Release of Information allowing such disclosure.

9.3 Reports and Records. Documents prepared or produced by or for the Council or any member may contain aggregate data, or may contain information about an individual(s) if it can be presented in such a way that identification of the individual(s) is not possible. Documents prepared or produced by or for the Council or any member may not contain confidential, privileged or protected health information regarding any individual, without specific authorization in a signed DBHDD Authorization for Release of Information that allows disclosure of the confidential, privileged and protected health information to the general public.

9.4 Authorizations for Release of Information. The Council shall maintain copies of all Authorizations for Release of Information presented to the Council.

9.5 Confidentiality Agreement. Every Member shall sign a Confidentiality Agreement with DBHDD regarding his/her participation in the Council. Any violation of the Confidentiality Agreement or of the provisions of this section of these Bylaws shall be grounds for the removal of the member from the Council.

9.6 Violations. Every member is responsible for reporting any violation or alleged violation of a Member's Confidentiality Agreement with DBHDD or of the confidentiality and privacy terms of this section of these Bylaws to the Chairperson of the Council, the Field Office liaison for the Council, Field Office HIPAA Coordinator, the DBHDD Privacy Officer and, if electronic information is involved, the DBHDD Information Security Officer, within five (5) business days of becoming aware of the violation or alleged violation. If there is an immediate threat to the security or privacy of confidential and protected health information, the member shall make the report immediately.

9.7 Cooperation with DBHDD. The Council and every member shall cooperate with DBHDD in its responsibilities to comply with all federal and state law requirements regarding confidential, privileged or protected health information. Obstruction, interference, or lack of cooperation with DBHDD in this regard shall be grounds for the removal of the member from the Council.

9.8 Continuing Terms. The requirements of this section of these Bylaws do not terminate upon the member's end of term as a member, but are continuing thereafter.

9.9 Training. Every member shall obtain from DBHDD and shall comply with training regarding privacy and security of confidential, privileged and protected health information.

ARTICLE X - COMMITTEES

10.1 The DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council will create and dissolve standing or special committees as it deems necessary for the proper conduct of its business. With the exception of the nominating committee, committee membership will be determined by the chairperson. Committees will report directly to the council.

ARTICLE XI - PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

11.1 The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, will govern the council in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are consistent with the constitution or laws of Georgia, these bylaws, and/or any special rule which the council may adopt. The council may appoint a parliamentarian from among its members.

ARTICLE XII - APPROVAL

12.1 Approval. Prior to the adoption of these bylaws, the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council will submit the bylaws to the DBHDD Director of Community Relations for review and written approval by the DBHDD Commissioner.

ARTICLE XIII - AMENDMENTS

13.1 Amendments. A request to amend these bylaws may be submitted to the DBHDD Statewide Leadership Council by the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council upon a two-thirds vote of the membership of the DBHDD Region 6 Advisory Council provided that the proposed amendment was submitted in writing via postal service or email to all the council members at least ten days prior to such meeting. Upon receipt of the proposed amendment, the DBHDD Statewide Leadership Council will have up to 60 days to consider the request before voting. A vote of two-thirds of the Leadership Council will be required to submit it to the DBHDD Commissioner for approval. Final approval of any amendments to these bylaws is under the authority of the DBHDD Commissioner.