Welcome and Introductions
Secretary Ted Dallas welcomed the members to the meeting. He recognized the progress of the workgroups.

Agenda Review
Facilitator Carol Spigner gave an overview of Agenda items. The September 11, 2012 minutes were approved.

Phase-In Implementation
The Secretary reviewed that the implementation would be phased in by region:

- Phase 1 - Garrett, Allegany, Washington, Frederick, Montgomery
- Phase 2 – Howard, Carroll, Baltimore County, Harford, Cecil
- Phase 3 – Prince George’s, Anne Arundel, Charles, St. Mary’s, Calvert
- Phase 4 – Eastern Shore
- Phase 5 - Baltimore City

The rollout schedule will build in extra time during Phase 1 to allow for more deliberation and review. Improvements and “lessons learned” will be applied to subsequent regions as the implementation occurs.

Communications Message
Brian Schleter and Carnitra White reviewed a revised “What is Alternative Response?” document to guide message development. Please provide any recommended revisions to the document to Carnitra White by October 17, 2012.

A draft Communications Strategy for External and Internal audiences was presented. Internal communications strategies include but are not limited to:
Communications Office will draft monthly e-blast updates from the Secretary on the Advisory Council’s work to date and plans for a phased-in implementation. (November)
- Communications Office will create an intranet page with an interactive “Facebook functionality” for posting short and long updates, video/photos, training schedules, MD CHESSIE updates, etc. (early November)
- Create a “Directors Corner” intranet page where directors may exchange information and lessons learned on AR, other DHR initiatives (December).

External communications strategies include but are not limited to:
- Collateral Materials
  - General update letter to stakeholders from Secretary (early November)
  - General brochure (January)
  - Video overview of AR (spring)
  - Training materials?
- Local Forums (Community Partners Workgroup, start early January)
  - Stakeholders are invited to discuss issues
  - Address concerns and barriers to services
  - PPT message that can be used at all forums (Pam/Brian, December)

As the Communications strategies are implemented, the Advisory Council will be asked to provide input on strategies and how they are working.

Other issues to consider with the Communications Plan:
- How do we link messages with the Change Management Plan
- Include the phase-in schedule

The Workgroups reported on their progress:

Policy Workgroup
Co-chair Debbie Ramelmeier reported on the progress of the Policy Workgroup. The draft policy was reviewed. The Council discussed each section of the draft policy. It was noted that the under Eligibility for Alternative Response (AR) section, the first 4 bulleted factors and the last four factors are required by the statute.

Recommendations were made by the Council for discussion at the Workgroup meeting:
- Add a subtitle, “Mandatory Disqualifying Factors” to the first list of factors under “Eligibility for Alternative Response”
- Under Discretionary Disqualifying Factors:
  - Change “(recent incidents)” to “(current incidents)”
  - Change “Criminal History” to read “Criminal History bearing on child safety”
Key points were noted:

- If an Investigative Case is “Ruled Out”, the case shall not be reassigned to an Alternative Response.
- Under Case work process two points are included from the statute, Advising law enforcement agency that report has been assigned to Alternative Response and protecting the rights of the person making the report.
- If the case is deemed to be Alternative Response, the worker should ask the parents' permission to visit the child at school or day care (Investigative Response does not require obtaining permission).
- Alternative Response and Investigative Response both “shall be concluded within 60 days of case assignment.”
- An Alternative Response record shall not be released in response to a 3rd party background request for child protective services history.
- A standard form will be available for AR assessment and within 10 days, the summary report will be provided to the family.

The Workgroup was thanked for their work and participation in developing the draft policy.

**Practice Workgroup**
Co-chairs David Thompson and Steve Berry reported on the progress of the Practice Workgroup. The Workgroup plans to develop a Pre-training and Post-training template for local jurisdictions to utilize prior to implementation. The template should be finished by mid-November.

The Practice Workgroup recognizes that the work overlaps with the Community Partners Workgroup. They plan to work together to develop a Change Management Plan. The Plan would include a review of the current services offered in the jurisdiction, the services needed and the plan to develop the services needed.

It was recommended that the Workgroup review the implementation dates for each region and develop concrete timelines and action plans for the work to be completed by July 2013. The Workgroup was thanked for their work and efforts.

**Community Partners**
Co-chairs Pam Brown and Shanda Crowder reported on progress of the Community Outreach Workgroup. Carnitira White noted that Brian Schleter, DHR Communications
Director will participate at the Workgroup meetings and assist with crafting the general message that will be presented to communities. Co-chair Pamela Brown noted that the Local Management Boards have been asked to submit the services offered currently and how the services are accessed.

The Workgroup will work with the Practice Workgroup to develop the Change Management Plan, including the Timeline for templates for jurisdictions’ services assessments and implementation depending on the size of the jurisdiction, general communication to localities, dates for training, Phase-in, etc. It was noted that not every jurisdiction is the same size but there should be a standard implementation process to follow for small, medium and large jurisdictions. Carol Spigner expressed the Council’s appreciation of the group’s efforts and work.

**Evaluation**
Co-chairs Melissa Rock and David Ayer reported on the progress of the Evaluation Workgroup. The Workgroup presented Proposed Outcome Measures, Family and Caseworker Satisfaction Survey and Service Provider Perspectives Survey. The Council was asked to review and give feedback to the Co-chairs by Friday, October 13, 2012. The document will be posted on the Alternative Response Internet page. The Evaluation Workgroup was thanked for their progress.

**General Discussion:**
The Council reviewed the Timeline that was developed at the onset of the Council. The Timeline will need to be changed to reflect the deadlines for the Change Management Plan. ML Wernecke volunteered to change the Timeline once the Workgroups complete the Change Management Plan.

The Secretary thanked everyone for their input and work on the Workgroups. He emphasized that a Change Management Plan is needed with specific dates and plans to meet the July 2013 deadline.

**The next meeting will be held Tuesday, November 13, 2012, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm at 311 W. Saratoga St., Room 1044, Baltimore, MD.**