

Louisiana Commission on Civic Education

Post Office Box 94183
Baton Rouge, LA 70804
Telephone: (225)342-9818



Commission Staff
Tammy Crain-Waldrop
Researcher

Nanette Longuepee
Administrative Secretary

APPROVED MINUTES

May 10, 2013

I. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Louisiana Commission on Civic Education was held on Friday, May 10, 2013 in the John J. Hainkel Jr. Room at the State Capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The chairwoman, Beth Courtney called the meeting to order at 3:26 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The secretary called the roll and the following was noted:

MEMBERS PRESENT

Beth Courtney
Carl Dermady (designee for John Alexander)
Tamara Heidenthal (designee for Sen. Appel)
Russell Armstrong
Nancy Bebn
Peggy Cotogno
Barry Erwin
Janet Pace (designee for Julie Cherry)
Pamela Mitchell-Wagner
Polly Johnson
Sanettria "Sam" Pleasant
Lawrence Narcisse
Lauren Russell
Alison Neustrom (designee for Robert Travis Scott)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Yvonne Dorsey-Colomb
Fredell Butler
Rep. Steve Carter
Richard Hartley
Ashley Herad
Carolyn Hill
Brenda Hodge
Rep. Patrick Jefferson
Terry Landry
Anita Sexton

STAFF PRESENT

Sherri Breaux, LYAC Coordinator
Tammy Crain-Waldrop, Researcher
Nanette Longuepee, Administrative Secretary

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Nancy Beben made a motion to approve the minutes of November 5, 2012, and without objection the minutes were approved.

IV. BUSINESS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

Beth Courtney opened the meeting and roll was called. Ms. Courtney introduced the new members of the committee. The first item of business was the approval of the recommendations of the Application Review Committee for the 2013-2014 membership to the Legislative Youth Advisory Council. Ms. Pace read into the record the recommendations for acceptance of the nominees. Ms. Pace made a motion to approve the recommendations. Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion and without objection the new recommendations were elected to the 2013/2014 Legislative Youth Advisory Council.

Ms. Cotogno delivered the background on the "We the People" - Simulated Congressional Hearing. The Louisiana Center on Law and Civic Education (LCLCE) is a non-profit organization that has been operating for 20 years. The primary mission is to support law related education and good citizenry. Towards that end, we have supported the award winning national civics curriculum called "We the People, The Citizen and the Constitution". I am the Louisiana "We the People" State Coordinator. This program was funded by the federal government up until 3 years ago when President Obama cut funding. Since then the LCLCE has continued the program using available operating funds to finance it. We have done this because we believe it is an excellent curriculum. The textbook for "We the People" is an excellent, relatively inexpensive, book that provides teachers an opportunity to offer their students the ability to take abstract concepts, such as those found in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and apply them to current issues and day to day circumstances. When "We the People" is taken to its highest level, students are broken up into six teams representing one team for each of the six textbook units. These teams work all year learning everything there is to know on their assigned unit. Each team prepares a four minute oral response to several questions. The students then present a four minute oral argument before a panel of judges after which the judges then have six minutes to ask follow up questions. Each team is scored by the panel of judges. At the end of the day, the Louisiana team that has the highest score at the State Competition advances to the National Competition held in Washington DC. Today one of the Louisiana unit teams that competed in the National Competition is here to perform one of their ten minute simulated congressional hearings for you. This team is from Haynes Academy which is a public school in Metairie, LA.

The students from Haynes Academy, Eric Le, Srilasya Garigipaty, Emily Hingle and Chandler Harris, completed their presentation to the committee. The judges' for today's panel were Carl Dermady, a retired Jefferson Parish Social Studies Consultant. Tiffany Crane, an attorney in the Baton Rouge area, and Belinda Cambre, an attorney and a professor at the University of New

Orleans.

The next order of business is an update on the activities of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council.

Mr. Uday Toodi, 2012-2103 president of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council gives an update on this year's council. We are a group of students who come together to discuss the problems of our youth and try to craft solutions. Mr. Toodi presents a power point presentation on the accomplishments of the past year. In addition to the regular initiatives of the council, this year's council were also able to participate in a mock election held at the old state capitol as well witnessing the electoral college.

Ms. Breaux elaborated on the council by telling the commission about the council's involvement in LPB's show "Public Square". Also, the Louisiana Register has finished their rule making process on the Community Service Diploma Endorsement, which was started by last year's council. This program will begin this fall with the first endorsement being awarded in four years.

Ms. Lauren Russell with the House Legislator's Back to School Program updates the commission on the program and hopes that next year will increase participation.

Ms. Courtney updates the commission on HB 298 of the 2013 Regular Session which adds two member to the Commission on Civic Education. One member will represent the LA District Judges Association and will be appointed by the president of its board of directors and the second member will be the Chief Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court or his designee.

Ms. Breaux introduces Ms. Ann Brown as her predecessor to the Legislative Youth Advisory Council for the coming year.

V. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, Peggy Cotogno moved to adjourn. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Courtney, Chairwoman