

# Louisiana Commission on Civic Education

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



**Commission Staff**  
Sherri Breaux  
Chief Legislative Researcher

Tammy Crain-Waldrop  
Researcher

Nanette Longuepee  
Administrative Secretary

## UNAPPROVED MINUTES

April 27, 2012

### I. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Louisiana Commission on Civic Education was held on Friday, April 27, 2012 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 2:13 p.m.

### II. ROLL CALL

The secretary called the roll and the following was noted:

#### MEMBERS PRESENT

Rep. Patrick Jefferson  
Leslie Freeman (designee for Nancy Beben)  
Gail Brister (designee for Sen. Dorsey)  
Barry Erwin  
Steve Spires (designee for Ashley Herad)  
Brenda Hodge  
Beth Courtney  
Louise "Lou" Munson  
Lawrence Narcisse  
Jeanne Johnston (designee for Sen. Appel)  
Richard Hartley  
Sheila McCant  
Terry Landry  
Anita Sexton  
Pamela Mitchell-Wagner

#### MEMBERS ABSENT

John Alexander  
Rep. Steve Carter  
Carolyn Hill  
Robert Travis Scott  
Fredell Butler  
Peggy Cotogno  
Chris Gorman  
Malcolm Myer  
Russell Armstrong

#### STAFF PRESENT

Sherri Breaux, Chief Legislative Researcher  
Tammy Crain-Waldrop, Researcher  
Nanette Longuepee, Administrative Secretary

### **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There were no minutes to be approved.

### **IV. BUSINESS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE**

Beth Courtney opened the meeting and roll was called. Introduced new members and staff to the committee. The election for chair was conducted and Mr. Barry Erwin nominated Ms. Beth Courtney. Sheila McCant seconded the motion and without objection, Ms. Beth Courtney was elected Chairwoman of the commission. Brenda Hodge nominated Senator Yvonne Dorsey-Colomb as vice chairwoman. Representative Patrick Jefferson seconded the motion and without objection Senator, Yvonne Dorsey-Colomb was elected vice chairwoman.

Sherri Breaux who works on the Senate Staff and works with the Legislative Youth Advisory Council gave an update on the activities of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council. A meeting of the council was held in December and their last meeting will be on May 12<sup>th</sup>. The students have been working hard on several initiatives, one of them being engaging more high school students in community service. Barry Erwin, Janet Pace, Beth Courtney and Rep. Steve Carter were at the December meeting. Rep. Carter challenged the students to come up with an idea to engage more high school students in community service. One of the ideas was a high school graduation requirement. During the discussion the students discussed reasons they felt the idea would work and reasons it would not. Some students felt that perhaps community service could be incorporated into a civics class or other curriculum. Another idea was to create a new elective in community service that students could take and receive credit for. The idea that the students decided to move forward on was to have a diploma endorsement on the high school diplomas. Representative Carter challenged the students to come up with a plan on how to move forward with this and he would author the legislation. There were two resolutions introduced during this session, one by Senator Appel and one by Representative Carter. Both resolutions passed the legislature. These resolutions urged and requested BESE to study the diploma endorsement concept and ways to implement it. These students worked together to help draft the language for the resolutions. They went to each of the committee meetings and testified before the committees in support of the resolution and answered any questions the committee members had. Due to the fact that not all students would participate equally they came up with 3 levels of distinction. The gold level would require 300 hours or more, the silver would require 150 hours or more, and the bronze would require 50 hours or more of community service. Jeanne Johnston spoke on behalf of Senator Appel and commended the legislative youth advisory members who came before the Senate Education committee to testify.

Nanette Longuepee gave an update on the Legislator's Back to School Program for the senate. The program was already 85% or more completed by the time she took over. There were approximately 10 senators still to be scheduled but at this time all but two of them are scheduled and we are hoping for 100% participation.

Sheila McCant gave an update on the Legislator's Back to School Program for the house. She

stated that Kathleen Randall headed up the program. At this time they are in the process of regrouping and reorganizing. There were a number of house members who have participated and they are hoping to have more. They are looking for new ways and ideas to engage the house members to participate in the program. Over the last several years there has been a large turnover of new members. Representative Jefferson stated that as a new house member he did not feel that the importance of the Back to School program was stressed as well as it could be. Ms. McCant stated that some legislators were going into the schools but not reporting back to the house staff so their numbers for participation were off.

Brenda Hodge encouraged the commission to go to the NCSL's website for more information on the Legislator's Back to School Program. The website has extensive information about the program as well as support materials and how other states are handling implementation. It started as a one day event and is now a year long program. Their website is NCSL.org. Search under civic education, the legislator's back to school program. Sherri Breaux mentioned that the NCSL can also be reached from the legislative website home page.

Beth Courtney moved on to the next item on the agenda which was approval of the recommendations of the application review committee for the 2012/2013 membership on the Legislative Youth Advisory Council.

Brenda Hodge stated that she served on the application review committee and had the honor and privilege of reading through all of the applications submitted. Ms. Hodge read into the record the recommendations for acceptance of the nominees. Brenda Hodge made a motion to approve the recommendations. Mr. Barry Erwin seconded the motion and without objection the new recommendations were elected to the 2012/2013 Legislative Youth Advisory Council. Ms. Breaux stated that many of the students were told to tune in to the meeting and everyone will be notified by phone throughout the weekend.

Beth Courtney introduced Mr. Richard Hartley and asked him to give the introduction for Ms. Memory Seymour and the Bicentennial Presentation.

Richard Hartley introduced Ms. Memory Seymour who has authored a book titled "The Teacher Desk Reference". You can see the quality of her work in all the bicentennial materials and events that are planned throughout the state.

Memory Seymour summarized the events thus far. This has been a 16 month celebration. It began in September of 2011 and continues until December of 2012. We wanted to create something that would be of value to the class room for an extended period of time. It was our goal to get this desk reference as well as a wealth of other resources to teachers in advance of the event. It was supported with a series of teacher workshops in which we got the content to all the teachers. We had six university based workshops around the state that was open to a maximum of 75 teachers. We also accepted invitations to do special workshops for various schools. The book itself is based on social studies, English language, arts, science, and math activities for the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade American history classes. This is to be used as a bridge between class room instruction and home instruction. Many of the activities found in the book begin in the class room and carry over into the family. The Lieutenant Governor took the presentation to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and they recommended this

resource very highly. Presented several materials that are available for purchase during the bicentennial celebration.

A resolution was read in honor of Sherri Breaux recognizing her retirement from the senate and for all of her work with the senate especially in education, the Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council, the Louisiana Civic Education Commission and the Legislators Back to School Program.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, Sheila McCant moved to adjourn. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Beth Courtney, Chairwoman

Approved: