



LOUISIANA PUBLIC DEFENDER BOARD

Monday, November 15, 2021

10:30 a.m.

Zoom Video-Conference

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87129843859?pwd=RHhYc1g3UnRpYmJub0tEblZKakJLdz09>

Meeting ID: 871 2984 3859

Passcode: 117756

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Comments by Chairman. A meeting of the Louisiana Public Defender Board, pursuant to lawful notice, was called to order by its Chairman Michael C. Ginart on Monday, November 15, 2021, at approximately 10:30 a.m.

The following Board members were present¹:

Flozell Daniels
Michael Ginart
Donald North

Pat Fanning
Holly Howat
Cindy Woodard

W. Ross Foote
Lyn Lawrence

The following Board members were absent:

Zita Andrus

Frank Holthaus

Allyson Prejean

The following members of the Board's staff were present:

Rémy Voisin Starns, State Public Defender
Barbara Baier, General Counsel
Natashia Carter, Budget Administrator
Anne Gwin, Executive Assistant
Michael Mitchell, Trial Level Compliance Officer
Robert Noel, Dep. Public Defender, Director of Training
Richard Pittman, Dep. Public Defender, Dir. Juvenile Defender Services
Tiffany Simpson, Juvenile Compliance Officer; Legislative Director
Erik Stilling, Information and Technology Director

¹ Board Members Frank Holthaus and Allyson Prejean arrived at approximately am, respectively. Quorum was not affected by the late arrivals.

2. **Adoption of the Agenda.** Mr. Pat Fanning moved to adopt the agenda. Judge Cynthia Woodard seconded the motion which passed unopposed.

3. **Public Comment.** Chairman Ginart indicated that he has received several requests for Public Comment regarding Mr. Paul Marx. He clarified that Mr. Marx has reached out to him and requested that he be allowed to address the Board at the December 16, 2021, meeting. Mr. Ginart asked those present to discuss this issue to reserve their comments for that meeting.

4. **Executive Session^{2,3*}.** Professor Donald North moved to go into Executive Session. Mr. Flozell Daniels seconded the motion which passed unopposed. Mr. Daniels moved to leave Executive Session which was seconded by Judge Woodard and passed unopposed.

5. **District Defender Appointments***

a. **Regionalization Assessments.** This item was not addressed.

b. **District 2.** Mr. Lyn Lawrence moved to hire Mr. Steven Gatlin as the District Defender for District 2 (Bienville, Claiborne, Jackson Parishes). Mr. Daniels seconded the motion which passed unopposed. Chairman Ginart congratulated Mr. Gatlin and thanked the other candidates. Mr. Gatlin thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve.

c. **District 6.** Mr. Daniels moved to hire Mr. John Hogue as the District Defender for District 6 (E. Carroll, Madison, and Tensas Parishes). Judge Ross Foote seconded the motion which passed unopposed. Chairman Ginart congratulated Mr. Hogue and thanked the other candidates for applying. Mr. Hogue thanked the Board for the opportunity. Applicant Pamela Greer welcomed Mr. Hogue and expressed her eagerness to work with him in the future.

d-e. **District 11 and District 42.** Judge Foote moved that the State Public Defender enter into a contract with Mr. Brian McRae to satisfy the duties of the District Defender for District 11 (Sabine Parish) and District 42 (Desoto Parish). Ms. Allyson Prejean seconded the motion which passed unopposed. Chairman Ginart congratulated Mr. McRae and thanked the other candidates for applying.

² The Board may vote to go into executive session pursuant to La. R.S. 42:16 and 42:17 (formerly La. R.S. 42:6 and 42:6.1), by a two-thirds vote of the members present. The executive session is limited to matters allowed to be exempted from public discussion pursuant to La. R.S. 42:17, including character and professional competence of a person; provided, however, such person(s) may require that such discussion be held at an open meeting pursuant to La. R.S. 42:17(A)(1). The Board may interview District Defender candidates in the following districts: District 2 (Bienville, Claiborne, Jackson Parishes) candidates; District 6 (E. Carroll, Madison and Tensas Parishes); District 11 (Sabine Parish); and District 42 (Desoto Parish). The Board may also discuss the District Defender site visit result in District 23 (Ascension, Assumption and St. James Parishes).

³ The Board may vote to go into executive session pursuant to La. R.S. 42:16 and 42:17 (formerly La. R.S. 42:6 and 42:6.1), by a two-thirds vote of the members present. The executive session is limited to matters allowed to be exempted from public discussion pursuant to La. R.S. 42:17, including strategy sessions with respect to litigation and prospective litigation. In accordance with La. R.S. 42:19(A)(b)(iii), the Board may discuss the following: *Jami Pellerin vs State of Louisiana, through Indigent Defender Board, 15th Judicial District Indigent Defender's Office and G. Paul Marx, Chief District Defender for the 15th Judicial District Indigent Defender's Office*, 15th Judicial District Court, Docket: c-202116471, Lafayette Parish; *Joseph Allen et al v. John Bel Edwards, et al*, Docket: C655079, Section 27, 19th JDC, Parish of East Baton Rouge.

f. **District 23 – Appointment of Interim.** Mr. Starns reported that the District 23 (Ascension, Assumption and St. James Parishes) District Defender Alan Robert has submitted his resignation effective November 30, 2021. Mr. Starns indicated he is recommending District 17 (Lafourche Parish) District Defender Andrea Stentz as Interim pending the appointment of the permanent District Defender in that district. Mr. Daniels moved to accept Mr. Starns' recommendation to hire Ms. Andrea Stentz as the interim District Defender for District 23 (Ascension, Assumption and St. James Parishes). Mr. Lawrence seconded the motion which passed unopposed.

6. State Public Defender – Authority to Hire Personnel and Set Salaries. Judge Foote moved that this item be deferred to the next meeting (Dec. 16, 2021) after the Budget Committee has had the opportunity to review and/or address salary ranges and that personnel be given performance evaluations. Judge Woodard seconded the motion which passed unopposed.

Judge Foote asked if the Zoom meeting information and materials will be sent out prior to the "O" Level Funding meeting scheduled for November 17, 2021 in Marksville. Mr. Starns indicated he would provide that information.

Returning to 5(f), General Counsel Barbara Baier asked for clarification on the salary for the interim district defender (Andrea Stentz) in District 23 (Ascension, Assumption and St. James Parishes). Mr. Starns reported her salary is to be \$3,000 per month.

Returning to 5(b)(c)(d)(e), Mr. Fanning asked for clarification on the salaries for the other newly appointed district defenders. Mr. Starns reported the salaries should be \$84,000 for all but it is for the Board to decide. Judge Foote inquired if their salaries could be set at \$84,000 and revisited at a later date. Mr. Starns clarified that the earlier discussion was for District 2 (Bienville, Claiborne, Jackson Parishes) District Defender salary to be \$84,000 and for District 6 (E. Carroll, Madison, and Tensas Parishes) to be \$100,000. Mr. Fanning then moved that the District Defender salary in District 6 (E. Carroll, Madison, and Tensas Parishes) be set at \$100,000. Ms. Prejean seconded the motion which passed unopposed. Mr. Lawrence moved that the District Defender salary for District 2 (Bienville, Claiborne, Jackson Parishes) be set at \$84,000. Judge Woodard seconded the motion which passed unopposed. Mr. Starns indicated he also needs a salary set for Mr. McRae at the same rate he is being paid now in three all districts. Mr. Lawrence moved to pay Brian McRae the same rate in all 3 districts – Red River, DeSoto and Sabine at the same rate he is being paid now. Judge Foote seconded the motion which passed unopposed.

7. Next Meeting: Thursday, December 16, 2021, 1:30 pm
(format / location to be determined)

8. **Adjournment.** Mr. Fanning moved to adjourn which was seconded by Mr. Lawrence and passed unopposed.

Guests: See attached Zoom Participation list.

I **HEREBY CERTIFY** that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct account of the proceedings of the meeting of Louisiana Public Defender Board meeting held on the 15th day of November, 2021 as approved by the Board on the 16th day of December, 2021⁴.



MICHAEL C. GINART, JR., CHAIRMAN

⁴ The meeting at which these minutes were approved was held by Zoom video-conference pursuant to La. R.S. 42:17.1.