



John Bel Edwards
Governor

State of Louisiana

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
DRUG POLICY

Kristy Miller
Director

GOVERNOR'S DWI TASK FORCE November 15, 2023; 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

MINUTES

Call to Order

Lisa Freeman, Chair of the DWI Task Force and Executive Director of the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission (LHSC), called the meeting to order. Lisa Freeman shared that quorum was not achieved. .

Welcome and Introductions

Lisa Freeman did a roll call for voting members seated at the table, each member was asked to introduce him/herself. After these introductions, stakeholders were invited to introduce themselves as well.

Old Business- Discuss and Approve: Minutes from February 2023 meeting

Lisa Freeman shared there was no quorum achieved therefore minutes were not approved.

New Business

A. Celebrating the Achievements of the Governor's Task Force on DWI

Greetings and Commendations from Dr. Chaunda Mitchell, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor

Kristy Miller introduced Dr. Mitchell. Kristy shared that Dr. Mitchell is the Deputy Chief of Staff with responsibilities over community programs and planning, which includes health departments. Dr. Mitchell thanked everyone and highlighted the achievements of the Governor's Task Force on DWI. Dr. Mitchell and Kristy discussed the executive transition at the state level, concurrently addressing an issue concerning the lack of legislation for the task force's executive transition. It was expressed that Lisa Freeman was the ideal choice for Governor Edwards to oversee the Highway Safety Commission and lead the DWI Task Force. The Executive Director and Chair of the DWI Task Force, Lisa Freeman, expressed gratitude, noting she was the "exact right person for that agency for that work at the exact right time." Dr. Mitchell acknowledged Lisa's remarkable team, underscoring the significance of teamwork in achieving success. Lisa Freeman, in turn, expressed gratitude, recognizing her team's contributions and attributing her success to the dedication of those around her. Dr. Mitchell emphasized the importance of data-driven decision-making, noting the incorporation of data pieces into the discussion and referencing the training of Dr. Freeman and others.

B. Briefing on Executive Transition from Kristy Miller, Director of Drug Policy, Office of the Governor

Kristy Miller then shared additional details about the executive transition process, underscoring the significance of maintaining a focus on the DWI Task Force. She highlighted the legislation establishing a Drug Policy Board within the governor's office, dating back to 2016 amid the

opioid epidemic. Governor Edwards's goal was to establish a robust office of drug policy, tasked with managing various aspects, including legislative tracking and policy advisement.

In her address, Kristy recommended that Governor-elect Landry's administration consider establishing an Office of Drug Policy to oversee a comprehensive portfolio of boards and commissions. This would include the drug policy board, heroin prevention council, and associated committees. Importantly, she emphasized the commitment to ensuring the continued presence of the DWI Task Force.

Regarding the transition plans, Kristy reiterated the current administration's commitment to leaving behind thorough documentation, recommendations, and considerations. Briefing documents from department heads have already been submitted to the governor-elect's chief of staff.

Kristy Miller also mentioned a specific commitment related to the DWI Task Force. She expressed the intention to issue an Executive Order within the first 30 days of the transition to create a Governors DWI Task Force, especially considering the absence of existing legislation for it.

In terms of employment status, Kristy shared that she, along with Dr. Mitchell and Dr. Polk, currently have employment guaranteed until January 8th at 12 noon. However, she made it clear that there are no guarantees beyond that date, emphasizing the ongoing efforts to secure the presence of the DWI Task Force.

C. *DWI Task Force Accomplishments from Lisa Freeman, Executive Director of the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission*

Lisa Freeman shared details about the DWI Taskforce's 2022 Louisiana CARS Pilot Program, funded by a grant from the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission. The initiative aimed to provide certain Louisiana Judges with free access to trained screeners for a computerized mental health screening tool, focusing on assessing the risk of mental health and substance use disorders, predicting repeat DWI offenses, and offering local clinicians for necessary assessment and treatment.

Utilizing the well-validated Computerized Assessment & Referral System (CARS), adapted from the World Health Organization's Composite International Diagnostic Instrument (CIDI) for DSM-IV, the program identified psychiatric disorders to address recidivism and impaired driving. Various screening instruments, including Impaired Driving Assessment (IDA), DUI Risk and Needs Triage (DUI-RANT™), and the CARS screener, were highlighted. The emphasis lay on early screening and assessment to direct high-risk individuals towards appropriate clinical evaluation and treatment.

The CARS program aimed to help judges by providing evidence-based strategies for rehabilitating DUI offenders. The screener generated reports detailing biopsychosocial factors, the risk of future DWIs, and local treatment providers, assisting judges in setting probation conditions to reduce recidivism and enhance road safety.

Lisa Freeman also discussed early screening for misdemeanor DWI offenders in the 17th JDC, highlighting the evolution of a proactive program that incorporated a mental health element to explore the reasons behind offenses. Assessments and screenings were conducted, and individuals were referred to mental health resources based on findings. Freeman stressed the importance of addressing mental health alongside legal considerations, advocating for tailored programs to meet specific community needs.

Lisa Freeman also highlighted the first ever Symposium put on by Louisiana Highway Safety Commission, hosting over 200 participants, saw the attendance of three legislators during the kick-off. Opening remarks were given by Col. Davis, LSP Superintendent, and Chief Justice Weimer from the Louisiana Supreme Court. Luke Niforatos, EVP at Smart Approaches to Marijuana, provided the keynote presentation, followed by an interview-style discussion between Teresa Haley, President of the Illinois NAACP, and Kristy Miller. She shared that their panels featured Louisiana's experts addressed public safety and impaired driving, offering valuable insights and focused on promoting a positive traffic safety culture to reduce impaired driving.

D. A Conversation about the Future of the Governor’s Task Force on DWI

The immediate implementation of the Executive Order for the DWI Task Force is essential. Furthermore, urgent legislative action should be taken to formalize the DWI Task Force's status by enacting legislation that establishes it as a legislative statute. This dual approach ensures both swift execution of the Executive Order and a lasting legal framework for the DWI Task Force's operations.

E. Recommendation Workgroup Updates

No Workgroup Updates during the meeting.

Other Business

No other business.

Office of Drug Policy update

Kristy shared that she, along with Dr. Mitchell and Dr. Polk, currently have employment guaranteed until January 8th at 12 noon. However, she made it clear that there are no guarantees beyond that date, emphasizing the ongoing efforts to secure the presence of the DWI Task Force.

Member agency updates

No member agency updates

Comments from stakeholders and members of the public

Several stakeholders made comments and thanked all who were active participants in DWI Task Force.

Upcoming Meetings of Other Office of Drug Policy boards

DWI Taskforce February, 28, 2024 @ 10 AM

Adjournment

With no further business to conduct, Kristy Miller (Office of Drug Policy) and Lisa Freeman (Louisiana Highway Safety Commission) moved to adjourn the meeting

DWI TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Member Agency	Appointee/Designee	Present
Attorney General's Office	Amanda Martin	No
Governor's Office of Drug Policy	Kristy Miller	Yes
House of Representatives member	Marcus Bryant	No
Office of Behavioral Health	Dr. Leslie Freeman	Yes
Office of Motor Vehicles	Robyn Temple	Yes
LA District Attorneys Association	Kurt Wall (Proxy for Norma DuBois)	Yes
Louisiana Highway Safety Commission	Lisa Freeman	Yes
Louisiana Alcohol and Tobacco Control	Ernest Legier	No
Department of Transportation and Development	Adriane McRae	Yes
Louisiana Sheriffs' Association	Sheriff K.P. Gibson	No
Louisiana State Police Crime Lab	Rebecca Chiasson	Yes
Louisiana State Police	Lt. Robert "Shawn" Owens	Yes
Property and Casualty Insurance Commission	Tom Travis	No
Senate Member	Vacant	--
Mothers Against Drunk Driving	Kelley Dair	Yes
LA Restaurant Association	Jeff Conaway	No
LA Association of Chiefs of Police	Chief Shayne Gibson	No
At-Large	Delia Brady	No
At-Large	Dr. Beau Clark	No
At-Large	Judge Jules Edwards (Ret.)	No

Guests

Tunde Animashawn - Office of Motor Vehicles
 Dortha Cummins - Louisiana Highway Safety Commission
 Aimee Moles - LSU Social Research and Evaluation Center
 Shayla Polk – Governor's Office of Drug Policy
 Frank Marrero - NHTJA
 Dr.Scott Smith - LSU CARTS
 Cathy Childers – LHSC
 Joey Jones – North. LA. Crime Lab