



**John Bel Edwards**  
Governor

# State of Louisiana

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
DRUG POLICY

**Dr. Chaunda Mitchell**  
Director, Drug Policy &  
Executive Director,  
Diversity and Inclusion

**Kristy Miller**  
Assistant Director

## **DRUG POLICY BOARD** **March 3, 2020; 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

### **MINUTES**

#### **Call to Order**

Dr. Chaunda Mitchell, Director of the Governor's Office of Drug Policy and Chair of the Drug Policy Board, called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Chaunda asked everyone to introduce themselves. After that, she announced that there were 11 members present which was one member short for quorum. At that time, she announced that the meeting would proceed because one additional member was reported to be in route. She reminded all in attendance that the meeting could proceed and discussion could occur, but no formal business could take place without a quorum.

#### **Old Business**

##### *Review and approve minutes from October and November meetings*

Due to a lack of quorum, Chaunda asked for approval to bypass the one item under "Old Business" which was the approval of previous meetings' minutes. All in attendance agreed. During the "Review of 2020 Legislative Filings" report, another member of the Drug Policy Board arrived which put the board at a majority plus one present and quorum was reached. So, after the review concluded, Chaunda made a motion to review and approve minutes. All agreed so Chaunda requested that members review the content. Dr. Joseph Kanter, Assistant State Health Director, made a motion to accept the October and November meeting minutes in globo. Pat Magee, Criminal Division Director for the Attorney General's Office, seconded the motion. All agreed. None disagreed. None abstained.

#### **New Business**

##### *Update on Drug Policy Board membership*

Chaunda explained that, as the new four-year term for the Governor and legislators has started, members who serve as Governor's appointees will have to be reappointed to their seats on the Drug Policy Board. Kristy Miller, Assistant Director of the Office Drug Policy, has reached out to you all individually to confirm whether you want to continue to serve. If you replied in the affirmative, your name has been submitted to the Governor for consideration.

In addition, Kristy has reached out to those of who serve as agency designees to confirm that you are still willing and able to serve. Many thanks to those who are returning. To that end, Chaunda announced that Alfreda Tillman-Bester, long-time designee for the Department of Children and Family Services, has resigned her seat after accepting a position outside of DCFS.

Further, the Attorney General has identified two individuals who will share the responsibility of representing his office: Bill Stiles, Chief Deputy Attorney General, and Pat Magee, Criminal Division Director. Finally, Remy Starns was recently selected as the new State Public Defender and will now serve as the Executive Director of the LA Public Defenders Board. Subsequently, Governor Edwards appointed Remy to fill the seat reserved for a representative of the indigent defender system. Chaunda acknowledged that we hope to have all appointments made by the next meeting.

#### *Review of 2020 legislative filings*

Chaunda announced that the pre-file deadline for legislative filings was Friday, February 28. She explained that, as always, we have conducted a review of all bills and compiled a list of those that are relevant to the Office of Drug Policy in some way. With that, Chaunda turned the presentation over to Kristy who conducted an overview of the bills.

Kristy suggested that everyone refer to their meeting packet which contained a list of all bills of relevance to the Drug Policy Board. The list contained the instrument numbers, current status, author's last name, and brief description of the bills. She suggested that everyone could use this document as reference while Kristy utilized a powerpoint presentation to highlight specific bills. In addition, Kristy committed to sending the powerpoint file to everyone after the meeting.

Kristy announced that there are 68 bills (47 House and 21 Senate) in total that the Office of Drug Policy will be tracking during the legislative session. The focus of the bills ranged from marijuana, hemp, opioids, tobacco and vapor products, impaired driving, alcohol, drug courts, mandatory substance use disorder screenings in certain instances, and changes to expungement of criminal records which includes alcohol and/or drug-related offenses. Kristy's presentation included references to 39 specific bills that the DPB members should keep an eye on.

Chaunda and Kristy reminded all members that the Drug Policy Board is designed to serve in an advisory capacity to the Governor as well as to the legislator. Given this legislatively defined role, they reminded the group that they could consider taking positions on one or several specific bills or even taking a position on a particular approach to drug control. Given that members were just introduced to the bills of concern to the Office of Drug Policy during this meeting, Chaunda recommended that members should take the list of bills back to their respective agencies/constituency groups for further consideration. Then, in two weeks, Kristy will reach out to everyone to inquire whether any agency/constituency groups represented on the DPB have taken positions on bills. Further, she will poll the group to see if any member intends to make a recommendation at the next Drug Policy Board meeting for the Board to take a position on a particular bill. This information will be used to develop the agenda for the next meeting.

#### **Other Business**

##### *HOPE Council updates*

Chaunda offered Dr. Jim Hussey, Medical Director for the LA Department of Health and Chair of the HOPE Council, an opportunity to provide an update. Jim introduced himself and also introduced Jay Besse, Chief Data Officer for the Office of Public Health at LDH and a crucial stakeholder of the HOPE Council. Jim pointed out that members have copies of the 2019 End-of-Year Report published by the Council. He requested that they turn to the Executive Summary while he conducted a brief overview of the report's contents. Chaunda commended Jim on his leadership and the herculean effort of the Council to develop another thorough and relevant year-end report. With that, Warren Montgomery, LDAA Representative and District Attorney for

the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District, made a motion to accept and endorse the HOPE Council's 2019 Year-End Report. Marcus Bruno, Agent with the Office of Alcohol and Tobacco Control, seconded the motion. All members agreed. No members dissented. No members abstained. Kristy committed to send the entire report to all members and stakeholders for dissemination and/or reference in their work.

#### *DWI Task Force updates*

This update was skipped because Lisa Freeman, Chair of the DWI Task Force, was not present.

#### *Agency updates*

LHSC: Jessica Bedwell announced that the application period for FY2021 grants from the LA Highway Safety Commission is now open. The application and more information is available on the LHSC's website.

Crime Lab: Rebecca Nugent reminded everyone about the Crime Lab's process for accreditation last year. They got their scope expansion in October and started their implementation of quantification of impairing drugs other than alcohol in blood samples. This is all evidence collected as part of DWI cases. They have implemented the THC panel, the benzodiazepine panel, the opioid panel, and the cocaine panel. An alarming observation is that 25% of the blood samples are positive for THC whole molecules. That means, 1 out of 4 blood samples have the parent drug as well. They are detecting the hydroxyl metabolite (the active metabolite) also at 25% and the carboxy metabolite (the non-active metabolite) at 40%.

Physician/OPH: Dr. Joseph Kanter wanted to spread the word the University Medical Center in New Orleans is the first Emergency Department that will start a person on addiction treatment while they are still in the ER. Previously, a person was discharged and recommended for a follow up for treatment, but the follow-up rates were abysmal. Now, treatment can begin immediately.

LDH: Louisiana has been selected to host a Tobacco Leadership Academy, funded and facilitated by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The purpose of the Academy is to develop a coordinated statewide strategic plan to address tobacco. It will include strategies across prevention, education, cessation, and treatment.

#### **Upcoming Meetings**

Chaunda referenced the agenda for dates of upcoming meetings including the next meeting of the Drug Policy Board which is scheduled for April 16.

#### **Adjournment**

Chaunda called the meeting to adjournment at 11:51am.

**VOTING MEMBERS**

<b>Member Agency</b>	<b>Appointee/Designee</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>
Alcohol industry representative	Buddy Schilling	No
Attorney General's Office	Pat Magee	Yes
Board of Pharmacy	Malcolm Broussard	Yes
District Court Judge	Judge Jules Edwards	No
Federal agency with AOD ed/treatment/prev responsibilities	Vacant	----
Governor's Office of Drug Policy	Dr. Chaunda Mitchell	Yes
House member, Committee on Health and Welfare	Vacant	----
Louisiana Commission on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse	Vacant	----
Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement	Linda Gautier	Yes
Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services	Vacant	----
Louisiana Department of Education	Michael Comeaux	Yes
Louisiana Department of Health	Dr. Leslie Freeman (proxy)	Yes
Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections	Dr. John Morrison	Yes
Louisiana District Attorneys Association	Warren Montgomery	Yes
Louisiana Highway Safety Commission	Jessica Bedwell (proxy)	Yes
Louisiana Office of Alcohol & Tobacco Control	Marcus Bruno (proxy)	Yes
Louisiana Public Defenders Board	Remy Starns	No
Louisiana Sheriffs' Association	Shannon Dirmann	No
Louisiana State Police	Rebecca Nugent	Yes
National Guard	Major Marshall Snowden	Yes
Physician	Dr. Joseph Kanter	Yes
Private organization involved in substance abuse prevention	Vacant	----
Senate member, Committee on Health and Welfare	Senator Yvonne Colomb	No

**OF-COUNSEL MEMBERS**

<b>Member Agency</b>	<b>Appointee/Designee</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>
LA State Board of Medical Examiners	Dr. Vincent Culotta	Yes
LA Department of Veteran's Affairs	Barry Robinson	Yes
Advisory Council on Heroin and Opioid Prevention and Education	Dr. Jim Hussey	Yes
Drug Enforcement Administration, NOLA Office	Randy Harness	Yes

**STAFF**

Kristy Miller, Governor's Office of Drug Policy

**GUESTS**

Dr. Murelle Harrison, Historically Black Colleges/Universities and Co-Chair of Prevention Systems Cmte

Cathy Childers, Louisiana Highway Safety Commission and Co-Chair of Prevention Systems Cmte

Mike Edgar, Louisiana State Police

Amiee Moles, SREC

Carolin Purser, SREC

Amy Thomas, LA National Guard

Blake LeBlanc, Department of Corrections

Jay Besse, LA Department of Health

Mike Barron, LA Highway Safety Commission

Alberto DePuy, Attorney General's Office