**MEETING OF THE**

**LOUISIANA STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**DATE:** January 27, 2015

**TIME** 10:30 a.m.

**PLACE:** Louisiana Retirement Systems Building

Mr. F. Travis Lavigne, Jr., Commission Chair, called a meeting of the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission to order at 10:39 a.m.

The following members of the Commission were present:

Mr. F. Travis Lavigne, Jr.

Dr. Toya Barnes-Teamer

Mr. Ken Bradford

Mr. Nichquin Dumas

Mr. Walter Guidry, Jr.

Mr. Jimmy Long, Sr

Mr. Wilfred Sibille

Ms. Wendy Simoneaux

Dr. Larry Tremblay

The following members were absent:

Mr. Scott Ballard

Mr. Raymond Brandt

Mr. Jeffery Ehlinger, Jr

Mr. Willie Hendricks

Mr. Myron Lawson

Mr. Richard Maciasz

Mr. Michael Murphy

Mr. Stephen Toups

Eight members were present, which did not represent a quorum, therefore, in accordance with the Meeting Notice, the Chairman called the Executive Committee of the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission to order.

The following members of the Commission’s Executive Committee were present:

Mr. F. Travis Lavigne, Jr.

Dr. Toya Barnes-Teamer

Mr. Jimmy Long, Sr

Mr. Winfred Sibille

Dr. Larry Tremblay

Five members were present, which did represent a quorum.

The following members were absent:

Mr. Jeffery Ehlinger, Jr

Mr. Lavigne temporarily appointed Mr. Bradford, Mr. Dumas, Mr. Guidry, and Ms. Simoneaux.

The following guests were present:

Ms. Shan Davis

Ms. Aisha Mirza

The following staff members were present:

Dr. Sujuan Boutté

Ms. Rhonda Bridevaux

Ms. Alice Brown

Dr. Tireka Cobb

Mr. Kelvin Deloch

Mr. George Eldredge

Ms. Shanna Estay

Ms. Carol Fulco

Mr. Jack Hart

Ms. Tisha Lewis

Ms. Robyn Lively

Mr. Richard Omdal

Ms. Stacy Oubre

Ms. Deborah Paul

Mr. Gus Wales

The minutes of the November 18, 2014 meeting of the Executive Committee of the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission were presented for review and approval. Mr. Dumas made a motion to approve. Mr. Guidry seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Lavigne offered a public comment period. There were no comments.

Under Program Updates, Mr. Wales, Director of Public Information and Communication, presented the Field Services report for Statewide and Concentrated services for November and December 2014. Mr. Wales also presented a College Goal Sunday report and an update on the Signal Vine services offered to TOPS recipients in their first year of college. Dr. Cobb, LA GEAR UP Assistant Director, presented the Field Services report for Intensive Services. Dr. Cobb reported on the high schools seniors Signal Vine text messaging campaign.

Mr. Hart, Assistant Executive Director of Fiscal and Administrative Affairs, presented the financial statements update. Mr. Hart presented the financials for the period ending November 30, 2014 and December 31, 2014. Mr. Hart reported the financial statement from December 2014 showed the Operating Fund closed the month of December with net assets of $9.7M and the Federal Fund with net assets of $7.1M. The Federal Fund had a decrease for the month of $417K and a decrease of $80K for the first quarter of the Federal Fiscal Year. The reserve ratio was 0.6% on a portfolio of $1.184B using the new methodology prescribed by the Federal Student Aid’s Dear Partner letter from December 10th. The Operating Fund had a decrease for the month of $369K and a decrease of $1.5M for the first quarter. Rehabs were $2.9M for the month or 11% above the projections. Mr. Hart presented a letter from KPMG Auditing stating a clean audit for guarantee services provide by Navient Solutions, Inc., and USA Funds. Mr. Hart also presented a letter for NCHELP proposed changes to the FFELP program.

Ms. Paul, Scholarship and Grant (S/G) Program Director, presented a GO Grant update as of January 27, 2014. GO Grant billing for Louisiana Tech winter quarter has been submitted and processing of payments has begun. The remaining post-secondary schools have to wait until the 14th class day of the spring semester to begin billing.

Ms. Paul presented a John R. Justice update as of January 26, 2015. John R. Justice application process began January 1 and all applications are due by April 30, 2015. LOSFA has received 2 applications for Public Defenders in the First and Third Circuits and 10 applications for Prosecutors in the First, Second, Third and Fourth Circuits.

Mr. Hart presented a TOPS update as of January 9, 2015. The report shows the TOPS Current Fiscal Year Expenditures Actual versus Budget Mr. Hart reported a projected $3.2M shortfall if billings remain fixed. TOPS billing are about 12% above last year. A 10% increase in TOPS tuition level and 2% increase in students explains the 12% increase.

Mr. Lavigne asked Mr. Hart what the fiscal impact of an estimate of a 10% increase in tuition throughout all of higher education. Mr. Hart stated the estimate is included in the projection model that is included with the budget request. The projection model includes through academic year 2015-2016 and for next year is about $24-25M increase. Mr. Lavigne stated that tuition increases by the college, which is essential to college operations, also specifically affects the TOPS program.

Dr. Tremblay commented that some college campuses may not get a full 10% tuition increase because of the SREB averages and there may have to be some adjustments involved.

Ms. Paul reported the remaining TOPS report shows the TOPS billings by schools.

Dr. Boutté presented the Executive Director update. Dr. Boutté shared with the Commission a form letter and e-mail from Graduation Alliance about students opting out of Louisiana Connect. Dr. Boutté commented on the IFAP announcement concerning the new FSA ID, which replaces the Federal Student Aid PIN as the process by which students, parents, and borrowers authenticate their identity to access their federal student aid information. Dr. Boutté shared an e-mail from LeAnn Detillier to the State Council of Enrollment Management Officers (CEMO) about post College Goal Sunday follow up FAFSA Events. Dr. Boutté commented on the notification from ACT on changes to the 2015-2016 ACT Electronic Student Records to Scholarship Agencies. ACT will be removing Social Security Numbers (SSNs) beginning in September 2015 on all reports. Dr. Boutté presented a design concept for www.unlockmyfuture.org, an interactive Web page for students using the 5 point match and created by AMS. Dr. Boutté also commented on the Report Card for the Louisiana State Budget Support for Public Higher Education. Dr. Boutté shared a handout on a working draft for legislative changes to TOPS Tech and TOPS Tech Early Start programs.

Mr. Bradford asked Dr. Boutté what will happen when the five year contract with Louisiana Connect expires. Dr. Boutté responded that the agency’s Web site with AMS will be in place.

Mr. Lavigne commented that the $30M in savings reported on the working draft handout of TOPS Tech and TOPS Tech Early Start legislative changes will appeal to legislators but it would be interesting to look at the data that supports the savings. Dr. Boutté responded that the data has been requested to run against figures to ensure there is a savings.

Under New Business, the first item was a proposal that the Commission consider two Budget Adjustments for Fiscal Year 2014-2015, replacing the state general fund with TOPS Fund Means of Financing in the amount of $4,946,681. Mr. Sibille made a motion for approval. Mr. Long seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The second item under new business was a proposal that the Commission consider publication of final rules to amend Section 703 of the Scholarship and Grant Program Rules to add Law Studies as an equivalent of social studies in the TOPS Core Curriculum for students graduating from high school in 2014 and to add courses taught at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts as equivalents to designated courses listed in the TOPS Core Curriculum. Dr. Tremblay made a motion for approval. Mr. Dumas seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The third item under new business was a proposal that the Commission consider publication of final rules to amend Sections 1001, 1003, 1005, 1007, 1009, 1011, 1013, 1015, 1017, and 1901 of the Scholarship and Grant Program Rules to implement Act 737 of the 2014 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature. Dr. Tremblay made a motion for approval. Mr. Guidry seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The fourth item under new business was a proposal that the Commission consider amending Section 703 of the Scholarship and Grant Program Rules to add Media Arts I – IV as equivalents of Art in the TOPS Core Curriculum for students graduating from high school in 2018 and later. Mr. Bradford made a motion for approval. Dr. Tremblay seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The fifth item under new business was s proposal that the Commission consider and act upon Requests for Exception to the TOPS Provisions that Require Students to Enroll Full-Time, to Remain Continuously Enrolled, and to Earn at Least 24 Credit Hours During the Academic Year. Mr. Sibille made a motion of approval of requests from Andrew (641961), Caitlyn (423337), Megan (543267), Joshua (651313), Jamal (538062), Denice (606655), Kerri (595219), Grant (653333), Justin (164162), and Lauren (450641). Dr. Barnes-Teamer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

There being no further business, Mr. Dumas made a motion to adjourn at 11:27 a.m. and Mr. Long seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

APPROVED:

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Chairman