

LOUISIANA COMMISSION ON CIVIC EDUCATION

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Louisiana Commission on Civic Education

APPROVED MINUTES

May 17, 2019

I. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Louisiana Commission on Civic Education was held on Friday, May 17, 2019 in the John J. Hainkel Jr. Room at the State Capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The chairman, Judge Manning, called the meeting to order at 2:14 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The secretary called the roll and the following was noted:

MEMBERS PRESENT

Judge C. Wendell Manning, Chairman
Shan Davis, Vice Chairperson
Kenneth Shutt on behalf of Will Chapman
Beth Courtney
Barry Erwin
Ryan Gremillion
Mitzi Hochheiser
Terry Landry
Criketa Matlock
Sen. Blade Morrish
Lawrence Narcisse
Morgan Robertson
Lauren Russell
Monica Taylor
Donald Songy

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Alexander
Fredell Butler
Sen. Yvonne Colomb
Peggy Cotogno
Rep. Rick Edmonds
Doris Hicks
Rep. Patrick Jefferson
Polly Johnson
Josh McNemar
Kelly Pepper
Anita Sexton

STAFF PRESENT

Tammy Crain-Waldrop, Legislative Researcher
Candace Shields, Senior Secretary

III. INTRODUCTION - New Chairman and Vice Chairwoman

The commission members introduced themselves and stated who they represented.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes of November 2, 2018. There being no objection, the minutes were approved.

V. VOTE

A. To approve the recommendations of the Application Review Committee for the new 2019-2020 membership on the Legislative Youth Advisory Council

Judge Manning: With regard to other items of business. We have the recommendations and report for the Legislative Youth Advisory Council. Megan, would you like to say anything at this time? Megan Bella, with regard, you have your written report? I'm sorry. She will make comments at the end of the meeting. Members of the commission, you have before you the nomination report for the Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council.

Judge Manning: The Chair will entertain a motion to approve the report and accept these members for the 2019-2020 Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council.

Ms. Landry: So moved.

Judge Manning: It has been properly moved by Mr. Landry. Is there a second?

Ms. Davis: Second

Judge Manning: Second by Vice Chair Davis.

Mr. Landry made a motion to approve the recommendations of the Application Review Committee for the new 2019-2020 membership on the Legislative Youth Advisory Council. There being no objection, the recommendations were approved.

Judge Manning: Any further discussion?

Ms. Courtney: I'd, I'd like to know – since we were in charge of reading some that were so impressive, before we go ahead and accept – any, any other information like, you know, how many applicants that we have or anything that, like that, I'm, before we approve them.

Judge Manning: Megan, do you have some information on that?

Ms. Bella: Megan Bella. I work for the Senate and the LYAC Coordinator. So this year, we have 214 applications which is the most I've, I've had since I have been the coordinator of it.

Ms. Courtney: Two hundred and fourteen?

Ms. Bella: Yes, ma'am.

Ms. Courtney: Yeah, well, that's a lot.

Judge Manning: And then how are the applicants vetted?

Ms. Bella: So their scores are based on their answers to eight short-answer questions. Two, at least two letters of recommendation, and then there is an overall question about how they can contribute to the diversity of the council. And some of the members of this commission score the applications. And it's a, a serious undertaking. It takes a lot of time so we really appreciate the hard work that the commission does to make this happen.

Judge Manning: Vice Chair Davis, do you have some comments?

Ms. Davis: So, I was one of the graders and I have some suggestions. I'd like to work with the team on refining this process. I think technology has moved on, but the application process has not necessarily. And one of the things that I've suggested was that this might be an assignment for the leadership of the organization to give us feedback on what they think about the application process. Maybe develop a .pdf application and even an Excel grading document that would help with inputting the scores. And also, I found out that five folks – I think and from what I understand – graded the essays, but we, five folks graded all the essays. So I think there might be a way to divvy up the grading and that may be something initially that schools do before they send all applications in or divide it up amongst, you know, the membership of the council, commission. And, I have some ideas that I have – a whole list of feedback. But I think it might be something good for the organization to propose. It might be a good assignment.

Judge Manning: Thank you. Ms., Ms. Courtney?

Ms. Courtney: Chairman, I'd like to, I know, Megan, there was so much work on your part. I appreciate the way everything was collated and put together, but there were a lot, yeah. And, and so I'm, so we choose, what's the number, what are our parameters? We, you know, give us a refresher on that. How many do we end up choosing out of the two hundred and fourteen?

Ms. Bella: Thirty-one members. So there is thirty-one out of two hundred fourteen.

Ms. Courtney: So thirty-one full members or are some of them are alternates? You know?

Ms. Bella: We used to do alternates and they kind of got away from that a few years ago. So before I, I was, this will be my third group and we got away from that before I started so I'm not sure when they stopped doing the alternates.

Ms. Courtney: Right. Okay.

Ms. Bella: But they are full members.

Ms. Courtney: Thank you.

Ms. Davis: Just to clarify that up. A question that I've asked. So everyone re-applies every year in case you didn't know. So it's like, people don't automatically carry over from year to year. They have to submit an application again and they still have to meet the criteria out of the, from what I understand. And then those folks are taken out and then the next highest scores determine the at-large members, so. They were very good essays, so.

Judge Manning: Well, thank you all for your explanation of the process and thanks to the commission members who served on this committee for review. I know it was a great deal of work and effort. And thank, thanks to the two hundred and fourteen students who applied around the state and to the support of their parents and their schools in submitting their application. So with that being said, are there any other further comment or questions? Properly moved and seconded that we approved the report of the review committee. Hearing no further questions, all in favor say I.

Commission members: I.

Judge Manning: Any opposed? Any abstentions? The motion carries. At this time I've been asked to read to the commission as well as to the general public watching – as are live streamed – the results of the work of this committee and the approval of the commission. And I apologize ahead of time, young people and parents, if I mispronounce your name. I will do my best. With regard to:

Congressional District 1

Carter Nugent	Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies
Avery Pierson	Lusher Charter School
Bridget Seghers	Covington High School

Congressional District 2

Eric Bui	Archbishop Shaw High School
Allison Lee	Benjamin Franklin High School
Rangasri Narayanamoorthy	Benjamin Franklin High School

Congressional District 3

William Brien	Ascension Episcopal School
Benjamin Martin	Sam Houston High School
Grant Suire	Episcopal School of Acadiana

Congressional District 4

William Bartle	C.E. Byrd High School
Molly McNulty	C.E. Byrd High School
Ashini Modi	Caddo Parish Magnet High School

Congressional District 5

Ashton Lee	Hammond High Magnet School
Autumn Moon	Cedar Creek School
Donovan Turpin	Cedar Creek School

Congressional District 6

Alexis Harvey	St. Joseph's Academy
Hiba Hasan	Dutchtown High School
Ella Otken	Denham Springs High School

At-Large Members

Patrick Chu	Lafayette High School
Maggie Eubanks	Ouachita Parish High School
Sophie Faircloth	Denham Springs High School
Andrew Gary	St. Martin's Episcopal School
Samuel Gil	Sacred Heart High School
Kevin Kim	Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies
Robert Lawrence	C.E. Byrd High School
Anna Kate Luke	Holy Savior Menard
John-Garrett Patrick	Concordia Parish Academy
Danielle Pellegrin	Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies
Laura Peters	Jena High School
Jeff Pham	Lafayette High School
Kingson Wills	C.E. Byrd High School

Judge Manning: Members of the commission, please join in giving a round of applause, congratulations to the new members of the LYAC. We congratulate these students and look forward to hearing from them over the course of the year and as they report back to the commission meetings.

B. To approve signatories for commission bank account

Judge Manning: Moving to our next item of business, you have also in your packet a resolution authorizing signatories for the commission bank account. We have Chief of Staff of the Senate Jerry Guillot and Kendra Stone. Anything else you would like to add with regard to the resolution?

Mr. Guillot: Just a, maybe do a bit of a background. For the many, many years LPB and Ms. Courtney have housed the account. The account, in essence, are funds donated by the Municipal, the Louisiana Municipal Association and the Police Jury Association who donate funds for the funding of the events held by the students at LYAC. That's the essence of the account. LPB has been gracious all these years of carrying the ball. They just wanted another running back to take over. So we have taken, we, the legislature has, has pulled in their account as part of the legislative account. And the two people that were looking to carry on with it, authorized as signatories are, being himself, and Ms. Stone is the comptroller for the legislature who works

with the Senate also. So that, the reason the resolution is here is we need that, for you all to authorize us to sign the checks that are necessary coming out of the account.

Judge Manning: Yes, sir. Thank you. Thank you for that explanation. Other questions? Hearing none, the chair will entertain a motion that we approve the resolution.

Ms. Courtney: So moved.

Judge Manning: So moved by Ms. Courtney.

Ms. Taylor: Seconded.

Judge Manning: Seconded by Ms. Taylor. Any further discussion? Hearing none, all in favor say I.

Commission Members: I.

Judge Manning: Any opposed, no? Any abstentions? Motion carries. And, thank you, Ms. Courtney and thanks to LPB all these years for managing this account and for your leadership and direction on this.

Ms. Courtney: Thank you. Well, we've enjoyed it and we are delighted that the legislature's taking it back.

Ms. Courtney made a motion to approve the resolution to approve signatories for the commission bank account. There being no objection, the resolution was approved.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

A. Adult Civic Education (ACE): Peggy Cotogno

Judge Manning: We move now to our presentation. We have listed Adult Civic Education program by Peggy Cotogno who is the Executive Director of the Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education. And, she contacted us earlier this morning. She's ill and able, unable to be with us. We look forward to her speedy recovery and we'll see her at the next meeting.

B. Pilots for Patients/Med-Camps Mission: Guinness World Record Holder Mason Andrews

Judge Manning: We have a special presentation today though from a young man in my neck of the woods in north Louisiana in God's country. He holds the Guinness World Record as youngest person to circumnavigate – that means to fly around the world – and he is here to talk to us about this very bold feat now on behalf of Pilots for Patients and Med-Camps Mission. So please join in welcoming Mason Andrews. And Mason, we'll turn it over to you.

Testifying and providing information to the commission was Mr. Mason Andrews, representing Pilots for Patients and Med-Camps Mission.

Mr. Andrews: Good afternoon and as you said my name is Mason Andrews and in October, October 6th I got back from a flight around the world for the Guinness World Record for youngest person to fly solo around the world. So today I am going to take you guys through sort of a summary of the whole trip from start to finish and then I am going to talk about why I did it and what it was for and also an organization I am involved with now when I got back from the trip.

Mr. Andrews presented a PowerPoint to the commission detailing his flight from start to finish. A hard copy was provided to each commission member and made a part of the public record.

Mr. Andrews: So that brings me into why I did the trip. I did the trip to raise money and awareness for Med-Camps of Louisiana which is a non-profit in Ruston, near Ruston that provides a free summer camp for kids with developmental and physical disabilities. I've worked there for three years now and sadly didn't get a chance to work there this summer. But, I was able to raise over \$35,000 for Med-Camps to allow them to run a summer camp program this year. Another thing I would like to talk about on here is Pilots for Patients. Pilots for Patients is an organization headquartered out of Monroe, Louisiana that operates non-profit flights for cancer patients between many cities in north Louisiana, Texas, even Mississippi and cancer hospitals, St. Jude's and M.D. Anderson in Houston. And I have been flying for them for a few months now since I got back from the trip and it is an absolutely fantastic organization that I encourage everyone to support.

Judge Manning: Mason, allow me to say on behalf of our commission that we commend you for this bold accomplishment. What a wonderful achievement for both the young people of Louisiana to show your civic engagement on behalf of Med-Camps. We welcome you with the work that they do there in north Louisiana as well as Pilots for Patients. And so, before I open it up, I know that many around us will have questions for you and would like to say their own words of congratulations. Would you please introduce your lovely companion to us?

Mr. Andrews: Absolutely and I thank you for that. This is Allie Hines. She's my girlfriend and, and she's, she's just come down with me today for the, the hearing here.

Judge Manning: So Allie, we welcome you too. Glad to have you. So again, on behalf of the committee, please accept our commendation for this accomplishment.

Mr. Andrews: Thank you.

Judge Manning: With that I'll open the floor up for further questions or comments by the members of the commission.

Ms. Hochheiser: What is rime ice?

Mr. Andrews: There's two types of icing that you can get on an airplane. There's clear ice and rime ice. Rime ice is just big rocky ice that sticks to the aircraft. Sorry, some of it is a little bit too technical I guess.

Mr. Songy: And who paid for the fuel?

Mr. Andrews: Um, yeah, about half of it was my dad and about half of it was sponsors.

Ms. Matlock: So is your father a pilot as well?

Mr. Andrews: My dad's not a pilot, but he owns the airplane I used to fly it. And I still fly him on business when he needs to go up to North Carolina or Florida or wherever he goes. Um, but, he used, he actually learned a lot to, to be able to help me and be kind of the, the flight support from the United States on the trip.

Mr. Erwin: How do you deal with the, the language issues when you are going to all of these places?

Mr. Andrews: Well, I mean, if, if you got enough money you can overcome the, the language issues sometimes as, as far as the bureaucracy and everything goes. But it was, you know, it was, it was interesting. I, I learned a little bit of, of the language each place that I went and I didn't have too many problems.

Mr. Erwin: Well, how does it work like in international, the communication when you are in flight to deal with these airports and these places?

Mr. Andrews: The international language of aviation is English. So it's, everybody is required to speak English on the radio no matter where you are.

Ms. Davis: So I, I heard you talk about, a lot about life and death experiences. And I have a good friend of mine who thought he wanted to be a pilot and he had one of those experiences and changed his whole trajectory. So I am wondering, are you going to continue with this kind of work? I know it is not necessarily what you want to do as a, as a profession, but is it going to make you more leery about your flying?

Mr. Andrews: I will absolutely continue it and it's, I will say it's a heck of a lot easier here than what it was in one of the places I went. But I'm, I'm actually even planning a, another circumnavigation in a little bit of a faster and higher plane, airplane in the future.

Ms. Davis: And your mother is okay with all of this? Because, I mean.

Mr. Andrews: I, I just tell her it is, it won't be as bad as the last time.

Ms. Davis: Yeah, she's, your dad is lucky she, he (indecipherable).

Mr. Andrews: For sure.

Ms. Courtney: So, Mason, um, what do you intend to do to, you know, for a career? Talk to us about that and what would you say to other young people who want to take on a task that seems audacious?

Mr. Andrews: Um, I would, well, I'd like to fly for the airlines later in my career, particularly UPS or FedEx and I'd like to fly in cargo. Um, as far as what I'd say to, to young people who, who would like to pursue say something as big as this or something even way bigger is, you know, follow your dreams. It sounds cliché, but it's, you know, if you've got something you want to do, you know, if it's something incredible or something great, people are going to tell you that you can't do it. And you need to be the person that pushes forward for yourself. And you get to a point where, now maybe you can't do it but don't stop pushing until you know you can't do it.

Mr. Landry: Mason, I want to commend you as well. Just a question. How long did it take you to prepare – a two part question – how long did it take you to prepare for this type of deal and how long did it take you to convince your parents to allow you to do it?

Mr. Andrews: So it took about six months to, from start to finish to, once I really got started preparing for the trip. And, um, it took about a month to get my parents convinced. I originally pitched it as a, a flight across the Atlantic Ocean. And then, and then I, I wanted to fly across the Atlantic Ocean initially and then got to the point where I was like, well, if I fly across the Atlantic Ocean then I've got to immediately turn around and fly back across the Atlantic Ocean –

which is one of the hardest parts of a circumnavigation is that, that crossing – so I figured I might as well continue all the way around.

Mr. Shutt: Mason.

Mr. Andrews: Yes, sir.

Mr. Shutt: So I was kind of impressed with when you had to know autopilot and all that kind of stuff. I mean, but you have to have some experience on that. How long, how long have you been flying? I mean, when did you start?

Mr. Andrews: Well, I started, I started in paragliders when I was fifteen and then started flying powered aircraft when I was, also when I was fifteen. And I'm, I'm just turned nineteen, so.

Mr. Shutt: Wow. That's. Not a lot of time.

Mr. Andrews: Not a whole lot of time, but I flew a lot and I, since my dad had an airplane I was able to get a lot of flying experience that other people maybe wouldn't, wouldn't have been able to get before I set off on the trip.

Mr. Shutt: How many hours did you have before you went on this flight?

Mr. Andrews: So I only had, I only had about four hundred hours.

Mr. Shutt: Wow.

Mr. Andrews: And the, the flight took the better part of two hundred.

Mr. Shutt: That's impressive.

Mr. Andrews: So, you know, that's fifty percent again of what I had.

Mr. Shutt: Nice job.

Mr. Andrews: Thank you. Anybody else? Thank you so much for your time.

Judge Manning: Mason, I, again we want to thank you for being here. Allie, thank you for being with him and accompanying him. We wish you the best. And one final question. How old were you again when you started this trek around the world?

Mr. Andrews: I was eighteen.

Judge Manning: Eighteen. Wow. Thank you. Any other questions or comments? Again, thank you for joining us.

Mr. Andrews: Thank you.

WITNESSES PRESENT:

Information Only:

Mason William Andrews, Pilots for Patients and Med-Camps Mission, Ruston, LA

VII. UPDATES:

A. Back to School: Morgan Robertson and Lauren Russell

Judge Manning: Moving on now with our updates. We have a Back to School report. Any, any report at this time? Okay.

Testifying and providing information to the commission was Back to School Coordinator Morgan Robertson, representing the Senate Communications Office.

Ms. Robertson: I, I am Morgan with the State Senate Communications Office and I am also the Senate's Back to School coordinator. For the last school year which is the 2018-2019 school year, we had eleven senators participate. And Lauren had to leave, but she said she didn't have any update for you guys at this time. I wish I had something as cool as flying around the world because my mom barely let me drive to Baton Rouge when I was eighteen, but that is it on our end.

Judge Manning: Thank you. Thank you.

B. LYAC: 2018-2019 Members

Judge Manning: And Megan, do you have anything for a summer update with regard to the Legislative Youth Advisory Council and how you will be working with your new members?

Testifying and providing information to the commission was Megan Bella, representing the Legislative Youth Advisory Council.

Ms. Bella: So first off, usually I'm accompanied by students, but this week is finals and graduations so we couldn't get anybody here to talk to you guys about what we have been doing. What we've doing – I've put it in your packet – is now, is SB 43. It's a bill by Senator Appel. It's about getting students a voice at the table with crisis management and response plans at schools. And the students came up with this idea. It was brought to the council by one of our current members. His name is Andrew Gary and he suggested that we look at this from an emergency management standpoint so that all stakeholders are involved. And one of the biggest stakeholders the students feel is themselves. So students aren't able to give input on these plans. So this bill would allow at least two students that would be selected by the principal and the principal would have a discussion on the level of involvement and the access of information that they get. But it's, it's been a learning process and we've gotten all the way through to the House. So we are waiting on it to be scheduled for floor debate in the House and then get signed by the Governor. And Mr. Songy has been a big help to us too in this process, so.

Mr. Songy: And, and if I could comment. When the group, we talked through this and this became a lot different than what you typically see in a student government type thing where you – like Boys State – where they have this, these mythical cities and this make believe legislation. They talked through this, and this was, this is actually going to become law. And what they learned from this is that there's a lot more to it than you, you first see in the civics class. They, they went into, I guess, negotiations with people like the Louisiana School Boards Association which, you know that, that's an education in itself going with them.

Ms. Bella: Yeah. Exactly.

Mr. Songy: Well, it, it actually went very well. And, and everyone, I think, got an education as a part of that. It, it was a good experience for them to, to truly understand the legislative process from a, a real standpoint. And the result of it is going to be legislation. Something, it, it, it's going to be in Revised Statutes that changes the way schools craft their emergency response plans. So it, it was a good experience and, and the, the, the students were just tremendous. They, they just really were very articulate, very concerned. They had some good ideas. They had some ideas that were kind of out there, but it, it ended up being a very good bill and it's, looks like it's going to get through the House and become law.

Ms. Bella: Yeah.

Judge Manning: Well, congratulations, and thank you Mr. Songy for helping with that process too. Other comments? Questions? Okay.

Ms. Davis: I would like to invite that group to now come when it becomes law to BESE to a meeting when we enact it into our policies. Most, most laws do get put in policy. If this does

eventually get into our bulletins 741 so that they can see that end of it on how BESE approves policy. And then we can take them through putting it out on notice and, of course, it's law that supercedes policy, but it's a good process to be a part of.

Judge Manning: Very good.

Ms. Bella: Fantastic.

Judge Manning: Any other questions? Comments? Megan, thank you and I know you've got your summer cut out for you, but thank you for your leadership and working with the council.

Ms. Bella: Thank you, guys.

Judge Manning: You welcome.

WITNESSES PRESENT:

Information Only:

Morgan Robertson, Senate Back to School Coordinator, Baton Rouge, LA
Megan Bella, LYAC, Coordinator, Baton Rouge, LA

VIII. CONSIDERATION OF ANY OTHER MATTERS THAT MAY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION

Discussion of statewide civic education activities calendar:

Judge Manning: Moving on, we have one other remaining matter for consideration and this came to us through discussion with Peggy Cotogno with the Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education. There was a discussion of creation of a state-wide civic education activities calendar. And, what I'd like to do, um, rather than address it as a committee as a whole but have a subcommittee appointed for those that might be interested in working with Peggy, Tammy and Candace to try to address how we might best respond to this mission or vision that's, that they've tried to articulate here – that is to create a statewide calendar that could be easily accessed by the members of our commission and other interested groups around the state. So, any takers? Anyone who would like to volunteer to work with Peggy and Tammy, Candace on this? Perhaps two other volunteers?

Ms. Courtney: I'll do it.

Judge Manning: Thank you, Beth. Anyone else?

Ms. Davis: I'll do it.

Judge Manning: Alright. Thank you, Shan. Alright. So we have our three members of the committee where we have Ms. Davis, Ms. Courtney and Ms. Cotogno. Anyone else?

Ms. Davis: Ms. Courtney at the helm.

Judge Manning: Ms. Courtney at the helm?

Ms. Courtney: Well, I am happy to help to do whatever.

Judge Manning: Thank you, thank you for your help with that. Any other – anyone else? Any other business to come before the commission.

Ms. Courtney: I, I just want once again to commend the wonderful members of LYAC and Megan for bringing them every time we do "Public Square". We are going to tape another one Tuesday and the young people add so much to the conversation about complicated topics. And I'm, it, it's a wonderful thing to be, have them involved. And it's helped us as well and I think when you look back at the program, you are impressed with, um, how they are up on an issue. They've researched it. They understand everything and make excellent comments. So I want to thank this group for allowing us to do that. And I'd also like to entertain maybe a study as we are looking into this calendar, um, and maybe discuss where I would like to take this. There is a program we have been doing for twenty-four years called "Young Heros" where we honor young people from all across the state. And we have about a, I'm trying, at the same time we were looking at all of these other applications for LYAC, we were looking at all the Young Heros' applications. And I am kind of thinking I might like to see how we better intertwine these programs because it is literally a state program of youth leadership and I, I think it may be appropriate. So I'd like us to research that possibility. I don't want to make a motion to do it. I just want us to research it.

Judge Manning: Study committee?

Ms. Courtney: Study committee.

Judge Manning: Alright. We can do that. Perhaps your, the little subcommittee we just created can also work with this.

Ms. Courtney: Can study it. Yeah.

Judge Manning: Alright. A dual mission.

Ms. Courtney: Yeah.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Judge Manning: Any other items of business to come before the assembly. Hearing none the chair will entertain a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Erwin: So moved.

Judge Manning: Being properly moved by Mr. Erwin.

Ms. Davis: Second.

Judge Manning: Seconded by Ms. Davis. Any opposition? Hearing none, meeting stands adjourned. Thank you. Have a great evening.

There being no further business before the commission, Mr. Erwin moved to adjourn. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 3:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Judge C. Wendell Manning
Chairman

November 15, 2019
Approval Date