

Environmental Education Commission

Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2019

Louisiana Department of Education/Claiborne Building

Marbois Room, Baton Rouge

In attendance: Jessica Dixon, Breigh Rhodes, Denise Bennet, Justin Gremillion, Matt Reonas, Dean Blackett, Dinah Maygarden, Cole Ruckstuhl, Brenda Nixon, Heather Egger, Pierre LaCaze, Kelia Bingham, Brian Gautreau, Kea Sherman, Brian Salvatore

LEEC staff present: Thomas Gresham, Venise Ortego

Guests present: Morgan Crutcher with the Governor's Office
Tomeka Prioleau with DEQ

Call to order: 1:06 pm

Minutes from August 27, 2019: Vote to accept minutes tabled until a quorum was available. Once the quorum was met, the minutes were approved unanimously with no changes on a motion from Brenda Nixon and second from Cole Ruckstuhl.

Financial Report: General discussion from the financial statement provided; question of \$1600 for operating services from September, and salary increase from October to November; see financial report

Coordinators Report: General discussion on coordinator's report; see report

Business: General discussion of arts & language contest; nothing to report from bylaws, grants, outreach committees; see below on nominating committee.

New Business: As several commissioners had indicated the need to leave the meeting early, once a quorum was achieved, Cole Ruckstuhl made a motion, second by Brenda Nixon, to suspend rules and take up new business, chiefly election of officers; unanimous vote to do so; the nominating committee (Matthew Reonas) previously had indicated two choices for chair-elect, Pierre LaCaze and Cole Ruckstuhl, who were on the ballot, and Connie Conner for secretary; no floor nominations were offered; ballots were passed out to members and then collected and tallied by staff; at the end of the meeting the announcement was made that Cole Ruckstuhl had been elected for chair-elect and Connie Conner for secretary. Jennifer Roberts, acting chair, will move into the chair position formally for 2020, with Mr. Ruckstuhl serving as chair-elect and then chair for 2021.

2020 Symposium: General discussion on upcoming symposium at Fontainebleau State Park; sign-up sheet distributed for commissioners to work on various committees. Regarding lodging, on motion by Kelia Bingham, second by Brenda Nixon, commission voted unanimously to hold participant lodging fee to \$10 a night (\$20 total) to help cover expenses, which was viewed as a reasonable amount that also would provide registrants an "incentive" to follow-through on their commitment to attend. Regarding registration amounts, "early bird" is a flat rate of \$65 for Friday and Saturday; on motion by Matthew Reonas, second by Cole Ruckstuhl, and unanimous vote, a fee of \$20 was added for registration after

February 14. Both on-site cabin and group camp lodging as well as hotel lodging, as needed. Attendees will need to bring sheets, pillowcases, towels (need to secure some additional ones as some attendees will arrive without). Goal for 25 presentations, 13 submissions at present; deadline for submissions continues to be extended.

Program Spotlight: Matthew Reonas discussed notice his agency had received of an EPA environmental education grant and requested if staff had received same to distribute to commission members; Kelia Bingham discussed an upcoming native planting and general cleanup by the Bayou Vermilion Preservation Association, information to be circulated.

Upcoming Meetings: Dates were announced as February 11, May 12, August 25 (pending vote), November 10.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Cole Ruckstuhl, second by Brenda Nixon; unanimous vote; adjourned at 2:37 pm

Notes by: Matthew Reonas