



Louisiana Commission on Marriage and Family
MINUTES OF MEETING

April 30, 2013

Iberville Building, Conference Room 4-232

I. CALL TO ORDER

Senator Broome called the meeting to order at 10:38AM

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was called with the following results:

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Broome
Deanne Bingham
Senator A.G. Crowe
Heather Doss
Cordelia Heaney
Sue Morrill
Audrey Veal Pugh
Debra Clayton (Dorothy Wallis)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Lisa Andry
Gordon Atwell
Neil Bernard
David Helveston
Rep. Frank Hoffmann
Juan Huertas
J. Michael Johnson
Fred Lowery
Gene Mills
Tony Perkins
Fred Selby
Tiffany Simpson
Katherine Spaht
John White

III. OLD BUSINESS

The minutes from the Feb. 5, 2013 meeting were discussed. After Sen. Crowe found a mistake, the minutes were corrected and approved.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

New appointments to the board were sent to Sen. Broome. She wants to make sure we have active members on our board. She was going to check with Kendall at the Boards and Commissions office to get an updated list. She would like to draft a letter to see if the members still desire to serve on the Commission. Sue Morrill mentioned that she received an email from the Board and Commission's office asking if she

would like to be reappointed to another term. Sen. Broome asked if she would forward the email to us.

Sen. Broome would like to review some established goals for the subcommittees. Goals need to be refined or tweaked as we move forward so we can see some tangible evidence of our work.

Audrey Veal Pugh was asked to reiterate the latest developments from the family issues subcommittee. Under family issues, there are subdivided goals into areas such as health issues, focused on mental health. The subcommittee took Healthy People 2010 national objectives and selected those that would be most impactful for our community. Those objectives have targets which allow the community to move in a positive direction. For example, when looking at statistics for suicide of kids of a certain age in Louisiana, we want to reduce or improve that target by 10%. Five objectives were listed and the target was studied. We stay focused on those and show some improvement. We can actually use that data to apply for grants. Ms. Pugh gets requests for data to support particular grants.

That is an avenue that Sen. Broome would like to see us pursue.

Ms. Pugh asked, if we want to focus on any specific area from a legislative stand point or from the Commission? Sen. Broome asked as it relates to healthy families since Ms. Pugh mentioned mental health. Unfortunately, several mental health hospitals have been closed.

Making people aware of what is available to families is one goal Ms. Pugh mentioned. People aren't aware of what is left due to budget cuts and services going away. The community needs to know how to access those things. We can focus on some type of awareness.

Ms. Pugh was asked about the Healthy People 2010 report and she suggested looking it up online using Google to find the link. It is well organized and every month there is a webinar. They will have objectives, targets and also implementations. They are listed in three categories – some they recommend with evidence based results; those they suggest and then they will list those that don't have any results that have proven to be effective. The report doesn't just show the problems or how to make the problems better but they give a percentage of increases needed to see an improvement. They also give out some ways of intervention.

Sen. Broome was asked the names of all the subcommittees. They are

- 1) Family Issues Subcommittee
- 2) Pre-Post Marriage Education Initiatives Subcommittee
- 3) Public Media and Public Relations Subcommittee – Daniel Kirk used to be on this committee but he is no longer here. Deanne Bingham replaced him and she said she would be willing to serve on that committee. He was over the committee. That was the committee that sent out media about the longest married couple in Louisiana.

Audrey Pugh is the chairperson of the Family Issues Subcommittee.

Heather Doss and Michael Johnson are co-chairpersons of the Pre-Post Marriage Education Initiatives Subcommittee.

The Family Issues Subcommittee has been very active historically.

When Heather Doss arrives we need to see where she is in reference to that subcommittee.

The commission needs to revive our Public Relations, Media subcommittee as well. If Deanne Bingham is interested in doing that, Sen. Broome welcomes her involvement. Ms. Bingham accepted.

Sen. Broome asked Sen. Crowe for his thoughts on objectives. He said there is talk during this session on the outskirts of what this board is called to do and it is about a thing called Transformation Village. It is a very huge vision – longterm, that addresses everything from broken families, people coming back into the workforce – built around a theme park in New Orleans East. There are visionaries – missionary visionaries, since they see this as a mission field. Jazzland would be the center, but everything out that way. It would open up the door for various/addressing lots of social issues as they relate to the family – killings in New Orleans, kids not having jobs and things to do – the rehabilitation of adults coming out of prison and being reunited in to society.

The labor chair and Sen. Crowe are working together on some things there. It can parlay into something very huge from Jazzland all the way to the lake which is about 15 – 20 miles – on the size scale of Walt DisneyWorld. There would be a place for a venue such as a Farmer’s Market and an exit for Hollywood productions studios and a miniature version of an amusement park of some type out by the lake. It would not only serve the purpose to entertain the public but to provide for some opportunities to address all the challenges in our society from kids getting into trouble to adults who need something to hold onto. The Transformation Village would change people from the inside out with meaningful changes. Sen. Crowe said, “We could throw money at everything but not change something from the outside in but once you change the inside, transform that individual, or community or that family – then you make progress.” This is something the legislature is going to birth this session in the form of a resolution.

Sen. Broome would like to fine tune the goals of the Commission to have something tangible that we accomplished this year. Annual reports are filed with great information but launching that information into something tangible is one concern. The mission has not been accomplished.

Sen. Broome stated we do not spend enough time being creative or brainstorming - the whole aspect of creativity, because we are always rushing as a society.

She encourages and asks the members to spend a few minutes thinking about this commission and how we can wrap ourselves around an idea and take that idea and see it manifest it into something positive for the families that we serve in the state of Louisiana. Everyone is to take that on as an assignment to look at the top five challenges in our diverse state. She also suggested conducting a survey among the colleagues in the legislature. Crime is an issue that impacts families. Another issue is kids getting summer jobs. We can serve as a catalyst. We need to build synergy to move forward in a spirit of unity against the backdrop of the original mission as a commission. We need to agree on five of the most basic objectives as a group that we can set out to do. We need to make an impact to strengthen the family as defined in the original resolution that established the Commission.

Sen. Broome brought up that Mike McManus brought out good information on marriage and divorce. We would be remiss if we didn’t look at some of his recommendations.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

The next meeting will be held May 28, 2013.