

# Commission Meeting Minutes



## VOLUNTEER LOUISIANA COMMISSION PROVISIONAL MINUTES

Wednesday, May 9, 2024  
10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.  
In Person Meeting  
State Library of Louisiana  
Capitol View Room

<p><b>Commissioners Attending</b> <b>Voting Members</b> Suzanne Harris Lee Jeter Matthew LaBorde Paul Pratt Patricia Prudhomme Gerren Sias DeRon Talley Travis Tharp Karen Burks Africa Price Matthew Fairbrother</p> <p><b>Commissioners Absent</b> <b>Voting Members</b> Stefanny Alecon Kellie Duhon Sarah Floyd Kyle Wedberg</p>	<p><b>Ex-Officio Members Present</b> n/a</p> <p><b>Ex-Officio Members Absent</b> Jeff Landry, Governor Billy Nungesser, Lt. Governor Katherine Krehbiel, CNCS</p> <p><b>Staff Attending</b> Darren Smith Jr Judd Jeansonne Jacob Brumfield Kristi Richardson Breanna Jenkins</p>
--	--

### **Call to Order**

Acting Chair Matthew LaBorde called the meeting to order at 10:10 A.M. Roll call was conducted, and a quorum was declared.

### **Consent Agenda**

The March Minutes were approved as corrected with a motion by Africa Price and a second by Travis Tharp. The Financial Report was approved with a motion by Paul Pratt and a second by Deron Talley.

### **Commissioner Education**

# Commission Meeting Minutes



Kaitlyn Collins made a presentation about the Boys and Girls Clubs of Acadiana. The director explained how they respond to changes as needed to help the program achieve its mission. The fall program was short staffed, but they have made several scheduling changes to address the member shortfall and are making progress in recruiting.

Laura Vinsant and Marie Mullins made a presentation for Teach for America in Louisiana. They are focused on increasing the student achievement for more students in the context of previous learning loss from the pandemic. They believe their strength is in the way they recruit, support, and place members in communities. They highlighted some of the alumni achievements with one alumni serving as the current Louisiana Teacher of the Year and another who is a semi-finalist for the upcoming Louisiana Teacher of the Year. They are offering the cost of certification at no cost to remove a barrier to entering the profession. They are offering tutoring opportunities to prospective teachers; many of the tutors decide to become teachers. Ninety percent of Teach for America members in Louisiana come from other states.

## **Executive Director Report**

Video about the Champions of Service was presented. Commissioners made comments about the nomination process, the notification process, and the event.

The agency is making progress on meeting its CERT and emergency response training goals. Commissioner Travis Sharp has been engaged in the process and spoke about the response to the training sessions. Fifteen partner organizations have been served and they are on track to meet the goal of twenty.

Over 1200 volunteer certificates have been presented and they are on track to meet the goal of 1500. Commissioners have been engaged in the process by attending local celebrations.

The idea of making changes to the required background checks policy for volunteers has received support from lawmaker leaders on both the House and Senate side of Congress. AmeriCorps groups have a huge burden to comply, and the penalties are costly for groups.

Slate of officers were adopted. Kellie Duhon, Chair; Sarah Floyd, Vice-chair; Matt LaBorde, Treasurer, Suzanne Harris, Secretary.

Proposed commission changes were presented that would use a hybrid model to include virtual and face-to-face retreats. Karen Burks made a motion to accept the proposed schedule change with revisions to be recommended by the executive board. Gerren seconded the motion and the motion passed.

## **AmeriCorps Committee Report and Action Items:**

The funding for AmeriCorps grants was recommended by the AmeriCorps Committee. There as a reduction of funds provided. Two groups had their funding reduced and that helped to make up the loss to all of the grants. No groups were given an amount higher than the 2023-year allotted

# Commission Meeting Minutes



funding. Lee Jeter made the point that volunteer work in local communities must find ways to be sustainable beyond the funding provided by the grant should funding be further reduced or eliminated in the future. Gerren made a motion and Lee Jeter seconded the motion to accept the funding recommendations are provided in the committee report. The motion passed.

Lee Jeter made a motion that the remaining funds, \$288,758.00, be distributed to existing programs to help with their cash match obligations. Gerren Sias seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **Final remarks**

Judd gave three awards to Commissioners whose term are expiring. Paul Pratt, Lee Jeter, and Gerren Sias received certificates to acknowledge their service.

### **Adjournment**

Matthew LaBorde adjourned the meeting at 1:05 P.M.