



RESILIENT LOUISIANA COMMISSION

CO-CHAIR DON PIERSON

CO-CHAIR TERRIE STERLING

Resilient Louisiana Commission
Wednesday, July 17, 2020
Meeting called to order at: 10 a.m.

Commission Members Present

- Terrie Sterling
- Sec. Kimberly Robinson
- Dr. Jim Richardson
- Bill Hogan
- Sonia Perez
- Tim Temple
- Walt Leger
- Ti Martin
- Tyrone Picard
- Louis Rienne
- Jade Brown Russell

- Resilient Louisiana Commission Director Andrew Doss began the meeting at 10:01 a.m., thanked the commission members for their participation and thanked the public.
- Quorum was met, and Andrew confirmed that the commission is authorized to meet remotely in accordance with proclamation JBE 2020-52.
- Andrew introduced Commission co-chairs, Don Pierson and Terrie Sterling. Co-chair Sterling welcomed the commissioners and guests. Sec. Pierson said there was a lot of ground to cover, and yielded back to Andrew.
- Andrew introduced Commissioner Kim Hunter Reed with the Board of Regents.
- Kim Hunter Reed highlighted the Governor's Education Emergency Fund of \$10 million to support people returning to work. She also thanked Sec. Pierson for convening regional economic developers to identify top three pressing skill needs for community colleges to provide. She also thanked Terry Sterling for ensuring the Federal Reserve Bank in Atlanta provided the Cliff tool that was mentioned during their previous presentation.
- She reported that a meeting of the LCTCS, the Workforce Investment Council and the Department of Health to share the Cliff tool and move forward with it, using a Louisiana Specific model.
- She also mentioned that they are focused on a safe reopening plan to get schools opened. We have multiple scenarios based on phases, and testing those scenarios with GOHSEP.
- She turned the meeting back over to Andrew, who opened the meeting to questions from the commissioners.
- Terrie Sterling referenced an attainment goal by OneAcadiana for certificates in education. Kim Hunter Reed responded that this was a pre-COVID goal by OneAcadiana, and they are the only regional economic development organization to have one at this time.

- Walt Leger asked if OneAcadiana's goal is something that the task force wanted other regional economic developers to pursue. Kim Hunter Reed responded that a meeting was in place for OneAcadiana to share their goal and plans, but that was interrupted by COVID-19. Still, it's something they would like to pursue.
- Dr. Jim Richardson, asked what type of time dimension the committee is looking at in terms of providing the certificates and students finding employment. Kim Hunter Reed replied that this approach is based on the top 3 training areas that would lead to employment in a COVID scenario. Dr. Richardson asked if community colleges have ability to provide those skills. Dr. Reed responded in the affirmative. Ava Dejoie said we are also in the process of surveying employers.
- Sonia Perez asked what the anticipated plan for the use of these phones and the training that is being provided for them. How long are we planning for and budgeting for? Kim replied that these are one-time dollars. Those dollars are already out and training is underway. Dollars for devices are one time. We hope that the universities, through the CARES act, have the ability to match this funding. Hybrid learning is what is proposed for K-12 learning, so devices are now a necessity and not a luxury.
- Dr. Richardson asked if Kim could share the Atlanta reserve model with everyone. She said both of the Education task force meetings were recorded, so she can share those. Cliff and the earning potential in short and long term for various credentials.
- Andrew Doss thanked Kim, and then called on Sec. Ava Dejoie.
- Sec. Dejoie said that LWC is working with federal partners, disaster dislocated worker grants, and an initial grant of \$6 million and a \$34 million that was used to build in a health care component. They also launched millennial tech, which has 60 individuals who were not enrolled in higher ed now with computers, hotspots, and they are taking online credential courses that will lead to employment.
- Today's State unemployment release is that the rate is 9.7%, which is a decrease over the month of 4.5%. She also said that the trust fund from March 22 to July 16 paid out \$4.6. billion in benefits, \$762 million of which is state unemployment insurance benefits which brings the state UI trust fund balance down to \$408 million, which the state already reached one lower trigger and anticipate that we have roughly 9 to 10 weeks to pay state benefits. LWC is looking at what options are available to Louisiana
- LWC is working to get people back to work. There are job fairs on a daily basis, and the department is aware of 23,000 available jobs at the moment.

- Andrew Doss asked the commission if any members had questions for Sec. Dejoie. Tim Temple spoke first, asking what triggers the next increase for the percentage for employment taxes. Sec. Dejoie replied that the next trigger is when the number gets below \$100 million. Unless there isn't a fusion of additional funds, the trust fund will go broke in 9 to 10 weeks. Dr. Jim Richardson asked her to confirm that those taxes would go up as of next year; Sec. Dejoie confirmed.
- Dr. Jim Richardson mentioned that the labor force reduced by 100,000. Sec. Dejoie said that the labor force participation rate in the country is declining, but Louisiana is behind the nation as a whole, so we are looking how to create opportunities in impoverished communities.
- Andrew Doss asked if there were any other questions. He stated that there were some public questions coming in. The first question was in regard to demographic breakdowns based on race and gender. Sec. Dejoie said that some of those breakdowns are not contained in the state information.
- Andrew shared another public questions: is there as PPP Cliff coming up? Sec. Don Pierson replied that the cliff coming up is associated with the end of the federal supplement to unemployment compensation and \$600 a week currently provided by Washington D.C.
- Tyron Picard asked if it would be possible to give Commission Members a summary of the CARES Act II may look like, as a member of Sec. McConnell's team gave that breakdown to Tyron and his staff recently. Sec. Dejoie said that she hoped it did not include provisions tied to last year's income.
- Andrew Doss welcomed the topic of the CARES Act II Summary. Mr. Picard began, saying that the broad topics covered include the liability protection provision, including medical liability protection in general business, the potential for individual direct payments of \$1200 per person or \$5000 per family, an extension of unemployment benefits through January 2021, likely at a level below the current \$600 per week; something called a return to work business, which would encourage individuals to resume available jobs and provide essentially a bonus for that, provision for additional assistance to state and local governments. Additional technical changes to PP an eligibility expansion of significance.
- Andrew opened up floor to questions regarding Sec. Dejoie's statement or Tyron Picard's information. None were raised. Andrew continued sharing questions from the public: Regarding WiFi access to low income housing areas that currently do not have it. Sec. Pierson said he would follow up with that question off line.

- Andrew Doss then introduced Dr. Sandra Brown and Thomas LaVeist of the Health Equity Task Force. She described the group's structure, composition and nine priority subcommittees. She turned the meeting over to Dr. LaVeist.
- To date, each task force has submitted a report to the Governor's office. Task Force leaders are now requesting that the subcommittees be prepared to submit a second report, which can be provided to the Governor at some point in the future. The Task Force is also collaborating with similar task forces in other states to share ideas.
- Andrew opened floor to questions from commissioners. There were none. He then turned it over to Ti Martin and Stan Harris of the Restaurant and Entertainment task force. Mr. Harris said the task force appreciates the willingness to consider innovation and flexibility within statutes that guide how alcohol is sold and regulated in Louisiana during the Pandemic. As the governor issued mask orders and required bars to close, task force leaders expanded our support of this message through social media and direct approaches with the industry statewide.
- Launched blueprint for restaurant revival. Central approach would extend \$120 billion in restaurant recovery funds. It's a U.S. Senate bill.
- He also highlighted good news in the industry, including restaurants supporting gaps in lunches for students during the summer and into the school year, and the collaboration of the City of New Orleans, FEMA and the Chef's Brigade of New Orleans for an innovation approach to providing meals for the homebound. Plus, Louisiana will receive multi-year funding from the department of Labor to execute youth apprenticeship readiness grants to increase youth participation in apprenticeships.
- Ti Martin said the measures that were being worked on cannot come soon enough.
- Andrew then turned the meeting over to Dr. Alex Billioux, who provided an update from LDH. He said that the pandemic continues, and in the past several weeks, positive cases have been rising throughout the state – it is not a statewide epidemic, rather than how it initially started in major metropolitan areas.
- The stay at home order was successful, with initial cases peaking in mid-April. Louisiana then saw one of the most precipitous declines in cases in the nation. From there, LDH was more engaged with partners like the RLC task forces for items such as expanded testing, assistance with isolation, and contact tracing. The state moved from phase 1 to phase 2 in June, but we did see increased public activity. During that Phase 2, we saw a

rise in cases in terms of rising positivity. We remain one of the top states in per capita testing.

- With the number of outbreaks and the growing evidence around the importance of masking led the Governor to have the state remain in Phase 2, and he began to put in new restrictions in order to reduce the rate of spread. This was in order to avoid having to revert back to a stay at home order. This was followed by similar, stricter recommendations from the White House.
- Andrew Doss opened the meeting to question. Terrie Sterling thanked Dr. Billioux for his science-based response to this pandemic. Sec. Pierson reiterated praise as well.
- Commissioner Jay Dardenne shared that he encourages all members to continue emphasizing the importance of mask wearing, based on the impactful guidance of Dr. Billioux.
- Sec. Kimberly Robinson said that language from the RLC supporting mandatory masking may be helpful, joining other language from the RLC that supports the Governor's previously issued mandates regarding public health safety.
- Walt Leger made a motion to include this language in the RLC's statement, Jade Brown Russell seconded it. Mr. Leger thanked Ti Martin for her leadership in initially proposing a statement of support and the language in it. Mr. Leger confirmed with Dr. Billioux that masking is, in fact, the most important thing that Louisianans can do to curb or stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Hearing no additional discussion regarding the motion, Sec. Pierson took a vote, which was unanimously in support of adoption.
- Tyron Picard requested a case study from Dr. Billioux regarding the hair salon in Missouri that supported the case for masks. Sonya Perez referenced a map in the New York Times regarding mask-wearing, which also refers to the hair salon. Dr. Billioux said he would be happy to share that case study. Dr. Richardson asked about the CDC statement regarding 100 percent mask wearing participation for a month, Dr. Billioux clarified, but confirmed the importance.
- Andrew then introduced Sec. Pierson to begin a conversation on document production in Appendix one. Sec. Pierson began, saying that the team has gone over more than 500 pages of reports that the task forces submitted. The staff is also going through briefings that each task force conducted for the full commission. The document – Appendix One – will be preserved for everyone to use in the coming months and years.

- When Appendix One is posted, it will be a working draft. He said the next part is to put together a second document – a roadmap to making Louisiana more resilient. Part of the challenge is to sift through technical work and integrate it with emerging themes. The staff is trying to put it into a form that is manageable for actionable items to be generated as the RLC moves forward.
- James Chappell of LED is taking the lead on formatting and structuring the overall document, making it easy to read and digest by the reader. It's divided into short or near term, it's designed to being high level. At present, it's about 25 pages. It is divided into two major sections: near-term (within Covid-19 pandemic) and longer-term recommendations.
 - Nine major categories stood out across the 15 task force reports in the short term
 - Employee support
 - Health and Safety
 - Education and Childcare
 - Legal Liability
 - Small Business support (in short term)
 - Regulatory environment
 - Taxes and Economic Stimulus (long and short term)
 - Federal funding and programing
 - Infrastructure investments
 - In longer term:
 - Economic inclusion, quality of life and health outcomes
 - Educational outcomes
 - Workforce and continuing education
 - Small Business and Entrepreneurship
 - State government support
 - Increased connectivity
- Mr. Chappell briefly elaborated on RLC initial recommendations and highlighted components of each. He said that there will be a little more information in the report, but the final version will effectively be the presentation he provided.
- Sec. Pierson opened floor to comments. Terrie Sterling asked the commissioners how the commission wanted to go about validating the major themes and then the distillation of strategies and tactics. She asked, as the commission begins to get to a real report, how do members want to inform the report and validate what makes it a more concise 20-25 page document.

- Sec. Pierson reiterated the point, saying that specifics were needed in the moment, but he asked the commission members to help them achieve a balance of blue printing the items of importance in the document. He said that the next thing the co-chairs want the commission to contemplate is to how to put all of this guidance into action.
- Co-Chair Sterling opened floor to feedback from the commissioners. Sonia Perez said that commissioners may have to trust that the document will be created, as it might be difficult to create a structure to review it. Tyron Picard said that the document should be workable and sort of expresses the policy and the desired outcome is.
- Jade Brown-Russell said that those who have strengths in particular areas can take charge, but all commissioners should take part in bringing action items to life.
- Co-Chair Pierson gave concluding remarks, thanked the commission for the tremendous amount of work that has been done so far and that continues to be done.
- Co-Chair Sterling asked if Andrew could send James' draft presentation.
- Sec. Pierson entertained adjournment. Terrie Sterling motioned, other commissioners seconded. Meeting adjourned.