

Louisiana Environmental Education Commission
Meeting Minutes
November 7, 2012
Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries
Baton Rouge Office, 4th Floor Conference Room
1 PM

I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Louisiana Environmental Education Commission was called to order by Connie Conner, Chair of the Commission, at 1:06 p.m.

II. Roll Call/Sign-in

Connie Conner recognized and introduced Erin Delaune from the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals sitting in as alternate for Gary Balsamo. Steve Chustz, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, was in attendance as an alternate for Kelley Templet.

All members present signed in on the sign-in sheet provided.

Members present:

Alex Appeaning	David Boldt
Angela Capello	Connie Conner
Jonathan Dearbone	Wade Dubea
Dianne Lindstedt	Aimee Robert
Allyn Rodriguez	Susan Testroet-Bergeron
Kelly Templet	Ann Wilson

Others present:

Venise Ortego, Coordinator
Juliet Raffray, Assistant Coordinator
Steve Chustz, LDNR
Erin Delaune, LDHH

III. Minutes from Last Meeting

Minutes were tabled until a quorum could be reached.

IV. Financial Report, Venise Ortego

The revenue/expenditure report was reported by Venise (see attached report).

There was a discussion on the Envirothon. A vote to change to \$5000.00 was tabled until a quorum is met.

V. Coordinator's Report

Venise Ortego reported on the issues listed within the coordinator's report submitted to the commission.

VI. Old Business

A. 2013 Environmental Education Symposium Committees

1. Audio Visual: Connie reported for Dinah that it was too early to comment on audio visual needs for the symposium at this time.
2. Door Prize/Hospitality: Marie Tizzard, who was chairing this committee, resigned from the commission. Connie Conner agreed to chair the committee. Ann Wilson stated that she will send a request to LEEA requesting a committee chair for this committee.

3. Evaluation: Allyn and Susan T.-Bergeron met briefly. They will distribute evaluations similar to last year's symposium evaluations.
4. Exhibitor: Angela Capello reported that there was one exhibitor registration so far, but it is still early. Exhibitor registrations will start to pick up after LSTA.
5. Finance: Connie Conner stated that the attached budget was good and on track for a successful symposium.
6. Keynote: Gary Balsamo suggested Commissioner Mike Strain for the keynote speaker. A Keynote committee was set up, consisting of Gary, Jonathon Dearbone, and Deepak Bhatnagar.
7. Programs: The e-blast went out today, November 15.
8. Public Relations: Wade Dubea will issue a press release and link it to iPhone and iPad social networking. Juliet will send the brochure to Wade. Susan T.-Bergeron requested that Wade send the press release to her and she can get it to various Environmental Ed. listservs. Venise will contact Keep Louisiana Beautiful and send this information to Ann Wilson.
9. Registration: Venise stated that registration is on track. The Save the Date mailing was going out. Call to Presenters/Exhibitors was out.
10. Short Courses: Dianne reported that there are 5 short courses offered at the symposium this year. Transportation logistics were discussed. The Commission used \$750.00 to purchase barrels for the "Rainwater Harvesting" short course. Wade Dubea stated the need to have a number limitation on the short course classes. He also asked about location of short courses (Hilltop Arboretum).

B. Environmental Literacy Plan

Venise has received a letter of support from the Department of Education's Superintendent for development of the ELP. Venise read the letter to the Commission. The letter will be included in the final version of the ELP. Once Nancy Rabalais returns from abroad, the stakeholder comments will be incorporated into the ELP. The next step of the development of the ELP is public comments. In addition, the governor's signature should be on the document as an endorsement of support.

C. Art/Language Art Contest

Juliet Raffray circulated the brochure for the Art/Language Arts contest. She reported on the April 26 postmark deadline. Juliet also reported that the Art/Language Arts 2013 calendars are unavailable at this time due to printing service issues. This year the calendars were printed on recycled paper at a lower cost this year (\$1000.00 less than last year).

D. 2012 Grants Program:

Venise gave an overview of the Sustainability Grants: Round 1 of EPA Grants are for schools; approximately \$91,000 has to be given out as grants. Students must be involved in the implementation of the grant within their school. There will be 3 rounds to cover all 5 states which are written into the grant. So far, 6 grants have been awarded; 4 in Louisiana and 2 in Arkansas. The proposals that were disqualified were provided with reasons for disqualification.

Round 2 is noncompetitive Sustainable Initiative Grant (not for schools).

A discussion followed about who was eligible for the Round 2 grant. Venise stated that it could be any nonprofit; nature center, etc. This will help fulfill the grant state obligations. Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is the fiscal agent for the grant.

There isn't an official chair for the grant committee. Venise suggested that Brenda Nixon be appointed chair.

VII. New Business

A. Social Media Opportunities:

Juliet reported that she is working on a new newsletter template for the e-blast. Juliet asked if we need our own Facebook page. Susan T.-Bergeron said that the EEC could post/link to the LEEA Facebook page. The commission can have administrator control of LEEA page.

Twitter was also discussed.

Juliet handed out LEEC giveaways to be used at conferences; recycled highlighters/pens/markers.

B. Symposium Awards:

Venise suggested that we present awards at the Environmental Education Symposium to encourage participation. Suggested awards were: K-12 teacher, Business/Industry, Informal Educator, Youth, and School. Ann Wilson suggested not creating over 5 awards (3 would be enough). It was questioned as to who would take the lead on these awards.

Motion: Alex Appeaning made a motion that LEEA take the lead on developing Symposium awards.

Second: Jonathan Dearbone

Discussion: Susan Bergeron state that 4 out of 5 the LEEA executive committee members agree with doing awards for the symposium. Allyn said that she will send out the announcement to LEEA via newsletter.

Vote: Carried, none opposed.

C. Appointments:

Venise stated that a federal agency is interested in joining the Commission but they would need a letter of invitation from the Commission before recommending a particular person. The only category that they will fit into is Environmental Advocacy. There was discussion as to whether a federal agency could be appointed. Alex Appeaning recommended that we table the discussion until consulting the bylaws. Ann and Susan asked if the federal agency was a LEEA member, could the federal agency be a representative. Alex asked if they could be considered "Friend of the Commission". A "Friend of the Commission" could help with fund raising. Ann said they can come to the meetings but not be able to vote.

D. Appreciation of Service Award:

Alex Appeaning suggested that past commission members be given an "Appreciation of Service" Award for their service on the commission. He suggested that we give this award to Aimee Robert and Marie Tizzard.

Motion: Aimee Robert and Marie Tizzard will be honored for their years of service to the commission and will receive a plaque stating this honor.

Second: Jonathan Dearbone

Vote: Majority carried, one abstained.

E. Vote of Officers:

Connie Conner requested nominations from the floor. There were none. Ballots were passed out.

Results of the vote: Chair-Elect – Allyn Rodriguez
Secretary – Dinah Maygarden

F. Quorum for the Minutes:

Motion: Alex Appeaning moved that the minutes from the May meeting and November meeting be accepted with minor rearrangement of attendees list.

Second: Susan T.-Bergeron

Vote: Motion carried, none opposed.

G. Envirothon Funding:

The Envirothon discussion was revisited for a vote.

Motion: Alex Appeaning made a motion to change funding to the Envirothon back to \$5000.00.

Second: Susan T.-Bergeron

Vote: Carried, none opposed.

VIII. Announcements:

- Professional Development flyers were handed out.
- Connie thanked Gary Balsamo for standing in for her at the last EEC meeting.
- Susan T.-Bergeron thanked all that assisted with the “Turning the Tide: A Teaching Guide”.

IX. Next Meeting Dates: February 21, 2013 (6 p.m. at Marriott, Symposium in Baton Rouge), May 14, 2013.

X. Adjournment: 3:00 p.m.

Motion: Jonathan Dearbone made a motion to adjourn.

Second: Susan T.-Bergeron seconded the motion.

Vote: Passed unopposed.