



**Virginia LGBTQ+ Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes**

Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Time: 12:00pm

Location: Patrick Henry Building Conference Room 2

Committee Members Present:

- Joanna Keller (Chair)
- Preston Main (Secretary)
- Phil Kazmierczak
- Keri Vornadore
- Collin Hite
- Patty Smith
- Kerry Flynn
- Demas Boudreaux
- Austin Palmore
- Jason Geske

Committee Members Absent:

- Jonathan Dromgole
- Kevin Han
- Dr. Monica Motley
- Michael Berlucchi
- Evelyn Brumar
- Thomas Turner
- Cooper Clark
- Neil Butler

Quorum: 10 out of 18 committee members present

Non-Members in Attendance:

- Youngkin Administration:
 - Gloria Senecal – Director, Board Administration
 - Lanette Walker – Chief Financial Officer, Office of Health and Human Resources
 - Wyatt Toehlke – Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Trade
 - Michael Molina (virtual) – Director, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs
- Office of the Attorney General:
 - Justin Bell – Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
 - Joshua Laws – Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
- Public:



- Kathy Everett (virtual)
- Bo Belotti (virtual)

I. Call to Order at 12:00pm
 (Motion made by Chairwoman Joanna Keller)

II. Board Business:

A. Secretary James update (Honorable Secretary Kay Cole James):

Secretary James reminded the board of how significant the board is and how desperate we need to be heard. She also stated there was much work left to be done. Follow the direction of the Chair. She wants to empower Joanna in her role as chair by vocally sharing her support. She will listen to what she has to say. Secretary James posed the following two questions to the board:

- What can we do to advance the ball right now?
- What can we do to make sure the voices of the community are being heard right now?

We are not always going to agree but let’s find something we can all get behind. Stay focused and work hard. Deeply held beliefs and emotions are at the core of some of these issues; keep these in check for the good of the board. Focus on the work that needs to happen. There is a lot to learn and room to grow; allow people to grow.

B. Introduction of new Board Attorney General Representative:

Justin Bell introduced Joshua Laws from the AG office. Justin will be leaving our board and turning things over to Joshua. Joshua introduced himself briefly.

C. Approval of previous minutes

Motion to Approve Previous Minutes		
Moved: Phil Kazmierczak	Second: Patty Smith	
Yes: 10	Nays: 0	Abstentions: 0

D. Timeline of Annual Report (Chairwoman Keller):

Annual Report to the Governor due the second week of September. It is imperative we get together and put the report together in a timely fashion. We will meet in May and July, possibly a third meeting as well, before the report is due. Changes to the board are ongoing with members coming on and off in June. We do not want to do last minute things. Bylaws and Code of Conduct Committee to meet next week to create these for the board. The Chairwoman needs to have something in writing by the May meeting as this would allow the board to vote on the document at the July Meeting. We need bylaws and code of conduct to function.



Collin Hite asked what the overall purpose and goal of the annual report was. Chairwoman Keller would like to take last year's report and make amendments or changes to this report as a foundation to build this year's report on. Demas thanked the chair for her efforts in presenting to the governor. He also felt the governor read the report and was listening to our concerns. There were a few areas of disagreement and we handled them and moved on. Thanks to the governor's staff as well for making things happen.

E. Committee Assignments (Chairwoman Keller):

Stephani Merlo, vice chair, stepped down. Chairwoman Keller went over the different committees. Keri Vornadore has been assigned to the Health Committee. Austin Palmore was assigned to the Housing and Infrastructure Committee.

Joshua Laws spoke on the boards limited ability to meet virtually. One in person then 1 zoom. You cannot have two zooms together. The FOIA Council has pdf on their website which will be forwarded to the board members. There is a limit on the virtual meetings the board may have, this also includes committee meetings. As long as there is a quorum for in person, others may join virtually. No more than two members can meet at a time if discussing board business. If more than two meet, this is counted as a meeting and prior notice must be given and the meeting must be recorded. Chairwoman Keller requested to copy her and Gloria in all meeting information sent and they will then determine what is sent out to the board as a whole.

F. Board Administration Updates (Gloria Senecal):

Gloria Senecal thanked everyone for being present so a quorum could be called. BIO and headshots are needed by Friday, or you may not be updated/added to the website until next year. Reimbursement forms have been sent out several times, please make sure you round up or round down to next whole number. Send a copy of the agenda with the mileage form, spelling out the exact address, when you submit the forms.

The Board now has a Microsoft Teams site. This was created to ensure consistency on the board as members change and to collaborate on documents together as a group. Patty asked if we could have training on the site, Gloria is working on this. Please reach out to Gloria if there are questions about the site, she is happy to help.

Gloria needs to know the date, time, and agenda well in advance of any committee or board meeting. These have to be posted at least 3 days in advance, but the more the better. Gloria also needs the minutes from all committee meetings and board meetings, within 5 days of the meeting.



G. New Board Member Introductions (Chairwoman Keller):

All board members introduced themselves, including our newest board member appointees.

H. Break

I. Health and Human Resources Update (Lanette Walker)

Lanette Walker provided an update from Health and Human Resources.

- HHR consumes 30 percent of the state’s budget
- Oversees 12 agencies
- Largest number of legislations in the General Assembly
- “Right Help, Right Now”
 - Transform the behavior health system
 - Top priority of Youngkin’s administration
 - Review of best practices
 - 2,800 responses to surveys based on user experiences with Mental health services
 - Identified weak spots in the system
 - Need to get folks in crisis help immediately
 - Young folks are being impacted at higher rates and younger ages
 - LGBTQ youth are 3 times more likely to be impacted
 - Outlined the goals of the program
 - Governor provided 3-year plan involving multiple agencies
 - Check out the HHR website about the program
 - 6 pillars, include several different initiatives
 - Same day care
 - Relieve Law Enforcement burden, reduce criminalization
 - More capacity beyond the hospitals
 - Provide targeted support for drug abuse
 - Make BH workforce a top priority
 - Must identify best practices in all phases of a crisis.
 - Citizens are advising this is the first-time changes are being carried out.
 - Some legislative efforts failed
- Safe and Sound Taskforce
 - Hundreds of foster kids living in unsuitable locations
 - Janet Kelly in HHR spearheaded
 - Many identified as LGBTQ youth
 - Developed a model to facilitate and expedite decision making
 - End the phenomenon of children sleeping in offices
 - Finding places for high acuity youth
 - Changing problems in the systemic issues with child welfare
 - Limit the time children are displaced



- Focusing on why the children are there
- Medicaid Unwinding
 - Ending the continuous coverage in Medicaid at the end of this month
 - Need to review all current members and assess their eligibility
 - Federal Gov gave all states 12 months to complete this.
 - 39% increase in enrollment in Medicaid
 - Attempting to streamline process with more advanced IT software
 - Extensive outreach to members to update their information
 - Very transient population
 - DSS must retrain their eligibility staff members as this has not happened in over 3 years. High turnover with staff as well
 - 14% will lose coverage, these folks are being directed to other services

Collin asked if HHR was thinking about Telehealth services and if there was a way to incentive this as a benefit for mental health. Lanette explained how rural places need this the most but lack broadband services to use these. The Governor also included nine million dollars to increase the number of services available to students in schools.

Phil asked if HHR sees Telehealth services expanding. Lanette believes Telehealth is here to stay. Chairwoman asked about what the administration is doing to increase broadband and lower taxes to keep people in the state. Lowering taxes appears to be a high priority for this administration.

J. Commerce and Trade Update (Wyatt Toehlke):

Wyatt Toehlke provided an update from Commerce and Trade.

- Focused on growing the VA economy.
- Bringing in more jobs. Several large companies moved to Virginia.
- Bring in help for disparate previously tobacco regions.
- “All of the above approach to energy” was discussed and how this impacts the Commonwealth.
- Looking at bringing a small nuclear reactor in Southwest Virginia, however, this will not occur during this Governor’s tenure.
- Focused on startups and incubators.
- Focused on tourism and “Virginia is for Lovers”.
- Focused on economic development and company recruitment.

Wyatt, in his role, is specifically involved with International Trade. We currently have offices in Germany, Seoul, and Tokyo. He also works with embassy partners and the Governor’s international missions.



Commerce and Trade Priorities:

- Driving job growth
- Reversing out migration, people are leaving the area in droves, to the south, for a litany of reasons. Focused on college student and veteran retention as well.
- Enhance economic competitiveness.
- Expanding startup and business formation

Chair asked for each committee chair to reach out to their respective secretaries to find ways we can assist each other in our common goals.

K. Break

L. Subcommittee Meetings:

Education and Workforce Committee members met.

Housing and Infrastructure Committee members met.

Health Committee did not meet due to only having one committee member present.

Safety Committee did not meet due to only having one committee member present.

M. Subcommittee Reports (Committee Chairs):

Each chair provided a brief update.

1. Housing and Infrastructure:

Demas reported the Housing and Infrastructure Committee wants to urge the governor to increase housing in the following three ways:

- Broadly,
- LGBTQ+ youth housing, and
- Broadband.

Demas also went over what each team member would be working on specifically.

2. Education and Workforce:

Patty reported the Education and Workforce Committee wants to focus on the following:

- Transgender Student policies and find some common ground with safety and facility management,
- Book bans across the commonwealth.
- New history standards and where they cross with LGBTQ issues.
- Increasing more parent-teacher communication.

Chair advised there were 12 transgendered bills in this year's general assembly, all failed.



3. Health:

Keri with the Health Committee read last year’s report during committee breakout. She also advised Lanette provided her with a lot of information and documents to share with the rest of the committee.

Chair reminded each committee chair to stay focused, so we have plenty of time to discuss the reports collectively and vote on the final draft. Chair expressed her thanks to Gloria for her hard work with keeping the board informed and on task.

N. Open Discussion

Chair opened the floor for open discussion by committee members.

O. Election of Vice-Chair (Chairwoman Keller):

Demas was nominated as Vice-Chairman. Floor was opened for discussion. Jason advised he would prefer to have someone fill the void in leadership now instead of waiting for the next meeting.

Motion to Elect Demas Boudreaux as Vice-Chairman of the Board		
Moved: Chairwoman Keller	Second: Jason Geske	
Yeas: 10	Nays: 0	Abstentions: 0
Roll Call Vote:		
Joanna Keller: aye	Preston Main: aye	Phil Kazmierczak: aye
Keri Vornadore: aye	Collin Hite: aye	Patty Smith: aye
Kerry Flynn: aye	Demas Boudreaux: aye	Austin Palmore: aye
Jason Geske: aye		

III. Public Comment

No public comment

IV. Adjournment (3:08pm)

Motion to Adjourn		
Moved: Chairwoman Keller	Second: Collin Hite	
Yes: 10	Nays: 0	Abstentions: 0