

House Committee on Commerce

Minutes of Meeting
2024 Regular Session
March 12, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Daryl Andrew Deshotel, chair of the House Committee on Commerce, called the meeting to order at 9:14 a.m. in Room 1, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Daryl Andrew Deshotel, chair
Representative Kim Carver
Representative Vincent E. Cox, III
Representative Jessica Domangue
Representative Troy Jude Hebert
Representative Jacob Jules Gabriel Landry
Representative Alonzo L. Knox
Representative Danny McCormick
Representative Dixon Wallace McMakin
Representative Shaun Raphael Mena
Representative Vincent "Vinney" J. St. Blanc, III
Representative Polly Thomas, vice chair

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Delisha Boyd
Representative Paula P. Davis
Representative Kyle M. Green, Jr.
Representative Stephanie Hilferty
Representative Edmond Jordan
Representative Candace N. Newell
Representative Neil Riser

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Victoria Kelley, attorney
Kathryn Vigrass, legislative analyst
Sharell Steven, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Nevonda Reed, division director
Randall Ike, committee clerk
Janet Anthony, sergeant at arms
Angela McKnight, sergeant at arms
Angela, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION OF ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS**Introduction of the committee members and staff**

Representative Deshotel introduced the staff of the House Commerce Committee. He then asked the members of the committee to introduce themselves.

Consideration and adoption of Committee Rules

Representative Deshotel offered a motion to adopt committee rules. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Deshotel, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Hebert, Jacob Landry, Knox, McCormick, McMakin, St. Blanc, and Thomas voted yea

Committee jurisdiction and workload

Representative Deshotel explained the jurisdiction of the House Committee on Commerce.

IV. INTRODUCTIONS/PRESENTATIONS**Department of Economic Development**

Susan Bourgeois, Louisiana Economic Development, 617 N. Third St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only. She explained the future plans and goals of the Louisiana Department of Economic Development from an internal and external standpoint.

Representative Deshotel and Representative Carver congratulated Susan Bourgeois on her new position with the Louisiana Department of Economic Development.

Representative McCormick discussed the issues of the small rural fire districts with taxes in his area and Susan Bourgeois explained that steps are being taken to address the issue in rural areas.

Louisiana Public Service Commission

Brandon Frey, Louisiana Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 91154, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, spoke for information only. He gave details on what the Louisiana Public Service Commission does and the members' roles.

Representative Deshotel and Brandon Frey discussed the procedure regarding utility companies being notified of new laws. Representative Deshotel asked if broadband was a part of the Louisiana Public Service Commission, and Mr. Frey explained why it is not.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 2 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Louisiana Used Motor Vehicle Commission

Derek Parnell, Louisiana Used Motor Vehicle Commission, 3132 Valley Creek Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only. He gave information about the Louisiana Used Motor Vehicle Commission and their goals.

Representative Deshotel and Derek Parnell discussed the complaints the commission has received and the number of employees on staff.

Representative Thomas inquired about the reduction and the reasons for the complaints received. Mr. Parnell explained the measures taken to resolve and decrease the number of complaints.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Office of Financial Institutions

Scott Jolly, Office of Financial Institutions (OFI), 8660 United Plaza Boulevard, 2nd Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke for information only and provided a handout out, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records. He introduced his executive staff to the committee members. He explained each division of OFI, what they regulate, and their jurisdiction of OFI.

Representative Deshotel asked to further explain the sunset provision. Mr. Jolly explained that Act 331 of the 2023 Regular Session, included a sunset provision that will terminate on July 1, 2025. He further explained the plans to have the date removed in the upcoming 2024 Regular Session. He also clarified that this only applies to the digital currency and not the entire agency.

Representative Knox asked Mr. Jolly if he had any knowledge of the rates of African Americans being denied home loans in Louisiana as a whole and what OFI is doing to address it. Mr. Jolley stated that he did not have that information but would provide it to Representative Knox at a later time.

Representative Cox asked a question about digital currency and how many entities out of the 39 that OFI regulates are state or local. Mr. Jolly provided information. Representative Cox asked about the upcoming sunset bill and Mr. Jolly provided further information. Representative Cox asked how OFI regulates the entities. Mr. Jolly gave information on the process.

Representative Deshotel asked what was the criteria of getting an application approved for a virtual currency license.

Michelle Jeansonne, OFI, 8660 United Plaza Boulevard, 2nd Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke for information only and provided information on the criteria for a digital currency license.

Louisiana Office of Tourism

Jeff Harlan, Louisiana Office of Tourism, 1051 N. Third St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only. He explained the background and structure of the Louisiana Office of Tourism.

Representative Deshotel asked Mr. Harlan to explain the budget of the Louisiana Office of Tourism. Jeff Harlan provided information.

Representative Thomas asked if the agency has developed a robust program to draw visitors for the 2025 Superbowl. Mr. Harlan provided information.

Representative Knox asked about the amount of districts in the state. Mr. Harlan provided information on the collective group of five individuals that make up the district.

Representative McCormick asked about the sales tax. Mr. Harlan provided information.

Representative Cox asked further questions about the budget and sister agencies. Mr. Harlan provided information.

Nancy Watkins, Office of the Lieutenant Governor and Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, 1051 N. Third St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only. She provided information on the state parks budget.

Representative Mena asked if social media is used to engage with the public. Mr. Harlan explained the marketing approach to reach the public.

Representative Deshotel asked for an estimate of the number of visitors that have visited the welcome centers per year. Mr. Harlan provided information.

Louisiana Board of Professional Geoscientists

Brenda Macon, Louisiana Board of Professional Geoscientists, 9643 Brookline Ave., Ste. 101, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke for information only. She provided information on the agency and what the agency has been doing for the last 10 years.

Representative Deshotel asked for the amount of licensees the agency has and Ms. Macon provided information.

Representative Knox asked for clarification on coastal erosion. Ms. Macon provided information on how the agency is approaching the issue.

Representative McMakin asked about the price difference on the new application fee and the renewal fee. Ms. Macon explained the difference and reason behind the fees.

Louisiana Motor Vehicle Commission

Lessie House, Louisiana Motor Vehicle Commission (LMVC), 3017 Kingsman St., Metairie, LA 70006, spoke for information only and presented a slide show, Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records.

Representative McCormick asked about the amount of licenses in the commission. Ms. House gave details about the different types licenses and the amounts.

Gregory Lala, LMVC, 3017 Kingsman St., Metairie, LA 70006, spoke for information only.

Representative Deshotel asked for clarification on the difference between the Louisiana Used Motor Vehicle Commission and the Louisiana Motor Vehicle Commission in regards to getting a license. Mr. Lala explained the details.

Representative Knox if the organization is funded through the fees of the licenses. Ms. House and Mr. Lala provided information.

Louisiana State Racing Commission

Stephen Landry, Louisiana State Racing Commission, 320 N. Carrollton Ave., New Orleans, LA 70119, spoke for information only.

Representative Deshotel asked for clarification on which forms of racing the Louisiana State Racing Commission covers. Mr. Landry explained the types of racing.

Representative McCormick expressed appreciation for the commission.

Representative Deshotel inquired about the amount of people on the board. Mr. Landry provided the information of the board, staff, and employees.

Representative Landry asked if slots and gambling are allowed at the racetracks. Mr. Landry provided information.

Representative McMakin asked for clarification about the 12,000 people and what that means for the facilities. Mr. Landry explained those 12,000 people are licensed personnel for the facility.

Representative Deshotel asked how the organization and the Louisiana Equine Council participate with each other or share funds. Mr. Landry explained the correlation.

Louisiana Board of Examiners of Certified Shorthand Reporters

Representative McMakin stated he had knowledge that the Louisiana Board of Examiners of Shorthand Reporters could not make the meeting today and had requested to attend tomorrow.

Representative Deshotel listed the boards that could not attend the meeting today.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative McCormick offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Deshotel, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Hebert, Jacob Landry, Knox, McCormick, McMakin, and Mena voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Daryl Andrew Deshotel
House Committee on Commerce

Date adopted: