**MINUTES OF AUGUST 15, 2017**

**Board of Commissioners of**

**Bayou D’Arbonne Lake Watershed District Regular Meeting**

Union Parish Courthouse Annex

303 East Water Street

Farmerville, LA 71241

1. Roll Call – President Bruce Hampton called the meeting to order. Commission members present were Bruce Hampton, Trotter Hunt, Steve Cagle, Terri Towns, Jake Halley and Guy Fortenberry. Cary Brown was absent. Also present were Bill Carter, Ron Riley, Robert Lemoine, Mayor Stein Baughman, Charles Williford and Richard Durrett.
2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance – Jake Halley led the invocation, and Guy Fortenberry led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Public Comment Registration – No one signed up to make a public comment.

D. Agenda Approval – Motion was made by Terri Towns and seconded by Trotter Hunt to approve the August 2017 Agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Approval of Minutes – Motion was made by Jake Halley and seconded by Guy Fortenberry to approve the minutes of the July 2017 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

F. Treasurer's Report:

1. Approve July 2017 Bank Account Summary – Steve Cagle made a motion and Trotter Hunt seconded the motion to approve the July 2017 Bank Account Summary. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Approve July 2017 Bank Statement Reconciliation – Trotter Hunt made a motion and Steve Cagle seconded the motion to approve the July 2017 Bank Statement Reconciliation. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approve July 2017 Financial Report – Guy Fortenberry made a motion and Terri Towns seconded the motion to approve the July 2017 Financial Report. The motion passed unanimously.

G. Old and New Business:

1. Channel Markers – (a) FEMA Claims, and (b) Repair Status – Ron Riley stated that the possibility of the Lake Commission getting 25% to LCDBG is not there. It would cost more than we could get. It brings in things like Davis-Bacon, environmental concerns, and having to hire a $30,000 consultant just to do the paperwork. We do not have a big project, so we are still looking at a $160,000 total project where we put in $40,000 which the Lake Commission has already agreed to. We are 95% through with the plans and specifications. He anticipates going to bid within the next two to three weeks but there are a few things to work out. The President has been given authority to sign any and all documents, so they can advertise without having the Lake Commission specifically instructing him to do that. He has to report back but they are moving forward.

2. New Lake Maps – Mr. Riley stated that, to his knowledge, nothing has changed. Steve Cagle stated that nothing has changed but he has not had a chance to work on it this month. Mr. Hampton stated that the maps are ready to go and that we are only waiting on the advertisers in order to complete it.

3. Discussion and Action, if Necessary, Regarding Policy for Primary Financial and Business Functions to Include Those for Cash – Mr. Hampton stated that he received something from Janet Cowart, but he needs to discuss it with her because a lot of it is about codes on the computer. They need to prepare something in language that the auditor will understand. There is no action to be taken on this.

4. Discussion and Action, if Necessary, Regarding Ramp Below Spillway – Mr. Hampton stated that the Police Jury went in and dug the mud out of the holes and placed dirt and rock on the parts of the road where the holes were. Shortly after that, the State called and said they are ready to do the work. Mr. Riley stated that right below where the ramp is, there was a “pond,” and the DOTD went in and cut that out and added compacted material so that it drains into the bayou. This was funded with left-over money from the tainter gate. DOTD furnished the labor and equipment. There still remains a terrible drainage problem there. Mr. Hampton stated that this was to be covered under #9 of the Agenda (Discuss and Take Action, if Necessary, Regarding Purchase and Installation of Culvert and Rock for Spillway Property), but we will discuss it under this section. Mr. Riley stated that at the top of the hill, outside the chain link gate, water is running across the surface and creating ruts in the road. There needs to be at least one or probably two culverts installed. The dam runs north and south and there is an ingoing road running east and west and then it turns and goes down, which has created a ditch on the left-hand side that leads nowhere. It just ponds water until it is full and then water runs over so they need to install a culvert there. There is also some washing going down the ramp on the left-hand side at the gate that is bad. He would like to see the Commission work with the Police Jury where Commission buys the materials, and then the Police Jury install the materials. Mr. Hampton stated that he has already spoken with some members of the Police Jury about this, and he will place it on the Agenda for the next Police Jury meeting to see if they will do that, and we will buy the rock and culvert. Mr. Hampton said the Police Jury will allow us to buy the materials under their contract. He priced one 40-foot culvert at approximately $600. Then we will probably need three or four loads of rock. Mr. Riley said the other culvert needed at the gate should be 20 or 25 feet so it will not cost as much as the other one. Mr. Hampton and Mr. Riley were of the opinion that this all could be done for around $2,500 or $3,000 and, since the Police Jury would be handling the labor, it would probably be less than that. Mr. Cagle stated that he believes the cost for materials would probably be closer to $3,500. Trotter Hunt made a motion and Steve Cagle seconded the motion to allow the President to spend up to $3,500 with the Police Jury for the two culverts and rock for the ramp. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Discuss and Take Action, if Necessary, on Temporary Mowing Contract – Mr. Hampton stated that Mark Bryan has submitted his invoices and has been paid so there is no further action to be taken on this. A motion was made by Terri Towns and seconded by Steve Cagle to extend the temporary mowing contract until a permanent mowing contract is awarded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Discuss and Take Action, if Necessary, on Permanent Mowing Contract – Mr. Carter stated that the bids were supposed to be submitted to the post office box, but they have not received any bids yet. A motion was made by Trotter Hunt and seconded by Guy Fortenberry to extend the quote period for the permanent mowing contract to September 15. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Status of DOTD Blocking Access to Spillway on Downsville Side – Ron Riley stated this matter is resolved and can be removed from future agendas.

8. Discuss and Take Action, if Necessary, Regarding Request for Union Parish Police Jury To Put Dumpster on Spillway Property – Mr. Hampton stated that he and Steve Cagle met with Shorty, who handles this for the Police Jury. As you go into the spillway property site, immediately after passing the woods to the left, there is an electric line and they have agreed with the Police Jury to use that as a right-of-way to get to the dumpster site. The actual dumpster site will be to the left, and there is a single pole where the electric line stops. In that hilly area just past that area, they want to put a dumpster site containing five dumpsters that would be enclosed with chain link fence, and a privacy fence with rock at the site. It would open to the woods. This would move the dumpsters further from the lake and should be a cleaner site and less likely to have trash there. Mr. Cagle stated that the Police Jury agreed that when they mow around that area, they will also mow the park on that side. In addition, Mr. Hampton stated that they will make it large enough to eventually add two more dumpsters in case of trash overflow. A motion was made by Steve Cagle and seconded by Jake Halley to allow the parish to put a dumpster site at that location. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Discuss and Take Action, if Necessary, Regarding Purchase and Installation of Culvert and Rock for Spillway Property – This discussion took place under Item #4 above.

10. Discuss and Take Action, if Necessary, Regarding Possibility of Re-Opening Beach at the Spillway – Mr. Hampton stated that he was contacted by Quentin Durr, a local banker and an energetic force for economic development in Union Parish, who would like to see the beach re-opened and he indicated they may obtain private funding to get it started and to purchase sand, picnic tables, etc. Mr. Cagle spoke with a man who owns a track hoe to see if he would go to the area to see if it is possible to pull up sand that has eroded, but that man has not gotten back with him yet.

11. Discuss and Take Action, if Necessary, Regarding Any Needed Repairs at Various Boat Ramp Sites, Including Piers – Mr. Hampton stated that Steve Cagle has gotten some quotes for repairs at some of these sites. Mr. Cagle said one man, John Gates, told him the pier near Mr. Cagle’s house is about to fall in. So they went together to inspect all the other piers that need repairs. Mr. Gates looked at every one of them and took pictures that Mr. Cagle agreed to send all the Board members. The one at Terral Island needs all the protruding nails removed or hammered back in and the screws replaced. On many piers, the cap board is rotten and needs to be replaced. Mr. Cagle gave everyone a list of the piers and suggested that one or two be repaired each month. Mr. Hampton asked when the last time maintenance was done on the ramps, and Mr. Cagle said it was about eight years ago. He said a little maintenance was done two drawdowns ago. Mr. Trotter asked whether we need to get quotes from other people. Mr. Carter said that was preferable, if possible, but Mr. Cagle said it will be a problem getting people to go out to look at them. Mr. Hampton stated that it is below any kind of bid amount that we would have to legally advertise to get bids. He has no problem getting quotes, but this man is insured, which will be a requirement. Mr. Cagle agreed to try to get another bid from someone, since one of the piers has to be completely replaced. The one bid we have to replace that pier is $3,000. The others should require only repairs. Mr. Hampton stated that we can address this at the next meeting, but we need to get this started as soon as possible because of safety issues. Mr. Gates suggested spraying the boards with rubberized material to keep the boards from rotting. Guy Fortenberry made a motion and Terri Towns seconded the motion to authorize John Gates to repair the piers at Terral Island, Jake’s and Highway 33 for $1,500. Mr. Cagle agreed to inspect those repairs and report on the progress at the next meeting.

12. Report by Richard Durrett and Mayor Stein Baughman of the Lincoln/Union Water Initiative – Mayor Baughman opened the discussion by speaking about the Union-Lincoln Water Initiative board regarding water for consumption and water for economic development. In looking for an alternative water supply for the last 10-12 years, he met with the Lake Commission after he became mayor eight or nine years ago. When he joined that board, Jack Rivers was on the Lake Commission and he attended their meetings and he stated that they would be grateful to have someone from the Lake Commission join their meetings to stay abreast of what is going on. Bruce Hampton stated that Steve Cagle was appointed an ex-officio member of the Union-Lincoln Water Initiative after Mr. Rivers left. Steve Cagle agreed but said he had no idea when the meetings were held. It was agreed to forward Mr. Cagle’s contact information and give him notice about future meetings. Mayor Baughman stated that Charles Sawyer is also on the board. After introduction, he turned the meeting over to Mr. Charles Williford from Jackson, Mississippi, and Richard Durrett from Ruston, Louisiana, both of Waggoner Engineering.

Richard Durrett stated that their meetings are the third Thursday of each month at the Ruston Mayor’s office at 9:00 a.m. but they do not have meetings every month. Mr. Durrett stated that the Sparta Aquifer is used by people in 16 parishes in North Louisiana and eight counties in South Arkansas. In 1999, the Legislature created the Sparta Ground Water Commission in Louisiana and in 2002 that Commission created a study of the aquifer and from that study it was determined that we need to reduce the usage about 18 million gallons a day just to stabilize the aquifer of 30 million gallons a day to have room for expansion and growth. They identified six projects and prioritized them. The first was to get the mill in West Monroe off the aquifer. That project has already moved forward and they are using all the waste water that the City of Monroe has.

The second priority in the study was Ruston and Farmerville going to Lake D’arbonne. In the meantime, the mill in Bastrop closed. With that, the Union-Lincoln group, which is the Union Parish Police Jury, Lincoln Parish Police Jury, City of Farmerville and City of Ruston, formed the Union-Lincoln Regional Water Supply Initiative. It’s a 501(c)(3) corporation and they have been working on this project since that time. The first thing they did was get some USDA rural development money to do a treatability and yield study of the lake. They have a copy of the results of the study which Mr. Williford passed out to the Lake Commission members, which concluded that the lake will yield the small amount of water we’re going to be drawing from it, and the lake water is treatable, as shown by a treatability study. The Union-Lincoln Water Initiative board has looked for two sources to get to this point, first, the federal, and they have a $2 million authorization in the Water Resources Development Act through the Corps of Engineers. It’s an authorization, not an appropriation yet. That was done in 2007 but Congress has a no new start ban right now and they are trying to work through that and get that done down the line. In the meantime, they have gone to the State Legislature, and this year in Priority 1 it is $1.71 million dollars. Priority 1 in the Capital Outlay bill means that is cash available. It was approved by the Bond Commission in July so that work will move Union-Lincoln forward in that project. Then the other $2.4 million is a Priority 5. That means it is there waiting to move up as the money is needed, provided you go back every year to get it approved. The total is $4.1 million, which will be enough to get this project through final design and ready for construction. That’s about a three-year time table. This is a major step this year with the Legislature.

The Commission also has a right to purchase the 21-22 acre site of the old State Park. Each of the entities have put their money up for the $125,000 to purchase that property. There is an option on that and the State Park is holding that. The reason it hasn’t been purchased yet is because there is a little more environmental work that needs to be done before they will be ready to purchase it.

Charles Williford addressed the Lake Commission and showed a layout of the property and said the project would be done in two segments, the first being Farmerville and Foster Farms, and the second going to Ruston. The treatment plant will be in four billion gallons per day modules. They will not have to build all of it in the beginning. The intake structure will be built in connection with the total project. He pointed out the schematic of how the intake structure will be. Part of it will be on the land and there will be an underground pipe going out to the channel. There will be no structure above water in the lake so there will be no obstructions in the lake, even if there is a drawdown, because it will be in the channel. There was another sheet Mr. Williford showed the Lake Commission of a hydrograph of the lake levels and it tells what the draw downs and the spread would be for each level.

Mr. Durrett then opened the meeting up to questions. Mr. Cagle said his biggest concern is he has seen Toledo Bend, and he is concerned about a stopping point and whether the lake going to drop. He stated that they have all the right in the world to pull water out of the lake, but the Lake Commission is in charge of the economics and draining the lake is not going to help. He would like to see a stopping point when the lake gets to a certain level if it starts hurting Union Parish. Mr. Durrett stated that no one has any intention of hurting the lake. He referred Mr. Cagle to the chart, the worst-case scenario of 16 billion gallons a day and at pool stage at 74, it still won’t drop it but 1/15th of an inch per day, which is one inch in 15 days if no other water is coming into the lake. That should not even be an issue because the City of Ruston is dumping four million gallons a day (not all of which goes into the lake but there is always water going into the lake). Mr. Cagle again asked if there is a stopping point. Mr. Durrett said no, there has not been a stopping point set. Mr. Cagle asked if it could be done. Mr. Durrett said anything can be done. When you switch from surface treated water to ground water like in Sparta that is basically pure with only chlorine in it, you have a time period that you cannot mix those. You have to change from one to the other. Mr. Hampton asked if the intent is to get Farmerville completely off Sparta, and Mr. Durrett said yes. Mr. Hampton asked whether the wells present at the time the plant goes online would be backups. Mr. Durrett said it would take a period of time depending on which system and how the system is set up to change back. He did not think those wells would be abandoned. Each well operates its own system. However, this is a system of delivering treated water from the lake.

Mr. Hunt asked what kind of filtration system is used. Mr. Williford said that, in layman’s terms, it is a complex water treatment plant, which would have chemical addition, ozone treatment on the front end, which uses a number of different chemicals, like lime, parachloride, to precipitate the solids and the color and the other things in the water manganese and iron, particularly. It would then go through a settling tank and a charcoal and sand filter. Then it would be chlorinated or disinfected and pumped out into the systems at Farmerville, the poultry plant and ultimately to Ruston. Mr. Hunt asked if any by-products would be put back into the lake, and he said they are not proposing that right now. The concept they are looking at now is that any kind of backwash from the filters or sludge would go into a lagoon and it would be landfill at some point in the future.

Mr. Durrett reiterated that they are not totally through with the design, and he was simply giving an update as to where they are and what they have done so far. This is all preliminary. Their next stage is to get the concept and the conceptual layout of all this so they can do the environmental study. Mr. Cagle asked whether his was just for the City of Farmerville and the City of Ruston. He said initially the wording of the Lake Commission rules were for Ruston and Farmerville only, but later it was added to include Ruston and its customers and Farmerville. Mr. Carter stated that there has always been a concern, as it should be, from the Lake Commission to protect the lake. Money is a big issue and he understands the they are moving into a conceptual design stage and even construction if they get the funds. However, he believes this is like the tainter gate project. It is owned by the DOTD but the Lake Commission deals with the lake. With engineering help, the Commission entered into a very detailed plan of how the gate would work so they could meet the purposes of flood control, as well as protect the water resources of the lake and property owners. Mr. Carter stated that he anticipates as they get closer to this project being built, it is giving the right to take water, but there has to be some cooperation about how it is done. He cannot foresee this getting to the point where they will allow water to be taken without there being an agreement in place. Mr. Durrett stated that this project is only designed for 12 million gallons a day, so the intake structure and the total is only designed for that. If you go past that, you will have to redesign or add to the intake structure. Mr. Riley asked how they arrived at that figure, and Mr. Durrett stated that they took the figure of what Farmerville and Ruston currently uses. Mr. Williford stated that earlier studies were looking at larger numbers (16 million gallons a day) but the most recent studies indicate it would be 12 million gallons a day as the design capacity for the plant, with four million being the initial capacity for Farmerville and the poultry plant. That leaves some room for growth. Mr. Riley pointed out that both the Ruston and Farmerville water systems supply water to many smaller water systems and asked how those smaller systems would be affected if Farmerville and Ruston were converted to the new supply. Mr. Durrett said they had not gotten to that point yet.

Someone asked who the operating company would be, and Mr. Durrett stated that Union-Lincoln Water Initiative would have to set up an entity that will build, operate and finance this. There are a lot of parts that still have to be developed. They do not have the money to build the plant yet. This is just to prepare the design and the environmental rights. Mr. Hampton asked if Mr. Durrett agrees with Bill Carter that at some point before they begin drawing water that there will be an agreement. Mr. Durrett stated that he is the consultant and that the Lake Commission would have to ask the Union-Lincoln Water Initiative. Ms. Towns stated that they saw this happen with Foster Farms and the economic impact Foster Farms had when they went down in the parish. They came back, but the Lake Commission has to look out for them. Mayor Baughman stated that he would not want to be part of anything that would interfere with the integrity of the lake but, at the same time, he sees a need for the water situation because if they wait until it is needed, then it is too late.

Mr. Hampton asked whether they anticipate that Union-Lincoln Water will enter into some type of agreement with the Lake Commission so that there is input from both sides and what ultimately ends up being the agreement. Mayor Baughman stated that he feels sure they would do that. Mr. Williford stated that the Union-Lincoln Water Supply Initiative is just a 501(c)(3) but in the distant future there will have to be a legal body set up that will actually do the construction, acquire the right-of-way, acquire the sites and do the things that a public body would do. A lot of discussion would go into that, but that would be the entity that would implement the project. Mr. Hampton stated that there will probably be some kind of need for some zone so that no one would go into the lake with dredging equipment or anything else. Therefore, there may be some things the Lake Commission will do to help to ensure the integrity of their system. Mr. Durrett agreed and said that is one reason they have not purchased the land. They need a right-of-way from the treatment plant to the lake and under the lake. There are still a lot of things to be worked out. As far as draining the lake, though, at 12 million gallons a day and with the pool stage at 74, which is six feet down, you will only draw 1/20th of an inch a day, which is an inch in 20 days if no water is going into the lake.

Mr. Cagle expressed concern because there is already an evaporation of water on hot days and that is without any water being removed from the lake. Mr. Durrett agreed but said Foster Farms is employing people. If salt water intrudes their water, they will not be here. They cannot process their chickens with salt water. Second, Cross Lake in Shreveport is half the size of D’arbonne, and Shreveport gets its water from that lake. They draw 90 million gallons a day and it does not affect any of those homes, boat docks or areas around it. That is about 1/10th of that for D’arbonne Lake. That will give you a perspective of what the draw down will do to the lake.

Mayor Baughman stated that when Mr. Durrett referred to salt water, he was not talking about water like from Biloxi. Once the salt water gets in the Sparta, you cannot get it out. The only way you can use that water with salt is to have more water in the Sparta. There have been some problems with some wells here that have salt water intrusion. Mr. Hampton stated that the diagram looks like some of the intake is above the bed of the lake. He wants to make sure he understood Mr. Durrett correctly that the screen and everything will be in the bed of the lake. Mr. Williford said it cannot be right on the bottom but the idea is that it will be in the channel in the deepest part of the lake about ten or 15 feet below the water surface. They don’t know exactly yet. Mr. Hampton stated that when Mr. Durrett first explained the project, there would be nothing on the surface but this diagram appears to show some amount of distance from the bed of the lake. Ms. Towns asked about the maintenance of the screen and whether it would be scheduled and whether it would stop traffic to maintain the screen. Mr. Williford stated that the screen is stainless steel and they should not require any maintenance other than a compressed air system that from time to time will blow air into the screen from the inside that would clean any silt or leaves or whatever might have settled on the outside. You might see a little boil in the lake, but there would be no need to do maintenance on the screen on a regular basis.

Mr. Williford stated that once they get the geometrics of the survey done and determine everything, it will clarify a lot and they will keep the Lake Commission posted. Mr. Carter stated that there obviously would be a significant cost involved to build this project and asked if they had funding. Mr. Durrett stated that the first phase cost $35 million. He stated that they have the water resources bill running through the Corps and they have some other financing deals with the federal government. They are working on the funding.

Mr. Williford said the one thing he would like for everyone to take away from the meeting is that that amount of water they are taking from the lake is really insignificant. In addition, the way the water intake system is designed, there will be no impact or structure or impediments on the lake, and nothing the Lake Commission will be required to do as far as maintenance, protection or restriction. He also said they would report back to the Commission as the project progresses.

13. Reminder Regarding Filing Financial Disclosure Statements by Commissioners – Mr. Hampton stated that the deadline for this year has passed, but we are leaving this on the Agenda for the new members as a constant reminder.

14. Reminder Regarding Board Member Ethics Training by Commissioners – Mr. Hampton reiterated that ethics training can be done online, and the Board has until the end of the year to do this. He reminded everyone when you do take the seminar, the certificates should be emailed to him or Janet Cowart to print for the auditors.

H. Public Comment – None.

I. Adjourn – A motion to adjourn was made by Terri Towns and seconded by Trotter Hunt. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned.