**MINUTES OF MAY 19, 2020 REGULAR MEETING**

**Board of Commissioners of**

**Bayou D’Arbonne Lake Watershed District**

Union Parish Courthouse Annex

303 East Water Street

Farmerville, LA 71241

6:30 p.m.

1. Roll Call – Jake Halley called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Commission members present were Jake Halley, Terry Morris, Clint Graham, Todd DeMoss, Steve Cagle, and Richard Royal. Also present were Bill Carter, Jon McKinnie and Byron Avery.
2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance – Clint Graham led the invocation and Todd DeMoss led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Public Comment Registration – No one signed up for public comment.

D. Agenda Approval – Motion was made by Clint Graham and seconded by Richard Royal to approve the Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Approval of Minutes – Motion was made by Steve Cagle and seconded by Clint Graham to approve the minutes of the April 2020 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

F. Financial Reports/Budget/Audit:

1. Approve April 2020 Bank Account Summary – Motion was made by Todd DeMoss and seconded by Steve Cagle to approve the April 2020 Bank Account Summary. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Approve April 2020 Bank Statement Reconciliation - Motion was made by Todd DeMoss and seconded by Clint Graham to approve the April 2020 Bank Statement Reconciliation. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Approve April 2020 Financial Report – Richard Royal stated that the Budget needs to be amended, as a few of those line items are reaching the amount budgeted for the year and those items need to be increased. Todd DeMoss said that he would talk with Richard Royal and get better figures for the budget. Motion was made by Richard Royal and seconded by Terry Morris to approve the April 2020 Financial Report. The motion passed unanimously.

G. Old and New Business:

* + 1. Channel Markers Project - Reimbursement – Bill Carter said that Neal DeForest informed him that the only things remaining are the items discussed at the previous meeting.
    2. Lake Report / Drawdown Enforcement – Ryan Daniel of LDWF – Ryan Daniel of the LDWF provided his annual spring report regarding the condition of the lake. He made numerous comments and handed out a summary of his report as follows:

**Drawdown**

LDWF recommends a "standard" drawdown of 5 feet below pool stage, to be initiated September 8, 2020 extending through November 15, 2020. There is no current biological need to extend the duration of the drawdown.

**Fisheries Sampling**

Electrofishing samples were conducted in spring and fall in 2019.

* Above average catch rates for largemouth bass (see handout)
* Population distribution for bass was near ideal (see handout)
* An increase in abundance has been documented over past 20 years

This is the second year of the 3 year crappie stock assessment. A creel survey was initiated in January 2020 but discontinued due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey will resume as soon as a return to normal statement is issued.

**Fish Stocking**

* 300,000 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings continue to be stocked annually
* Genetics sampling was conducted in 2019 to evaluate the stockings
* 24% Florida presence determined (highest ever)

**Vegetation**

Control of giant salvinia continues to be a priority.

* Now found throughout the lake
* 367 acres of salvinia treated with herbicide in 2019
* LDWF urges public to notify where mats have formed

Hydrilla coverage has slowly increased since 2016 drawdown, but not problematic. Other species are at minimal to normal amounts.

* + 1. Spillway Beach Area Improvements/Spillway Bayou Access Road Improvements – Steve Cagle said that he went by the site and grass is being planted to minimize erosion on the hill. He suggested adding some additional crushed concrete in the road area. Motion was made by Clint Graham and seconded by Steve Cagle to give Neal DeForest the authority to request Kendal Terral of Terral Construction to purchase additional crushed concrete for the road at a cost not to exceed $3,000. The motion passed unanimously.

1. Stowe Creek Ramp Road –Terry Morris stated that he spoke with (47:35) Ben Bridges and that he indicated they would move the dumpster, but they do not have a location to move them to. Bill Carter said that if litter is a problem, a temporary barrier could be installed to prevent access from the dumpster site to the ramp area.
2. Lake Level Gauges – Jake Halley stated that he spoke to Jeff Shapiro of DOTD and they discussed moving the downstream gauge. He said that the Rocky Branch Bridge is a possible location, but he does not know if power is accessible. Mr. Halley said that solar power is always an option if power is not available. Bill Carter said that he recently spoke with Ben Humphries of Delta Process and he said that was his thought as well, but vandalism is a concern. Mr. Carter suggested Jake Halley get an estimate to facilitate the upgrade and relocation. Todd DeMoss asked what the cost of a new gauge would be, and Steve Cagle said approximately $3,000. Jake Halley said that the gauge at the spillway is a USGS gauge and the maintenance is $20,000 per year. Bill Carter said that Jeff Shapiro informed him that they do not use the data from the Delta Process gauge that is currently at the state park. He said that Mr. Shapiro also informed him that the engineering calculations done by James Henry on which the tainter gate opening and closing plan is based utilizes the USGS gauge located at the spillway and the USGS gauge located on the Highway 15 bridge between Spearsville and Lillie, both of which are paid for by DOTD. Additional discussion was had about relocating the Delta Process gauge downstream.

1. Communications Re Tainter Gate Opening / Other Information (Facebook / Website) – Jake Halley said that the details are still being worked out for the Facebook page. Bill Carter said that Jessica Hollingsworth informed him that the page could be set up where all posts could be reviewed before allowing comments to be seen by the public. Byron Avery said that when the newspaper posts information regarding the lake it reaches a lot of people and he has not experienced any negative comments. Jon McKinnie said that multiple people can be involved in the process of setting up and editing the page. Todd DeMoss said that it would be good to give the public information from each month’s meeting and said that he would handle setting up the page. Bill Carter talked about the ineffectiveness of the Commission’s website and said that the information could be transferred to the Facebook page.
2. Lighting at Boat Launches – Jake Halley said that the lighting has not been replaced yet, but it will be in the near future.
3. Boat Launch/Ramp Maintenance – Jake Halley said that the project at Terral Island is complete.

Todd DeMoss said the sign at Gill’s Ferry is right at the water’s edge and when the lake gets high the area is getting washed out. Todd DeMoss suggested replacing the sign entirely and then putting a new sign in a different location. Bill Carter asked how much the previous signs cost and Steve Cagle said he thought about $1,000 per sign. Motion was made by Clint Graham and seconded by Richard Royal to replace the sign at Gill’s Ferry at a cost not to exceed $1,500 and to move it to a new location away from the water. Steve Cagle said he would take care of installing the new sign. The motion passed unanimously.

Todd DeMoss also stated that there is a light pole at Ken’s Landing with a low electrical line that you can almost touch. Steve Cagle said that it would be best for someone to contact the applicable power company to repair the line.

1. Lake Closure / No Wake Policy – Jake Halley asked if everyone had a chance to review the draft Lake Closure / No Wake Policy sent out by Bill Carter. He said the policy basically provides for the closure of the lake at 84 feet and a no wake zone at 83 feet. Jake Halley said that he spoke with the Union Parish Police Jury President and the Union Parish Sheriff and they indicated to him that if the Commission would adopt an Ordinance, the Police Jury would adopt the same and the Sheriff would enforce the Ordinance. Bill Carter said that the lake commission does not have the authority to close the lake but would determine the process to follow in accordance with state law. Jake Halley said that in the meantime the Policy Mr. Carter drafted can be adopted internally and an Ordinance to be drafted reflecting the same. Motion was made by Clint Graham and seconded by Richard Royal to adopt the Lake Closure / No Wake Policy. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Lake Drawdown – Jake Halley said that the commission needs to proceed as scheduled with the four-year drawdown beginning the day after Labor Day, September 8, 2020, based on its policy and as recommended by LDWF. Motion was made by Clint Graham and seconded by Terry Morris to approve the lake drawdown to five feet below pool stage beginning September 8, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

Bill Carter suggested putting a formal notice in the Gazette starting next month to inform the public and possibly put it on the Gazette’s website as well. Steve Cagle said to make sure the notice included the closing date so that people are aware of their timeline to do work on their piers.

1. Select Bank for New Commission Checking Account – Todd DeMoss stated that he previously requested and received proposals from Origin Bank and First National Bank for terms of a new checking account and previously provided the proposals to the Commission members. He said that the proposals were similar but First National Bank guaranteed a higher interest rate of 0.5% and recommended that the Commission open the new account at First National Bank.

Motion was made by Todd DeMoss and seconded by Clint Graham to open a new checking account at First National Bank and thereafter transfer the funds in the current checking account at Marion State Bank to First National Bank. Richard Royal abstained from the vote since he is a First National Bank employee. The motion passed five to zero with one abstention.

Motion was made by Todd DeMoss and seconded by Terry Morris to allow all Commission members to be signatories on the new checking account at First National Bank. Richard Royal abstained from the vote since he is a First National Bank employee. The motion passed five to zero with one abstention.

1. Sexual Harassment Policy – Bill Carter said that public bodies are now required to adopt a sexual harassment policy. He said that Jessica Hollingsworth recently sent an email to the Commissioners with a report on the audit, and informed the Commissioners about the requirement for the sexual harassment policy and a draft of a policy was attached to that email. Motion was made by Todd DeMoss and seconded by Richard Royal to adopt the sexual harassment policy provided. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Annual Financial Disclosure – Jake Halley said that the deadline to file Financial Disclosures was May 15, 2020.

H. Public Comment – No one signed up for public comment.

I. Adjourn – A motion to adjourn was made by Clint Graham and seconded by Todd DeMoss. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned.