

RESTORE LOUISIANA TASK FORCE

May 12, 2017

**Louisiana State Capitol
House Committee Room 5**

Approved

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Jacqui Vines Wyatt called the meeting to order at 9:37 AM.

Ms. Wyatt: Let's call the Restore Louisiana Task Force meeting to order. Friday, May 12th. At this time I'd like to ask Lori to do the roll call.

II. ROLL CALL

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Roland Dartez
Mr. Jimmy Durbin
Mr. John Gallagher
Mr. Adam Knapp
Mr. Michael Olivier
Mr. Don Pierson
Representative J. Rogers Pope
Mr. Sean Reilly
Representative Rob Shadoin
Commissioner Mike Strain
Mayor Ollie Tyler
Ms. Jacqui Vines Wyatt

TASK FORCE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Johnny Bradberry
Mr. Randy Clouatre (non-voting, ex-officio)
Mr. Michael Faulk
Representative Edward "Ted" James
Mr. Raymond Jetson
Senator Dan "Blade" Morrish
Mayor Dave Norris
Dr. James Richardson
Mayor-President Joel Robideaux
Dr. Shawn Wilson

Ms. Dupont: 12 members are present. Madam Chair, we do have a quorum.

LET THE RECORD SHOW THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS ARRIVED AFTER THE ROLL CALL:

Representative Edward "Ted" James
Dr. Shawn Wilson

SUPPORTING STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Patrick Forbes, Executive Director, Office of Community Development
Mark Riley, Office of Community Development
Pat Santos, Office of Community Development
Dan Rees, Office of Community Development
Jeff Haley, Office of Community Development
Lauren Nichols, Office of Community Development
LaSonta Davenport, Office of Community Development
Sandra Gunner, Office of Community Development
Lori Dupont, Office of Community Development
Kim Jupiter, Office of Community Development
Robert Bizot, Louisiana Housing Corporation
Nicole Sweazy, Louisiana Housing Corporation

III. APPROVAL OF APRIL 21, 2017 MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Wyatt: Great. I'd like to ask for the approval of the minutes for April 12, 2017. They were some pretty extensive minutes, weren't they? Do we have a motion?

Mr. Durbin: Motioned.

Ms. Wyatt: Do we have a second?

Mayor Tyler: Seconded.

Ms. Wyatt: All in favor?

All Members: Aye.

Ms. Wyatt: Motion carried.

IV. CHAIRPERSON OPENING REMARKS

~ Jacqui Vines Wyatt, Restore Louisiana Task Force Co-Chair

Ms. Wyatt: I'd like to start out with some opening remarks. Welcome to the 13th meeting of the Restore Louisiana Task Force. I'm glad to say that numerous notable developments have happened since our last meeting. Meaningful strides have been made. Environmental reviews of homes damaged by the 2016 March and August floods are underway. Applications are being processed, housing assistance centers will open soon. And outreach meetings and webinars are being held to help homeowners, rental property owners and small businesses. Over 19,000 flood victims have completed the Restore the Louisiana Homeowners Assistance Program survey. That number may seem high, but we know that about 86,000 Louisiana homeowners have FEMA verified loss from the floods. We will receive more information later in the meeting regarding the ongoing initiatives to reach those who were affected but still need to take the initial survey for the homeowner's association program. The state has selected the lender who will implement the small business loan program. And that program will start receiving applications from flood impacted businesses in the next couple of weeks. The Louisiana Housing Corporation has conducted multiple workshops across the state to inform landlords and developers. We will hear more about that, when they will start accepting applications for those programs during this meeting. And the Louisiana Housing Authority Rental Assistance programs, which target displaced renters are already accepting applications. We will hear from the Governor's office, and from Pat Forbes on the potential for receiving additional disaster assistance. Just a couple of reminders that are extremely important. If you're a homeowner and were impacted by the March and August floods of 2016, please take the homeowners flood damage survey. It doesn't matter whether you're in your rebuilding process. We need to know what kind of help you need in recovery. This is also the first step in applying and qualifying for assistance. If in taking the survey, you find yourself in a later phase than you think you should be, keep in mind we have a limited amount of funding and are prioritizing the most vulnerable. The low income, elderly, and disabled who have the greatest needs at this moment. And everyone please visit restore.la.gov regularly to sign up for email updates, get the latest information, frequently asked questions on the survey, and other topics. Remember our focus is always to bring Louisiana residents home as quickly as possible. And we have been as expeditious as we can in moving this process along. And it's still top of line for us to get this process moving. And with that, I'm going to ask Senator Barrow, who wanted to make comments and who would not be here during the public comments. Senator Barrow, she's not here? Okay, well, we'll call her out of turn. Let's move to the Governor's office update. Erin Monroe Wesley, she's Special Counsel, Office of the Governor.

V. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE UPDATE

~ Erin Monroe Wesley, Special Counsel, Office of the Governor

Ms. Wesley: Good morning, Madam Co-Chair and members of the Restore Task Force. Again, Erin Monroe Wesley, Special Counsel Office of the Governor. I want to start by reiterating what the Madam Co-Chair just talked about in terms of a survey. We are encouraging every homeowner to complete the survey. I know some have asked or they've declined to complete the survey because they don't know if they're going to receive assistance. But we want to tell those homeowners is we are seeking additional funds. So even if you may not qualify for this first round of funding, you could qualify in the future. So again, we encourage you to reach out into your communities and encourage every homeowner to complete this survey process. It's very critical in this long recovery process. I want to talk a little bit about where we're at in terms of numbers. We submitted emails to 35,000 impacted homeowners reminding them to complete the survey. And so that was one action step that took place this week. We have completed environmental reviews of 58 pilot homes. And started the application intake process this week. We have started environmental reviews of phase one homes last week. And over 1,800 environmental site inspections have been completed. All of the phase one homeowners who have taken the surveys, their

site visits will be completed by the end of this weekend. Next week, housing assistance centers will start opening. We'll have the first center open up in Baton Rouge at the Celtic Centre. That center will open up on May 22nd, and homeowners will be able to go to these centers to get questions answered about duplication benefits. And to really figure out the best solution to fit their specific situation. It's also important for us as we talk through this process that we set the necessary expectations. And so when homeowners begin to come to these homeowner assistance centers, they will see mock buildouts of what a finished kitchen and bathroom would look like once that program is underway. And we really, again, encourage them to look out for these centers. We had the first one opening on May 22nd, but others will come down the line. So we want to encourage that again through the process. If you'll look at tab five in your binders, you'll see some information around outreach. And that's very critical as we begin to get the word out further about this next step in this next phase in the process. And I want to read out to the folks in the room where we're at in terms of outreach. We'll have six all-day community outreach events. They'll take place from 9AM to 7AM in the following communities. On May 16th, we'll be in Hammond at the Southeastern Louisiana University. On May 17th, we'll be in Gonzales at Ascension Parish Library. May 18th, we'll be in Shreveport at the Bill Cockrell Recreation Center. May 23rd we'll be in East Baton Rouge Parish at the EBR Main Library. May 24th we'll be in Youngsville at the Youngsville Sports Complex. And May 25th we'll be in Denham Springs at the Denham Springs historic City Hall. I want to shift gears a bit and talk about where we're at in terms of funding. As you know, our office has continued to work in partnership with the Congressional delegation to secure an additional appropriation from Congress. To fund our recovery needs as it relates to both the August and March floods from last year. And this most recent allocation of \$400 million in community development block grant funding was included in the continual resolution that will fund the operations of federal government through October 1st of this year. Now this appropriation is for four states, it includes Louisiana, California, West Virginia, and North Carolina. But it also covers any future disasters that may occur within the 2017 calendar year. Now prior to this appropriation, Governor Edwards joined several governors asking for these additional dollars. He joined Governor Deal of Georgia, Governor Cooper of North Carolina, Governor McMaster of South Carolina, and Governor Justice of West Virginia. And they all took part in a bipartisan letter to Congress to the lead appropriators, both in the House and the Senate. Making that ask for additional dollars for these respective states. At this time we don't know how much Louisiana will receive in terms of that \$400 million allocation. The determination is set by HUD and Pat Forbes in our team has been in constant conversation with HUD around that allocation. But we simply don't know yet what it will take in terms of what Louisiana will receive from that. But what we do know is that we still have some unmet need, still a lot of remaining needs in Louisiana. And that includes \$1 billion for homeowner assistance, \$600 million for infrastructure enhancements. Then those are both CDBG needs, as well as \$125 million for the Corps to complete the Comite River Diversion Project. Then finally, \$86 million in social services block grant funding. And even if we were to receive that full allocation of \$400 million, which is not likely because that's shared amongst states. We know that does not satisfy our full recovery needs, because of those outstanding needs. And if you'll look at tab seven in your binders, staff has prepared for you various scenarios walking you through if we are able to receive some of these dollars from that \$400 million allocation. What that will look like in terms of homeowner assistance, assistance for renters, and so forth. So please take a minute to look through that tab as well. Now the allocation of funding to complete the Comite River Diversion Project, that's still remains a top priority of this administration. As you know, the Governor has traveled to Washington DC, I believe, on nine occasions. And on each of these occasions he's urged Congress and both the presidential administrations to authorize the 125 million for the Comite Diversion Project. Now members of the Capitol delegation as recent of the last couple weeks, they submitted a letter to the governor's office. Strongly urging us to consider allocating 190 million of the 252 million for the Louisiana Hazard Mitigation Program to allocate a portion of those dollars for the Comite River Diversion Project. Now as soon as we received that letter, we then submitted a letter to FEMA asking if those dollars will be eligible for use for that particular project. And if you'll look at tab three in your binders, you'll see a letter from FEMA directing us as relates to those dollars. And what FEMA has indicated in that May 3rd letter, is that Hazard Mitigation Grant Program dollars may not be used for this project because it is a core authorized project. That letter further states that Hazard Mitigation dollars cannot be used as a substitute or replacement to fund projects or programs that are already available under other federal authorities. But there is an exception to that and that's under limited circumstances in which there are extraordinary threats of life, public health, safety, or improved property. And what FEMA found is that this specific project did not fall within that limited exception. So I did want to make note of that, did not, it did not fall within that limited exception. So, right now as it stands based on FEMA's guidance, we cannot use Hazard Mitigation dollars for the completion of the Comite project. Because it continues to be a core authorized project and that's the direction that we've received from FEMA. Now the administration has also, we've been asked to consider using the state's allocation of CDBG funds to support the completion of the Comite Project. And I want to go back to statements we talked about earlier in terms of CDBG. We know, again, that we don't have enough CDBG dollars to address our current needs as it relates to homeowners and renters and business owners. So keep that in mind as we have continued conversation and dialogue around CDBG, Hazard Mitigation and what we can do for the Comite River Diversion Project. Now we'll continue to urge Congress for those Comite dollars, those are outside that CDBG request. And that dollar amount, again, is 125 million, we'll continue

to ask Congress for as it relates specifically to Comite. And finally, just a couple quick updates regarding the National Flood Insurance Program. You should have a letter in your packet regarding the NFIP. And they have granted a fourth extension for policyholders to submit a proof of loss claim. And so this extension has been granted through Friday, September 1st, 2017. So again, for those homeowners who have not submitted that claim, they do have an extended deadline to complete that claim. And then finally, I believe in tab five, you have some information regarding a bill that's sponsored by Senator Cassidy. And he's joined with Senator Kirsten Gillibrand from New York, and this also relates to the Flood Insurance Program. And as you know, this program is set to expire September 30th of this year. And so this bill extends the program for another ten years, and also makes strategic adjustments or reforms within the program. And so at your leisure, take a look at that bill, it's lengthy. But it takes the necessary step to reform the program, to address not only our state's needs, but other states' needs. And so again, just wanted to give you a brief update in terms of where things stand for our office. I know Comite has been a big topic of discussion as of recent, but again, we continue to ensure that that's a top priority for us. We ask you engage it as a top priority as well. And we did have a great dialogue with the Capitol delegation this week. We were joined by Congressman Garrett Graves who's leading on the effort in Congress as well. But we would hope that you would continue to join us in asking the federal government to fund the core to then fund the completion of that project. I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Ms. Wyatt opened the floor for questions.

Representative Shadoin: Thank you ma'am. Thank you Madam Chair, thank you for the update. Couple of questions, in terms of being not only north of I-10. And I know that it's hard to believe that this is still part of Louisiana, but I'm north of I-20. I realize I'm closer to Little Rock, the capital of Arkansas, than I am to Baton Rouge on the commute down here. We have heard a lot about the Comite River Project, but what makes this a priority over the Red River, or the Ouachita River, or Dorcheat, or D'Arbonne, or Corney Creek in north Louisiana? Why are we hearing so much about Comite, and not the rest of the state that's flooded?

Ms. Wesley: That's a good question, I mean, we certainly are concerned about other flood protection projects. I would say the concern about this project has been the timing of it. So given that this was authorized more than 20 years ago, it's been a lingering project out there. And so I think that's why there's a heightened presence over this project versus some of the other projects. But we do know with working with FEMA and working with our stakeholders, that there are other critical drainage projects and flood protection projects across the state that we need to invest in. So, by no means are we saying this is the end all, be all, but this is a priority among other key priorities across the state.

Representative Shadoin: And I do remember Representative Hodges informing the House that this has been on the drawing board, I want to say almost 30 years. It was a long time I do remember that. Is that right Representative Hodges? Oh there you are.

Representative Hodges (from the audience): It has been 30 years.

Ms. Wesley: That's correct and it is partially completed.

Representative Shadoin: Okay, and I also heard that she had a parish that had indicated that they could chip in several tens of millions of dollars. Does that factor into any of the money that we're talking about between here and Uncle Sam in DC.

Ms. Wesley: Well, in our meeting with Representative Hodges and other members of the delegation this week and talking through potential, I guess pots, to add to what we need for the Comite, it was our understanding from those conversations that the parish would wanted to chip in CDBG dollars, and as you know, these are dollars that don't go directly towards the parish, they are to support homeowner assistance and other needs, and so these weren't necessarily a pot of dollars that could go toward this particular program.

Representative Shadoin: Okay, one other question. As we're making the tour around the state on the outreach events, was there any though as to having a contact somewhere in the northeast part of the state, Monroe, Rustin?

Ms. Wesley: We'll add that.

Representative Shadoin: Because Shreveport is in North Louisiana, but for the people who live around East Carroll, West Carroll, Union Parish, that's a long way to go.

Ms. Wesley: That is.

Representative Shadoin: Okay, well I would appreciate it if you all would add that to help those folks up in that area.

Mr. Forbes: There is going to be a housing assistance center in Monroe.

Ms. Wesley: There will be a housing assistance center in Monroe.

Representative Shadoin: Very good.

Ms. Wesley: So, we have the first center opening up in Baton Rouge, but there will be more centers across the state.

Commissioner Strain: Good morning. Ms. Monroe, how are you this morning?

Ms. Wesley: Good, how are you?

Commissioner Strain: First of all, thank you for all of your work. When we're looking at, such as the Comite and the issues with the Red and the other waters, maybe it's time and the document may already exist if we put all these together in a white paper and try to, let's see these are the most urgent priorities. An estimation of what that's going to cost. And then we can start thinking about how we're going to get this done. And if you look at the Comite Diversion, what's been done so far as my understanding that worked from local taxes. I think sponsored the majority of that and then if we can see in each of those entities, we can find local dollars. Then at the end of the day, if the federal government go as far as we can, then it's up to us. And we have done other things creatively in the past, where, and I'll give you a for instance. Where we made major investments in Avondale at one time. And we put it into a capital outlay over a period of 25 years. And so, but when you look at how we can do these things. I think we need to outline them, start talking about them. And then really, just like any other major project that we don't know what we're going to do, start down that path. And so I think what I'm hearing from the task force now is the time to do that, because the cost of doing these projects in the long run is far less than a cost of not doing these projects and so we know that.

Mr. Forbes: I would like to say we almost had a presentation today from the Infrastructure Recovery Support Function within the National Disaster Recovery Framework. And they are working on a paper that is due this month that looks at all 27 flooded watersheds in the state. It's an assessment of each one. It's not a deep down modeling yet, but it is a starting point for all of us. And as soon as that's done, we will be bringing that to you to look at. And to talk about the process going forward. How do we more deeply evaluate each of those watersheds? And start to look at what are the smartest projects, and approaches in each one.

Dr. Wilson: Thank you Madam Chair. What I was going to offer to Commissioner Strain and Pat and Erin to say is, I know we've been discussing this very issue. And I think we are still debating a potential executive order to address how we work with this with CPRA, Pat's office, and DOTD. And we've actually already begin the process to do the Amite Basin to provide the data that's necessary. One of the challenges that we're going to have is these watersheds typically cross jurisdictions. And we want to support entities that are working across those boundaries. In the Acadiana region, they've already begun doing that. And so we're going to be looking at 24 of those due to these already in the process of supporting that effort. To provide the data and information so that better decisions can be made like what you have talked about. And then the other thing I was going to contribute is only one segment of the Comite has been built a little bayou. Which is important because it's not going to function or do anything until we complete the entire project. Which is why that one has some priority, and we've had money in HB2 for the state's match. And we are prepared to move forward dependent upon the feds giving us the dollars we need to deliver that project.

Mayor Tyler: Thank you, good morning. I just want to make sure that we add the Red River to that list of priority projects. We were having some major issues with flooding because of the Red River and what needs to happen there. So, thank you so much for all the work that you are doing.

Ms. Wyatt: I'm sorry, Commissioner Strain, are you not done?

Commissioner Strain: No ma'am. When we're doing these environmental assessments of all these different homes. What happens when we find asbestos, lead, lead pipes, when if that happens is there? Because that can become all of a sudden very extensive or improper chemicals. Is there a process, is there, are their dollars to deal with that if we find that in a neighborhood or a home as we're moving forward so we don't just stop rebuilding?

Mr. Forbes: Remediation is an additional eligible activity in the grant. If we find that we've got remediate asbestos or lead paint, we will pay for that over and above.

Commissioner Strain: Over and above?

Mr. Forbes: Yes, sir.

Commissioner Strain: Okay, thank you. Now I'm done.

Representative Pope: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I just don't want any of that conversation to go away. I think when we go to public comments, we're going to have some people that we want to have come to the table and speak on this. I think it is probably one of the more important things for the parish, and Representative Hodges is still in the back, and I and others represent. I think it's a very, very important project but we will have further conversation.

Ms. Wesley: Absolutely.

Representative Pope: And further potential discussions from Mr. Forbes, he and I have had a conversation about it this morning. And so we'll have further discussion on this so I don't want people in the audience to think it's going away because we'll have further discussion on this at a later time in this program.

Ms. Wesley: Not at all.

Mr. Knapp: Thank you. I just want to commend you all for bringing the conversation further about the Comite projects. I know that there has been a lot of conversation in the community about the importance of this in order to feel like the homeowner program is an opportunity. And you all touched on that. I think confidence that the project can get secured funding can potentially be separated from the path forward for when construction starts. But to know it's a funded project, the dollars get committed. While people work out all the different pieces. If I understood from a conversation earlier this week, there's across the HMGP sources \$280 million, potentially another \$100 to \$200 million maybe, who knows, in the other CDBG allocations. Somewhere in there, there is a path forward to finding a way to commit dollars. And I hope that the FEMA no is treated as one of those no's that is an opportunity for negotiation rather than a final answer in the May 3rd letter. It seems there are many different possibilities for how one might be able to skin the cat on this. And the ability to make some sort of financial commitment to the project is clearly a trigger for the homeowner program, the confidence for the homeowner program for those that are in that impacted area. And so just a point on that, the other I know we're going to talk a little bit further in the program about the small business program. It is hugely important for more in the community to hear about when that's going to happen. I think we're probably relying on the winners of the small business program to be the primary communicators of how businesses access it. But so far there's really very little information that's getting out to associations or groups or business groups in the communities about how to take advantage of that program or who the winners are. So some more communication is going to be helpful to get out in the community on this.

Ms. Wyatt: I just have one small question. The homeowners with the initial survey, the round tables that you are doing, I was curious as to how you prioritize those, because I know Livingston Parish was probably hit the hardest, and then East Baton Rouge Parish. I was just wondering how much information you would get if you had Livingston Parish first or Gonzales I guess I'll put first, and I don't know how you prioritize those, and I've been ill and not been here so I may have missed something.

Mr. Forbes: The first two phases are irrespective of geography. They are low to moderate income and either elderly or have a person with disabilities living in the household. Third and fourth phases are in the ten most impacted and distressed parishes.

Ms. Wyatt: Okay, thank you for that.

Ms. Wyatt closed the floor for questions.

VI. LOUISIANA OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

~ Patrick Forbes, Executive Director

~ LaSonta Davenport – Small Business Program

~ Robert Bizot and Nicole Sweazy – Rental Programs

~ Madhu Beriwal and Jon Mabry – Homeowner Assistance Program

Ms. Wyatt: We are going to move on to Pat, he's got quite a bit here. We're going to do the small business program. Pat is the Executive Director of the Louisiana Office of Community Development, we all know him well, and I think you are going to speak to the small business program update first.

Mr. Forbes: Great, thank you, and I'm joined by LaSonta Davenport, who is the manager of our economic development programs.

Ms. Wyatt: You have Madhu with you as well?

Mr. Forbes: She is going to come up in a second. Okay, thank you for having me here today. I will lead you through the presentation we have for today.

Mr. Forbes began his PowerPoint presentation. The PowerPoint can be found on restore.la.gov website.

Ms. Wyatt allowed questions during the presentation therefore the floor was never officially opened.

Mr. Olivier: Is it the same that South Central is doing as well with Regional Loan Corp.? Well, what was the reason for that?

Ms. Davenport: That is where most of the impact lies. So, we figured that multiple coverage is needed in those areas. So, we have the three entities providing the crossover coverage to address what we believe will be more of a significant number in those areas.

Mr. Forbes: And also while there will certainly be outreach to companies and businesses that may not be familiar with each of these entities. Each one of these entities has a network of people they know too. So when we overlap, certainly, we're going to be able to reach more businesses in those areas.

Mr. Olivier: Are you expecting them to work with economic development and chamber groups in the areas?

Ms. Davenport: We will on Monday.

Mr. Forbes: It's just part of the training.

Ms. Wyatt: You know Pat, August is probably in a lot of people's minds for a lot of different things, and I'm noticing all of these timelines you've come very close, either May or July. You really don't have a lot of wiggle room to get into August, because I think the pain that our folks are feeling. August is going to be the time. They're really going to feel it, so it's not for the fainthearted, and you're going to have to work really hard. But just to ensure that they continue to get some reassurance for all the good work that you put in place.

Mr. Forbes: Thank you. That's our intention and our hope is that we get those programs out there and we are able to continue to show progress which will continue to give people hope and a vision for where we are headed.

Mr. Knapp: Across these three programs small business and the two landlord programs or rental programs, they have deadlines for application intake that seem a little sooner than I would have expected. Is there a reason why those couldn't be open or rolling application cycles, I was thinking back across small business again? But it seems like the same logic might apply that there's benefit to having folks that are finding out about them and after they see some progress they want to come back and apply or seek an opportunity to apply. Is there a reason why to cut it off?

Mr. Forbes: I'll speak to the small business one first. It's really just to get that gauge of level of interest, it's not going to be a hard deadline, the other thing is that in the Small Business Program, that's revolving loan program. So as soon as people start paying the loans back they will be lending that money to others. If they're undersubscribed certainly it's not like we're going to say no, you didn't make the deadline. But if they're oversubscribed we'll have to look at how we handle that and whether it means we need more money in that program or need to adjust the program. It's really just a way for us to set a milestone and assess where we are. And I can't speak to the-

Mr. Bizot: I totally agree with Pat, I mean we're trying to set that date to engage subscription in the program. It's a deadline date, but not to say that a person cannot still just apply on our website. Because we're still keeping that data and I think that's going to be the evidence for us to be able to figure out after that date of where we need to move there. Whether it's to move money to the Multi Family Restoration, because there wasn't a need there in the Neighborhood Landlord, or we need to really push it back and allow those subsequent applications to be allowed in the program.

Representative James: With the Permanent Supportive Housing, the New Orleans location, I'm concerned about my folks here.

Ms. Sweazy: So, we currently operate the Permanent Supportive Housing program through the Gulf Opportunities Zone, with our project based vouchers and through Central and Northern Louisiana with our 811 Project Rental Assistance Funding. So, where their main office might be in New Orleans, they also have an office here in Baton Rouge, but then we have tenant service managers throughout all of the state, that work to connect people to services. Then, all of the organizations that provide the wraparound supportive services, they are throughout the entire state. So, if I am the person that is in need of permanent supportive housing, what I care about is my service provider that comes to my home, and visits with me and helps to make sure that I maintain my rental unit.

Representative James: Where is the office in Baton Rouge?

Ms. Sweazy: At the Louisiana Department of Health.

Representative James: Earlier this week I was at the gym, and I kept seeing this lady like multiple mornings, maybe four mornings and her truck was just full of stuff. And at first, I was just thinking she just was a pack rat. But, something drove me to speak to her the other day, and she's a flood survivor and she's been living in her truck, and she sleeps outside of the Planet Fitness, and goes in the morning, take a shower to get ready to go to work. So I definitely need to point her into the right direction. She's been speaking to my legislative aide.

Ms. Sweazy: Yeah, I will be happy to get with you to figure out how we can get connected with her.

Representative James: Good. Okay, thank you.

Commissioner Strain: When we're looking at our community outreach, one of the most effective ways to reach people you can't reach in the other ways is through the churches. And so when you look at church bulletins, or many pastors and priests, they will discuss it either before or after the services, but that's a tremendous way to get some information, especially to those that don't have access to anything else, your more vulnerable citizens.

Mr. Forbes: Thank you, we talked about that yesterday. That's really probably the tightest network out there for us to tap to get this word out and we're going to look at how to do that. Thank you.

Representative James: Thank you, John, for the information. Of the 52 in the pilot program, where are they from?

Mr. Mabry: That's a good question. I wish I had the numbers here with me. The majority, when I say the majority, 50% or more in East Baton Rouge Parish. There's Livingston, East Baton Rouge Parish and some in Washington, Ascension and Tangipahoa.

Representative James: Of the 50 in EBR, you have any idea of the location? Of course I'm trying to figure out how many of my constituents-

Mr. Mabry: I'll give you some specific numbers. 40 in East Baton Rouge parish, 11 in Livingston, 5 in Tangipahoa, one in Lafayette and one in Washington. And this was just a random sample that we pulled.

Mr. Forbes: And to be clear, this is just a pilot that may be two weeks ahead of the entire phase one. So it's really, I mean in terms of numbers, it's not substantial. It's more about our being able to learn, teach our system, the steps, and all the policies and procedures in there, but-

Representative James: When I think about the outreach and the media piece, of course all of us will be amendable to help, but those are the ones that I think need to be out in front. The folks that I represent, I see Senator Barrow here, we represent the same area, we hear a lot of concerns of apathy, a lot of worry out there, so I think that those success stories coming from flood survivors will be better than those, than the members of the task force stepping up because a flood survivor speaking to another flood survivor would go a longer way than me telling folks to trust the program, and do all those things. So, of the pilot program, if the guys are amendable, I would hope that they would be included in some type of PSA.

Mr. Forbes: Absolutely. We are looking at ways to get the news out there and see them so that people can get that hope and understand that the program is running now and that encourages them to get in and fill out the survey and line up.

Representative James: Thank you.

Mr. Mabry: And with the pilot program, one of the purposes is to test these internal controls that we've designed to make sure they are working effectively, so we don't have any errors through the process.

Mr. Durbin: I know when your company made your presentation you weren't fully staffed at that point in time. Can you give us all, this task force, an update on how your staffing is growing to cover Louisiana?

Mr. Mabry: Yes, Sir. What we've done is, obviously I don't want to put staff on the ground that aren't needed until the centers are fully functional, but think about the environmental reviews. We've parachuted in people to cover over 2,000 environmental reviews within a week of being here. So, from that standpoint, good. Turning up the centers, we are going to phase in people. We'll start with our call center on Monday. All call center staff were being trained today, and will be rolled into the call center on Monday. Case workers are the same way for those two facilities. And I'm actually working out of a temporary facility now, handling the pilot with some of our case workers, and our call center people were there getting a hands-on experience. So we're in pretty good shape from that standpoint with the staffing.

Ms. Madhu: And Mayor Durbin, I just wanted to add that we have 28 Louisiana companies on our team. So they have a lot of staff available, we've allocated the positions to the various team members. And they know when they start, so they know when their people come back on board and be provided all the training for the staff.

Mr. Durbin: Final question, this is to you, Pat, what's your plans of having periodic updates from IEM representatives at each task force meeting?

Mr. Forbes: Whatever your wishes are as a task force, certainly. We are glad to have them here. We will absolutely be reporting on updates and milestones in all the programs at every meeting from now on. But to the extent that you request that we have IEM folks here, we can certainly do that.

Mr. Durbin: Well, I'm not interested in every meeting but I think every month we should have an update. Once a month.

Mr. Forbes: Yes, sir.

Representative Shadoin: Want to go back to the environmental reviews. Mr. Mabry, you have indicated about parachuting people in to do all these? The question that's posed to me, the flooding in North Louisiana happened in March of 16. Then we have another one in 1,000 year flood in August of 2016. Well here it is, May of 2017. What is the delay, even though you said we got ahead of this, to many people out there who've been displaced are anything but ahead of this, because of the distant lapse of time. What causes us to wait for something that we know we have to do? And that we can't do this sooner, such as the environmental phase one, whatever you called it?

Mr. Forbes: Let me speak to that a little bit. The thing that kept us from having them be able to complete 2,000 environmentals in a week is not having a contract with them until a few weeks ago.

Representative Shadoin: Does that have to do with the money not coming in?

Mr. Forbes: We timed the contract, I guess yeah, with the funding coming in which we got on April 10th. But we went out with our own contractor with limited resources and did the pilot folks.

Representative Shadoin: The 58 or so that we're talking about?

Mr. Forbes: Yes, before the program contractor was on board, but once the program contractor got on board that was the first trigger they pulled was to call their environmental subs and start these reviews.

Representative Shadoin: All right, and in the reviews, what are we doing? I mean, the environmental reviews, what do you do? Do you go out to each site and say, okay?

Mr. Mabry: There's a 12-step checklist, like archeological, historical, above ground storage tanks, I mean propane tanks, we all love down here in the South, we've got propane tanks, okay. Looks at blast resistance, lead, flood zone, in or out of the flood zone. Those were-

Representative Shadoin: We were all a flood zone last year.

Mr. Mabry: Yes, sir. This is something that I've personally fought against early on. Back to Katrina days, Jeff Haley and myself, we fought it, we could not get any relief out of it, but it's something that has to be done.

Representative Shadoin: And I assume these environmental regulations are from the EPA?

Mr. Forbes: It's actually HUD's. Every federal agency has some way that they comply with the EPA's NEPA, and this is how HUD complies with NEPA.

Mr. Mabry: And HUD layer's additional with NEPA and then HUD requirements.

Representative Shadoin: I hear what you are saying, but when you are trying to explain to people that have no place to live, they view these regulations as more strangulations, preventing some assistance to come in. And I understand the hoops you've had to jump through, and I appreciate that.

Mr. Forbes: The Governor has been working diligently with congressional delegation, and the White House on trying to get relief from these, as you know. We've seen this many times and with no success so far. It looks like the only way to really get these out of the way is through legislative language in the appropriation. And so that's what we're hoping for with the next appropriation.

Representative Shadoin: You're talking about the next congressional appropriation?

Mr. Forbes: Correct, not the one that just passed for the \$400 million, it did not include the language that relieves us from this.

Representative Shadoin: Yeah but that \$400 million is still spread among about four states, correct?

Mr. Forbes: Absolutely, that's right. Four or plus because we don't know what other disasters may occur between now and the end of the calendar year.

Representative Shadoin: And then from the analysis that we've gotten from our folks here in the state, we're still about \$1.6 to \$1.7 billion shy of meeting just the basic needs, correct?

Mr. Forbes: Not knowing what this allocation will be for us, we are \$2 billion short.

Representative Shadoin: Well, I do know Governor Edwards has been up there multiple times seeking to increase that, but I don't know where we stand with Congress. But, thank you, madam chair.

Representative Pope: I'd like to follow up on Mayor Durbin's staffing, if you would, and I think you had indicated that you had what, 28, subcontractors? Could you tell me where these people are coming from, or where they are housed, or where they are located? Offices, etc.?

Ms. Madhu: So they are in 67 different locations in the state, Representative Pope, but I can tell you that some of the key ones that we have in North Louisiana. We have Denman Engineering. Ratcliff Construction over from Alexandria. Postlethwaite & Netterville, which is a key accounting company here in Louisiana in Baton Rouge. Emergent Method, which is from Baton Rouge area. BBB Creative from Lafayette. So, our team is as diverse as the areas, they pretty much represent the 51 parishes. Having started this company myself in 1985 in Baton Rouge, I'm very familiar with the talent pool that we have in Louisiana in disaster recovery. For this contract, for many months before the RFP came out, we started to look around and say, we want a great performance in every lane. We have Providence Engineering doing some of the damage assessment work, they are here in Baton Rouge also. But we also looked for representation from every community that was affected, if there was a company there with disaster recovery expertise, we brought them on board on our team.

Representative Pope: It had to do with the staffing, I think you had mentioned that you were trying to do that, and you had indicated there was 28 subcontractors, and you feel adequate staffing could be coming from those people. I think that was my understanding, is that correct?

Ms. Madhu: Yes, absolutely, and there are 28 Louisiana companies. In addition, we have some national providers who excel in this field, and so we brought a few of the national providers on our team. Like Crawford, who is also going to be doing some of the damage assessments. We've got Environ, who is doing some of the environmental assessments. Tetra Tech. So we have some national companies involved, and then we have 28 Louisiana-based companies. And of those 28 companies, they had 700 employees affected by either of the two floods. So they are very well cognizant of the pain and

suffering that people are going through. We also have a network of non-profits that are on our team. And again, we went to at least the ten most impacted parishes to make sure that we pulled in the non-profits from those areas.

Representative Pope: Those that are in the state, I hope they are not living out of their vehicles.

Ms. Madhu: Well, hopefully not. I mean, that is certainly something that we'd like to work hard to change, is to get people back in their homes.

Representative James: Okay, just real quickly, the appropriations process in Congress, we know it is not as organized as our process here. The continuing resolution, are you guys hearing anything about more money coming via continuing resolution?

Mr. Forbes: We actually have some slides on this coming up, but we do know of course the \$400 million that was passed in the continuing resolution to get through fiscal year 17. It's the \$400 million for four states plus any other disasters that happen by the end of the year. We don't know how much HUD will hold from that \$400 million for prospective disasters. Consequently, it's impossible for us to guess how much we might get out of that. We think we would get a very substantial portion out of whatever they allocate now because we understand-

Representative James: Out of the \$400 million?

Mr. Forbes: I'm going to just lay a scenario out. Let's say that they decide to keep \$100 million reserved for future disasters, then the four states would be splitting up the \$300 million. Now, just a made up scenario because I don't know what the numbers are. I think that we'd get a substantial portion of that just because I understand our unmet needs by their calculations compared to those other states.

Representative James: Yeah because I mean, even if we get a large portion, that's still a long way off.

Mr. Forbes: It's still a long way off, which is why we're committed, and the Governor has committed to continue going back and making sure that we keep asking until we get what we need.

Representative James: Yes, because I mean, I know it's difficult. We don't have any members on the House Appropriations Committee, but we do have one senator on Senate Appropriations. And I see him talking about a lot, I don't see him talking about this. I've seen him on a lot of news stations talking about immigration and other things, but I don't see him talking about this. And I know I'm going a bit far, but I get these calls, and a lot of my constituents don't recognize that the dollars aren't coming from this capital, but another capital far away from here. And while I see him fighting for some very important issues to him, I don't see him advocating for this issue. And he's on the Appropriations Committee, and I think it's important that folks know that and reach out to those congressional offices. And not continue to call myself, Rob, and Roger on some of these issues, because we don't control it. And I think everybody knows that there's not a lot of appropriations coming out of this building any time soon, so.

Mr. Forbes: I do know the Governor's continuing and committed to working with the entire delegation to get this done.

Representative James: I just want the delegation to commit to working with you.

Mr. Olivier: I'd like to ask a question after the task force members have exhausted their questions because it deals more with the process than with the IEM delivery.

Ms. Wyatt: Okay, anyone have any other questions? You are the only person lit up here.

Mr. Olivier: Thank you very much, Pat. Help the committee understand, since we were not involved in the process of selection, can you run us through, we have a protest that exists, I understand, and their reasons and some of the reasons to deal with the fact that they were, what, five and the selections that were made were based on a process. They were independents who were involved in the process. Are all the committees, or all the task force members, aware how the process worked and what went on? The answer is no, right?

Mr. Forbes: Certainly. So, in state procurement law, there is an RFP process and a solicitation for offers process. IEM ultimately was selected through a solicitation for offers process. They're largely identical except for a few of the time frames associated with how long the request is on the street and that kind of thing. In essence we put out to the world to all interested contractors, what we're looking for in a contractor. What the duties of this contract would be. And in fact, provide a sample contract as part of that request. We then give them a certain amount of time to develop proposals to submit relative to that request. They develop those, they submit them by a time certain, we evaluate them first to see if they are all responsive, if they've hit all the mandatory marks. And the first pass there were a couple that didn't. Those are set on the side. They're not even evaluated. The remaining ones that are determined to be responsive are. The proposals are provided to a panel that we select. A panel of professionals who we think have the diverse background to appropriately look at proposals and assess their relative values for our purposes. We had two different panels, as you all know, we had to go through this twice. The panel makes their review of the books, in this particular case they read all the proposals over a three day period.

Mr. Olivier: And these were independent panels?

Mr. Forbes: Absolutely, independent panelists.

Mr. Olivier: Multiple diverse areas?

Mr. Forbes: That's right. We had attorneys, construction people, an architect, and people from my department. We try to get people who are knowledgeable in the area, but not necessarily too familiar with any single entity that might be proposing. We do everything we can to try to eliminate any perception of favoritism or bias that somebody might have or a conflict of interest. Certainly there are conflicts of interest laws but in something this big we need to make sure there is absolutely no question about the fact that there's no conflicts. And so we take great pains to pick people for those panels who can be independent and not be perceived as having a bias. In this case I have to say all the firms have a lot of local contacts, and so everybody knows everybody on all the things, practically. So it's impossible to completely get a panel that doesn't know anybody on any of the firms. But at least we can get people who don't have close contacts with the firms.

Mr. Olivier: But one example was like the person from the LSU staff.

Mr. Forbes: We had LSU's chief architect, as one of the persons. We had the CPRA chief financial officer for instance. Had an attorney from our staff who has been working on the development of the program policies and procedures. We got a financial officer from our office. And then we had somebody from facilities planning and control, the state's building agency so that we get that additional construction background. So they heard oral presentations from each of the five responsive proposers. They reviewed the proposals again in the context of those presentations, and they scored the firms, and rank them on the technical merits. They were not exposed to the financial portion of the proposal. We had 30% of the points set aside for the cost portion. 70% for technical merit. As you might well imagine, we want to make sure that while cost is an important factor in what people submit to us. And we want them to pay attention to that. We also want to make sure that we get the best firm that is best able to deliver the programs for us. So we're weighted 70%, 30%, that's fairly normal. 75, 25 is a little bit more normal. But after the first round of proposals we wanted to up the percentage on cost a little bit, because we thought it was important to try to drive the cost down. So, once the panel scores on the technical merits, we then bring in the cost scores which they did not have available to them. And we combine the two and come up with a total score and that defines who the winner is.

Mr. Olivier: Did that panel then judge the cost factor after the technical?

Mr. Forbes: No they don't. The cost is a completely objective mathematical calculation. You could sit down, I could sit down. Representative could sit down with the formula and the proposals, and come up with exactly the same number. It's just a calculation based on hourly rates, and our weighting factors for those hourly rates. So it's completely objective. Which is why the panel doesn't, you don't want to have the appearance that maybe the panel pushed the scores one way, or another, after they knew the cost scoring. Which is why we keep the cost scoring separate from them until after they've scored their technical proposals just on technical merit. Then, we combine the two, come up with an overall score. IEM had the highest score. We subsequently got a protest from AECOM, who was the second place firm. That protest is ongoing. The process is, they provide protest questions. We are able to respond to those questions which we have done, the deadline was last Friday and we did that. They now have provided some responses to our responses and I'm not quite certain what the deadline is but the Office of State Procurement, I think, it's May the 24th. Has until May the 24th if I'm not mistaken. To respond to AECOM's protest. If AECOM doesn't like the Office of State Procurement's response to that, they then are at liberty to bring the protest up to the Commissioner of Administration. Which will go through the same process, the commissioner would look through their protests and our responses, make a decision. And at that point, if the protesting firm was not happy with the answer that they got from the commissioner of administration, their opportunity is to go to court. Through all this, of course, we're running the program. We have our contractor in place, and we will continue to proceed with the contractor.

Mr. Olivier: But you won't let this stop you, in other words?

Mr. Forbes: It will not stop us, sir. It won't slow us down, it is not impeding the process at all. It is a typical protest period. We generally get protests when we put RFPs out. I don't expect this to slow us down in the least.

Mr. Olivier: Hearing any fall out from Washington because they want us to fail so badly?

Mr. Forbes: No, I have not, we certainly get questions from HUD. They want to understand where we are in that process of going through the same description for them, of course. I don't hear any great concern from them. The proof the pudding will be in the eating, and that will be as we go through this process and see whether it goes to court and how that goes. In the meantime, we're running a homeowner program, and we're getting people back in their homes, and that's what's important to us. That's what we are focused on and it is what we will remain focused on, and we have attorneys for the other stuff.

Representative Shadoin: Madam Chair, I just want to know a little bit more. Ms. Madhu, I guess this might be you, I had the pleasure of meeting you a couple of weeks ago, I'm glad you all are here. Tell us a little bit about IEM, we weren't in on the selection process.

Ms. Madhu: Thank you, Representative.

Mr. Forbes: We can fix that for next time.

Representative Shadoin: I didn't mean to open that door. I'm not volunteering for any extra.

Ms. Wyatt: I don't think that was a request.

Commissioner Strain: Turn his button off.

Ms. Madhu: It's reading 2500 pages in the matter of three days, that's not going to be fun. Thank you, Representative, I started this company in 1985. I worked for the State of Louisiana as the State Floodplain Manager for a few years and I was involved in hurricane evacuation planning for the New Orleans and surrounding areas. I loved the feel of emergency management. I think being able to work on safety, security, resiliency for people, I just found my niche when I work on floods and hurricanes in Louisiana. And so, started this company in 1985 in Baton Rouge. We are the largest woman owned homeland security and disaster management company in the world at this point. We reached that milestone in 2012. We worked in every one of the 50 states. We worked overseas for the government of Turkey and our World Bank funding. We worked for the Gulf Cooperation Council which is Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other places looking for disaster management. We work in India on chemical safety preparedness. We work in Ukraine and Russia under the US Army on their chemical weapons program. And we have provided support for the Army and FEMA for chemical weapons security programs for the last 20 years. And we've also done all the biological defense modeling for Health and Human Services since 9/11 and the anthrax attacks. So we do a lot of work across the country. This work the housing program is a specialized area because not only do you need technical expertise, but I believe you need empathy working with people. And so we have, I brought in John Mayberry because he's the one who did the best job possible, except for Louisiana, in terms of housing recovery programs after Hurricane Katrina. He came in in Mississippi, and he was in charge of \$5.4 billion of recovery programs with CDBG dollars, housing programs. And he finished a program with one-tenth of 1% in error or fraud, which is a unbelievable record of performance. And I wanted him part of my team, so he came on board about three years ago. And we won the contract in New York State for Hurricane Sandy. We worked on the housing program there, and gave out \$902 million to home owners over two years. And we worked every single day in housing assistance centers there. Working with individual homeowners, working with elected representatives in New York. And the record I think speaks for itself in terms of what we've done there. But this is home, this is where I started the company. And when the flooding occurred in August, a number of my employees were flooded, or their parents were flooded, or their children were flooded. Some of them were part of the Cajun Navy that went out to rescue people. And so we knew that there would be a disaster program coming up and we pulled together the great performing companies within Louisiana to form the core, the backbone of the team. And we started to do solutioning to figure out how we make this program easier for the homeowners, because these are convoluted programs there, there's a lot of steps involved. How do we cut through as much as possible, because not only is that more empathetic to the homeowner, but it's cheaper. So, the first time around when we bid on this contract, and had referred to it, we were the best price of all of the contractors. And we came in first in the first round. When the state decided to have another SFO process, we then went back and sharpened our pencils and found another set of savings to reduce the cost further. And this time around we actually won by an even higher number of points in the second go around than the first go around. So, I think that our focus is really threefold, which is what we said in our proposal. First is speed, because we know that North Louisiana has been waiting for over a year now. And we are coming onto the anniversary of the August flood in South Louisiana. And 85% of the state's citizens were affected by these two floods. So, speed is really essential, is getting, driving the program as quickly as possible. Second is accuracy, because we cannot afford to have money clog back. So the money that's sent out and given to the homeowner's, we need to make sure it complies with all of the requirements. Onerous as they are, it's important that we comply with them so that we don't have money that has to come out of the state treasury. And on that front, I would mention that, right now, the city of New York, which has a housing program for Hurricane Sandy is \$600 million in the red. So that's money that's going to come out of the city coffers for a \$1.7 billion program. So there can be a real downside to not managing accuracy, it's very important. And the third one, not necessarily in that order of priority, is empathy because we need to work with the homeowners who've been waiting for a longtime. And so that we present to them not just here's the process, here's the paperwork. But that we have the time to engage with them, figure out what other needs they have. How can we connect them to other service providers for their other needs, while we take care of the housing portion of their need.

Representative Shadoin: Good. You mentioned the state treasury, so nothing would have to come out of the state treasury. We've already checked all of the cushions and the couches and the chairs around here, good luck on finding money there.

Ms. Wyatt: I just want to take a second before I recognize Mr. Dartez, I have had the opportunity to work with Madhu on many different commissions, many different boards, and although she is tiny, she is mighty, and she gets the job done with integrity, with compassion, with empathy, but also a very nice balance of strategy and tactics, and so we are in good hands with her.

Ms. Madhu: Thank you so much. I appreciate that.

Mr. Dartez: It gave me great comfort to know that you guys were selected. I don't know if you remember but I worked with you years ago after the Katrina-Rita issue, and it's good to see you back working with us. And also the partners you have brought in from a local government perspective. I know Mr. Gallagher, from LMA, can attest that we've worked for

years with folks like Providence, Denman Engineering, and currently posed to wait another bill, there's a lot of local government audits. So it's good to have local partners that know us from a state perspective. And I know Madam Chair said we would ask our last questions and I didn't want to let Director Forbes, I'm changing gears, the article that came out today in the Advocate about the SBA loans for the homeowners I think is a major chilling effect for this task force. Because, time after time after time when we do our public comments we hear from our citizens who have great concern. In an attempt to get back in their homes, and get going again in life. They said yes to these SBA loans. And I know you guys have worked diligently to go back. As you said, the history of that program was CDBG loans were able to be used in the past to forgive those loans. So I know that the article said there was a letter that came to the governor late yesterday afternoon. And I know that was late to you guys to digest it and put it in our pockets but we'd love to get a copy of that letter. Because from the folks that I hear from back home. I mean, before I even read the article I got one phone call, two texts, and an email. Just friends back home who were devastated. I'm from Acadia Parish, who were devastated by the floods, and it's just a chilling effect for those folks to hear that.

Mr. Forbes: It is, couldn't agree more and I can assure you we will do everything that we can to work with folks on their unmet need gap over and above those duplications to still try to get assistance to them, but it is a tough thing to take.

Mr. Dartez: I told them not to give up hope because I know we're looking at our third funding mechanism. The 4th of May and you laid out the scenario that that's now all coming here, but the reality is, we're still \$2 billion short. I told the folks that contacted me, and as a state we're not going to give up trying to find those unmet needs for our folks. I appreciate you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Reilly: Pat, I want to make sure I understand the \$400 million and how it flows and the formula for how much we get. I think what I heard you say is we've got to split it with four states and we don't know that allocation yet. At least four. But that we also may have to share it with other jurisdictions, and other state that has a disaster between now and the end of the year as in December.

Mr. Forbes: In fact, the language says by the end of the year, or after, which I have no idea what that means.

Mr. Reilly: Well then, how can they allocate us any if the pot is \$400 million and they are waiting to find out if somebody else gets hurt?

Mr. Forbes: They did a similar thing after Sandy, and they took the majority of the appropriated funds allocated those to all the disasters that had occurred already based on damages. But they set some money aside for disasters that occurred afterwards. Then they had a second allocation, if you will, later. It was about a year later where they distributed the rest of the funds to those entities that had disasters and also some of that went to other programs and back to some of entities that had gotten money from the first allocation. So if no disasters occurred before the end of the year, which is doubtful, they'd just allocate according to those same allocation calculations to those four states, would be my assumption. Although, they're at liberty to other things, the National Disaster Resilience Competition where we won \$92 million was a way that they used some of the money that they set aside.

Mr. Reilly: And that's as clear as the wonderful river that's running. All right, so hypothetically, if we get some money, I'll just chime in my thoughts on where it ought to go. I think bang for the buck, getting neighborhoods back, getting communities back, the homeowner program is the best bang for the buck. So it would be my recommendation that whatever HUD will let us do in that regard, we should do it. Reflecting on programs that we'd put together after Katrina, a lot of our rental programs were relatively low subscribed and, quite frankly, ran into places that I don't know that we were all that happy with. So again, to the extent we can allocate as much as possible to the Homeowner Program, that is where my recommendation would be. After we figure out how much money we're going to get.

Representative Pope: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. And I will touch only, and I might be in somewhat disagreement with my neighbor here. And I'll say that because I think that there's a large population out there that's not going to fall in the low to moderate income that are still stressed and still need help. I understand it's coming from the Feds. I'm not making allegations or accusations here, I'm just making a statement. Because of the federal guidelines that we have to operate under, there's a large portion of population that's not going to be serviced for the homeowners. I do agree that homeowners are very, very important. They probably should be our first priority. I have no issues with that. But also, know that representing an area that I represent, for the vast majority, are going to be left out of any assistance from the homeowner's program the way that it's set up. The only other alternative that I can see is maybe looking at some infrastructure, and that would maybe be the Comite Diversion that we have on your list, somewhat down the list. I don't know how that's going to come about, I understand that we can't use the CDBG funds for it according to what I heard, again, this morning. I don't think you indicated that we've got correspondents that we can't use the hazards and mitigation funds. So therefore, unless there is a subsequent appropriation in addition to this potential portion of \$400 million, there's nothing to go to that program, or any other that my good friend Rob has pointed out, Red River, etc. Am I off base here?

Mr. Forbes: I just want to be a little bit clearer on the CDBG side. We have funded projects with community development block grant funds that reduce risk. We're asking for \$600 million to do projects that do that. I don't want to leave the impression that it's not an eligible activity for those funds. So much as that, with the shortage of funding that we have and the unmet needs analysis that we have done and provided to HUD. In my mind, it would be highly unlikely that HUD would approve an allocation of that large a portion of the funds to an infrastructure project. When we still got that big a gap in unmet needs in homeowner and rental housing programs. I would also tend to agree with that from a policy perspective, but you all are the task force. And we can certainly submit that to HUD, my estimation of the likelihood of success to that would be pretty low.

Representative Pope: But this task force could come up with a separate program to submit. It doesn't have to be piggybacked on the one that we're operating under now, is that correct?

Mr. Forbes: Yes. If it were about the new funds and didn't impact any current programs, it would be a new program, in essence, yes, sir.

Representative Pope: Because like Sean said, it may not even be enough to even-

Mr. Forbes: So the process is when this next round of funding comes to us, we'll write an action plan amendment that describes how we want to spend the money, and we'll submit that to HUD for review just like we've done in the past.

Representative Pope: The action plan could be rewritten, or would be rewritten, and come back to this task force and you could include the Comite.

Mr. Forbes: It certainly could.

Representative Pope: Okay. Madam Chairperson, before we get off of this, and I would think somewhere along with public comment, I do have our Homeland Security here, Mr. Mark Harrell, who wants to make some comments on this particular topic, as well as some other topics, so I don't want to forget that.

Ms. Wyatt closed the floor for questions.

VII. NATIONAL DISASTER RECOVERY FRAMEWORK PRESENTATION

~ Community Planning & Capacity Building RSF & Housing RSF

~ Sandra Gunner, Outreach Manager, LA Office of Community Development

~ Earl Randall, New Orleans Field Office Director, US Department of HUD

Ms. Wyatt: We are going to move on to the national disaster recovery framework presentation, Community Planning & Capacity Building Recovery Support Function and Housing Recovery Support Function. We've got Sandra Gunner, Outreach Manager for the LA Office of Community Development, and Earl Randall, New Orleans Field Office Director for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Ms. Gunner: Thank you. I'm Sandra Gunner with the Office of Community Development. I have the pleasure of co-facilitating the RSF1 on planning and capacity building, along with LED, which is represented by Skip Smart and Pat Witty. Our federal co-lead with this committee is FEMA under the leadership of Sandra Bowling and Wayne Rickard, and a very strong support from GOHSEP as well as the strong support that we have had from our subgroup from the task force. All told, we have 66 people, or entities, that are involved with RSF1. We meet bi-weekly since January. Before that period, we were meeting weekly, in order to make sure that we were planning and constructively looking at our priorities, in order to assist with the recovery efforts.

Ms. Wyatt: Let me just interrupt you for one second. For the task force members, this is under tab nine.

Ms. Gunner: Thank you.

Ms. Gunner began her PowerPoint presentation. The PowerPoint can be found on restore.la.gov website.

Ms. Wyatt opened the floor for questions.

Ms. Wyatt: Well, first I would say thank you for your hard work, but being a businesswoman, I have to ask you this question. Every little bit counts. How do you know you're successful at the end of the day? Because you are touching niches, you're listening a lot, but it's really about once you're listening, then what are you doing?

Mr. Randall: Right, to answer that question I think, how you know you're successful in long-term recovery, and I'll date back to Katrina, when you know that failure isn't an option, you work towards success in anything that you do. You simplify things to certain terms and I mentioned that we were in a deficit prior to the disasters, and that difference, it was exacerbated after the disasters. That's why you simplify it to every unit counts, so when we bring a unit back online, that's success.

Ms. Wyatt: Okay, and then the other thing I guess I would say, and not to hold us all up because I pride myself on getting us out of here at 12 o'clock, this is very good work that you're doing. How are you telling your story? How are you getting to those that don't even know about this?

Mr. Randall: One of the things that we try to pride ourselves in doing is we work across the RSFs and we need to have people documenting what we are doing. I mentioned that a lot of the stuff that we are doing is being replicated around the country. So as we embark on maybe an initiative, we're documenting it. We're putting it in max.gov, and we're sharing it amongst our federal partners and our state partners. And we work closely in conjunction with our state partners. I thank you guys for the task force's participation in our RSF. We get active participation weekly from our task force members with the RSF, and we try and share as much knowledge and as much information as we can.

Ms. Gunner: This will lead us to develop recovery strategies for each of the RSFs. We got into that recovery mode right away, but ultimately our task is to have a plan in place for the next incident. So all of this is lessons learned. We are keeping track of all of this activity that's going on, and we will use that to develop the strategy. But one of the other things is the partnership and I think when you said, how are you telling your story? How are we getting the information out? The Louisiana Municipal Association and the Louisiana Police Jury Association have been outstanding communication partners in making sure that both information gets out, the invites to all our different activities. And that has paid off very well in terms of getting that diversified participation that we need.

Ms. Wyatt: Right now, I'd just encourage you to look at other opportunities. Louisiana is the best kept secret when things are going well. And like you're saying, people, they're whispering to you, what are you doing? I would really like for the country to know that we're doing something really good. And others are coming to us and then we would make those people that are whispering stand up and be loud and proud about utilizing something that's going well.

Mr. Randall: Definitely, thank you.

Ms. Wyatt closed the floor for questions.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Wyatt: All right, we are going to move to public comment. We have Mark Harrell from Livingston Parish, he is the homeland security person.

Mr. Harrell: Good Morning, Madam Co-Chair, and task force members. I'm excited, we did get in one minute before noon. And I apologize, I will keep it as short as I can. I am Mark Harrell, I'm the Director of Homeland Security for Livingston Parish. Just so you understand where I'm at on this, I have been in emergency management for approximately 17 years. I went from the local level and was blessed to go to GOHSEP for several years. And then I was asked to come to Livingston Parish, so I've been there for almost five years now and have enjoyed every minute of it. I do miss GOHSEP. I do miss the workings of the state office. But I'm hands on, and I serve approximately 100,000 people, 130,000. And we may be down to 128,000 now, 127, we're unsure where we are. But I'm blessed to be there. I thank you for just a few minutes, I know I'm not on the agenda. I'm coming to you to ask if I can be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. I would like to talk today just a little bit about the Comite River Diversion Canal Project. And the reason I'm doing that is soon after the water receded in Livingston Parish, my governor was talking, you can go back and look at clips all over the news about a plan, our funding to larger projects. We do the elevation and acquisition projects every year through Homeland Security, Casey Tingle. And when Pat said earlier, some of the parishes don't apply for the funds and don't use them, I promise you, you can talk to GOHSEP and Casey Tingle, and he'll tell you, we spend every penny we can get and, to the point where we're very aggressive and go after other parishes' funding when they can't spend it. And we need more than we could ever get this go around. And you said it earlier that Livingston Parish was the most heavily impacted parish. If you look at GOHSEP's information and FEMA's information, 94% of Livingston Parish flooded. Now I'm going to go out a little bit further and say that 73, I think it was, of Ascension Parish flooded. 27% of EBR flooded. It's devastating. I've been doing it, like I said, for almost 17 years. I've never let a disaster get to me like this one, it's devastating, I'm sorry.

Ms. Wyatt: It's alright, we understand.

Mr. Harrell: But we've got to reach out and do something larger. And the Comite River diversion will not help Livingston Parish as a whole. It will help the City of Denham Springs. If I can get 500 homes, 1,000 homes, or 3,000 homes from flooding, we've done something. Now I was asked up front if we would apply our hazard mitigation funding to this project, and I said absolutely not. And everybody thought that, he's nuts. Well, I knew up front you can't do it. And the letter from Tony in Denton, Texas proved that I was correct on that. I was asked to support \$190 million from the allocation that we have, HUD funding, for the Comite River Diversion. She's sitting next to me. I said absolutely not. We need the project, but absolutely not. This money must go to the homeowners. We've got to get them back in their homes. But there's been controversy back and forth. Do we ask for it at a later date? Do we put it in the action plan now? We can't put it in the action

plan until we get the funding. We have it to have it in the action plan before we get the funding. It's going back and forth. I want to see something in writing on what's the proper way of doing this. And I think all of you deserve that in writing. What do we need to do? I'm not saying use this fund, I'm not saying use a second funding. Let's get it in the action plan, because you may not be confident. I'm confident in my governor to go back to DC and get more funding. I'm confident in my congressman, my senators, to help him get that funding. I know it doesn't look like it. Representative James said he didn't see them working and pushing for that. I see that as well, but I think in the end, our elected officials will come together, and fight for us. So I would like some kind of clarification on whether we need to add it now, we need to add it later, how do we do this? That's the first thing I'm asking for and I'm going to move from that. As you know, every parish that was impacted is struggling. You graciously put, I think it was \$105 million to help our locals cover the cost share. And I know Pat is struggling to get everything up. It's a monumental task and I want to applaud him and everyone under his umbrella. Because this is a massive program that they're implementing. I'm glad to see they moved Mark Riley over to assist him. I'm glad to see that Pat Santos has come in to help move that program forward. But by the next task force meeting, could we have a plan in place to start giving the cost share funding to our local government? My school system is struggling. There's no one in the State of Louisiana that's had more devastation than the Livingston Parish school system. I'm out approximately \$2.5 million and that's just on my share of debris. And it's going to run into August the 13th. And it's not just me, it's EBR, it's Ascension, it's everyone. I'm asking for some type of action plan put in place for the locals to start getting their funding by the next task force meeting. And again, I'm going to stop my ranting and raving, and just ask you, could I present the facts as I see them on the Comite Diversion Canal Project at your next task force meeting?

Ms. Wyatt: I don't see why not, and I think, unfortunately, we don't have a quorum to vote on getting a plan together before that meeting, so when you come back, you'll have more information and we can talk further about it.

Mr. Harrell: Absolutely. Right, yeah, I just want to clarify, I'm asking for the action plan for the Comite River. Let's find out how we need to do it and put something in writing that says, at a future date when my Governor and my congressman and my senators fight for funding and it comes down, that it will work. Thank you so much. I'm sorry you stayed afternooon.

Ms. Wyatt: No worries, that's always been a goal of mine. You have something very important to say and we will always honor that.

Mr. Harrell: Okay, thank you.

Ms. Wyatt: Now we have Kenyatta Morris, Senator Regina Barrow's assistant. Does everyone have a copy of this? Okay, the Louisiana Senate Committee of Women and Children.

Ms. Morris: Thank you so much for having me and I'll be very brief. My name is Kenyatta Morris and I am here on behalf of Senator Regina Barrow. And I staff the Louisiana Senate Select Committee on Women and Children. Our committee was created to study and make recommendations to the legislature on issues regarding women and children, including but not limited to, advancing their lives, their well beings. Particularly as it relates to health, promoting equity, economic development, criminal justice. And we give these recommendations to the legislature. And so we wanted to make a brief presentation on a report that we did recently from our February meeting. The purpose of our February meeting was to receive testimony from State Departments on how the recent natural disasters, the great floods here in Baton Rouge and surrounding areas, affected the lives of women and children. So we received testimony from several state departments. The floods, of course, as you all know, affected 85% of Louisiana's population. And disproportionately women seem to have a different type of effect, be it affected in a different type of way as it relates to these floods. Of course, the reports will give you some more specific details about how natural disasters affect women. But some of the things that we heard from our state heads were how women are affected as relates to mental health. Women have an increased depression, anxiety, anger, sleep disturbance, alcohol abuse and increased domestic violence. Youth also are, of course, affected in substantial ways when we have natural disasters. And so we received some information from the Louisiana Department of Health on how we should deal with those things. There were seven disaster related homicides and suicides reported since the August flood. Louisiana of course ranks fourth in the nation of women murdered by men. And so what we learned is that the natural disaster seemed to add to this effects of domestic violence. Women, also, are at increased risk of contractor fraud, and women and elderly, of course. And so we wanted to see how we could, through legislation of the recommendations, try to mitigate that. The Attorney General's Office sent investigators to disaster recovery centers and areas. And they went actually door to door to see how neighbors were affected and also providing information on contractor fraud. Some of the family law issues that women deal with after a natural disaster are child custody. There are increased divorce filings. And because so many women are head of household in Louisiana, gaining access to property that was owned by ancestors seems to be a big issue in Louisiana after natural disasters. We have three recommendations after the conclusion of our committee hearing that we wanted to share. Senator wanted to make sure that you all know that this was phase one, as it relates to our reports. We will continue to meet about this. But the three recommendations that came from our February meeting were that possibly in Louisiana, we need to establish a protocol to ensure that women have access to reputable contractors. That seemed to be a big thing. And then also possibly setting up a clearing house for court proceedings, as well as a mechanism to expedite

necessary court proceedings after a natural disaster. And then the last one was providing additional funding of course for domestic violence programs in the state of Louisiana, because it seems to increase after a natural disaster. Did you all have any questions for me? You all do have the report?

Ms. Wyatt: Yes, we do have the report. I will defer to Pat Forbes on that one and the Governor's Office to kind of look through those recommendations and then we will get back to you.

Ms. Morris: Thank you so much.

Commissioner Strain: Yes, the Louisiana Board of Contractors has now an app that you can download, that you can instantly touch to see who's licensed and who's not licensed. And other entities that are now licensing different various contractors. We're trying to look at how to duplicate that within all the services. So there is one thing to kind of help. And of course also you can file a complaint, you just hit that app and you can go straight into Louisiana Board of Contractors.

Ms. Morris: That is great, thank you.

Mr. Forbes: If I could I'd also like to say that even in solution two, when folks choose their own contractor, the program is going to have case managers that help guard the process and help them with selecting licensed contractors and reputable contractors and watching the work progress as the money goes out. So there will be assistance from the program for folks who are eligible in the program.

Ms. Morris: We'll include that in phase two.

Ms. Wyatt: That's great with the contractors, understanding the domestic violence and those types of things, I think that was part of your recommendation, and the mental health piece, that's the part where we need to figure out, within the sculpt of this task force number one, and then secondly how can we point you in the right direction or that type of thing.

Ms. Morris: Excellent, thank you very much.

Ms. Wyatt: Next we have State Representative Valerie Hodges.

Representative Hodges: Good afternoon, I promise I will be brief. I think most of you have heard me speak before. I just want to say once again thank all of for your hard work, for doing this. And I want to, a lot of you don't know this but while we're talking so much about the Comite Diversion Canal. The Comite River ties into the Amite River, very close to where Representative Pope lives. And the Comite River is 56 miles long and it has a drainage capacity of 350 square miles. It drains portions of Wilkinson County in Mississippi and Amite County in Mississippi comes through the Comite River. And the Amite River is 117 miles long. And it starts in Lincoln County, Mississippi, and comes through Baton Rouge and drains out into Lake Maurepas. So what you have is a 56 mile long river and 117 mile long river that that's the only two drainage rivers that drain the capital region of Louisiana, where the seat of government is. And so why I'm so passionate about this project is because we are so long overdue. This project is a result, the Comite River Diversion Project is a result of the 1983 flood, where thousands and thousands of people lost their homes. And in this flood of August 2016, 13 people died drowned. And a lot more people died afterwards as a result of heart attacks and just the stress that they endured. And I see the commissioner shaking his head. And we don't hear about those in the public. But I know personally a lot of my neighbors and friends in the community. Widows who were telling me their husbands died two weeks later, three weeks later. And so because it cannot carry all of that water, when what we would do. The Comite River project, it takes that water that's coming from Mississippi and the North, and it dredges a canal over to the Mississippi river. And it takes that water that way, and the Corp has estimated it will be a seven foot reduction in Zachary. And nobody in Zachary would ever flood again. And in Central five feet, in Watson three feet, in Denham Springs, it's about six inches. But my sister got four inches in her house, she lives in Denham Springs, very close to, well actually by the Antique Village She got four or five inches. My nephew got two inches. Senator Mack's brother got two inches and so the inches do matter. And so that's why we've been paying taxes on this for 17 years and what I'm very worried about. I heard Representative Shadoin say and they have projects. Everybody has projects and they all need to be done. But we've been paying taxes for 17 years. The project is partially complete and it's just sitting there waiting to be completed. We only need \$100 million to fix it, to finish it, to complete it. And then Zachary and a large portion of Baton Rouge would probably never flood again. They're saying it's a 1,000 year flood or a 500 year flood. And what Jay Grimes said, what he's worried about when we went down to the mouth of the Amite river was the 20 year floods. And the 30 year floods that are going to come again possibly in our lifetime. Which this would avert much if not most of the houses flooding again. And so it makes no sense to me, and I've said this, I'll just say it again to rebuild homes, rebuild the community. To get businesses come back while we don't simultaneously fix the problem, there is an easy fix to this, already on the drawing board, the plans are drawn. We just have to appropriate the money and put it in action plan. We've got a \$100 million now and then you know what our parish president is with Mark Harold, they're willing to put some of their hazard mitigation. What they talked about we can't use hazard mitigation because it's a core project. Well in a meeting that we had Wednesday, our Congressman said in a few weeks we could de-fund. We could de-authorize the Comite Project. And we could use hazard mitigation money on that. And so this is a desperately needed project. It's a miracle that thousands of people did not drowned and so I just want to ask you to please consider. And nothing's going to take place today but we can remove that projects from the course so that hazard mitigation money can be

used. And if we wait until it floods again, it's too late. And so the letter from FEMA said if there is an imminent threat to life or property. And the other fact that I want to bring out about this. But by building the code meet diversion project we're taking care of people right now by giving them their money to rebuild their homes. But we can simultaneously take a very small portion of \$100 million. And take care of their future of possibly ten years, 20 years like J Grams said it's certainly is going to be another flood in 20 to 30 years in our children. So the other factor that we took consider is the flood insurance premium that we know are going to be astronomical in ten years. So it would reduce the need for many to even carry flood insurance, it's going to reduce the flood elevation. We're talking about having to elevate homes with the Comite project in place they're going to redo the flood zone maps. And these homes would not have to be elevated. And so I just think it just makes so much sense. That we put a major focus on this project to protect the state of government in the state. There's lots of people still in this capital that are not even back in their homes yet. And lots of people are telling me when I get my money I don't know if I'm rebuilding my house. Because I can't, you're all not doing anything better. I'm like well we're trying, I'm trying. We're doing everything that we can possibly do. And I think that's why we're seeing a lot of people. It's hard for me and I'm sure it's hard for Representative Pope. Every morning when I drive to work I have to drive through this steel, the debris on the roads, the abandoned houses everywhere. And to see that and to know that people don't have the confidence of fixing the problem. So I'm just here once again saying please, put this in the action plan. Please consider how important it is to the Capital Region. I've got email, so many emails from my frustrated constituents. Even I heard yesterday they are talking about the central and a demonstration starting a petition to say we want our tax money back. And which that's counterproductive. I mean that we can't do that. They need to hear from us, this is going to happen. Or they're going to not, they're saying they want their money back with interest. Of course, that's not going to happen either. But I know ARBC has \$14 million. And they said we want that back. And that to me would kill the project. So we've got to give the public some assurance, the capital region area. I'm not just talking, and just so everybody knows, if somebody said, well, we know you're grieving because you flood. No, I've been fighting for this for four years. But because Zachary, Senator Barrow, Barbara Carpenter, Ted James, this has a lot of more impact for their district they get a seven foot reduction and I get about three, two and a half three feet. Roger's folks gets about, I don't know, about six inches. So just once again, I'm pleading with you to please consider this in whatever way you can and I do appreciate your hard work I know you all are giving up your time. You all aren't getting paid for this and it's a sacrifice. And so I just want to say God bless you and thank you for your work again.

Ms. Wyatt: It's a sacrifice but well worth it.

Mr. Dartez: Thank you, Madam Chair. Representative Hodges, well good afternoon now. Thank you for continuously bring us this issue. And maybe next time you all do the formal presentation, if you all could like give us the issue, I'm learning this as I go, is there a dedicated tax to this project?

Representative Hodges: Yes, we've paid it for 17 years.

Mr. Dartez: And it's just fallen short?

Representative Hodges: Well, it's a federally funded, federally approved project. But there was a lot of confusion, the Corps was not asking, they built Lily Bayou, which is the largest portion of the structure is built and it's up in Zachary. But for some reason, the court never got the money to complete the project and there was an issue with mitigation land. So mitigation land was not being purchased. And then the court's excuse for not asking for money, we can't ask money in the president's budget, for money, without you, the state, meeting their mitigation requirements. Well now the mitigation requirements have all been met. We've been working on this, and thanks to the help of Dr. Wilson and Mr. Dittmore, they have fulfilled all those mitigation requirements. There's no reason I think the court has asked for money. I know our congressional delegation is pushing for the federal money to do it but I have no confidence in them that they're going to do it. We've been talking about this for 30 years. And I think we're going to have to do it ourselves. And we are in a position of only needing \$100 million to protect a huge region of where the most of the population of the state is. But I can explain later to you where we are. I've got a map right back there I can show you.

Mr. Dartez: And the August flood taught us that?

Representative Hodges: Yes.

Mr. Dartez: Okay, thank you very much.

Mr. Durbin: When I was elected to sit on the city council in Denham Springs in 1989 and serving as a city councilman in 1989, I'm going to respond to Roland, his comments, and to Valerie for all her hard work and Representative Pope. Roland, the Amite River Basin Commission was created as a result of the significant flooding that happens in huge rain events and Valerie is correct, 1983 was a big rain event and that set the 41.5 in Denham Springs. This flood in August brought it to 46.3, the height of the water in Denham Springs, above sea level. The Amite River Basin Commission worked very hard to create a taxing district. A portion of the taxing district was in Livingston Parish, a portion in East Baton Rouge Parish, and a portion in Ascension Parish. That taxing district had an ad valorem tax presented to the voters within that district, Denham Springs being one of the areas, to vote on whether or not they would approve the tax, a property tax. It was approved in a big way, it was a ten year tax. I forget what year that tax began, 94? In 2000, okay, and it was a 10 year tax. Then it went

back and as Mayor of Denham Springs, I was a big advocate that our voters, along with the other areas of EBR and Ascension, vote to renew the tax. It was renewed. So, an ad valorem on tax has been collected by our assessors channeling that money into a revenue fund. Now, this is where things went haywire. It was going to be a participation by the locals through their tax, by the state through appropriation, and by the federal government through appropriation. The big change was going to come from the federal government, the big participation, then the state, and then the locals. But the locals had to have a participation in it. And we have been participating. And what, we have three more years on the renewal? The money has been coming from the locals, and I can understand the frustration in the locals putting up their money but somebody else hasn't been putting up their portion. Now the issue is whether or not the feds or the state are going to ever get around to putting up their portion of the original agreement, to build the version canal. And true, and Dr. Wilson, I don't know what the status is on the expropriation of the, but if there's going to be a presentation, there's got to be an education of this committee, this task force, you got to educate us first. And Mark's a big part of it, but your office is a big part of the expropriation portion of it to educate this committee on has the route been totally expropriated and in place I don't know since I left office. The other thing is, what is the status on the money that has been collected from the locals and if any was forthcoming from the state and if any was forthcoming from the federal government, I don't have that answer.

Representative Hodges: I can tell you right now, we've got \$72 million in capital outlay that's approved.

Mr. Durbin: From the state?

Representative Hodges: Yes.

Mr. Durbin: That's available or has already been spent?

Representative Hodges: No, it's available.

Mr. Durbin: I know we are getting into an area right now but for our presentation, I'm just simply asking that it be bigger than just Mark coming in and speak. And we need the state DOTD to come in, we need a presentation from Demar, a part of that presentation to educate this commission, this task force.

Ms. Wyatt: And with a quorum, I think that's important with as many people here as possible.

Mr. Durbin: My comments are to request a larger presentation if this task force is going to be asked to adopt an action plan and add something to it, without being fully, totally, and you started off with the good educating comments, but we need a bigger picture.

Representative Hodges: Okay, well we have got it, it's just getting it on the agenda, it's prepared, so thank you.

Dr. Wilson: Thank you, madam chairperson and Representative Hodges and Mr. Durbin, we were going to offer but I was behind Strain and Olivier on the button. I was going to offer a presentation from the department to be able to do that, but in quick summary, we have \$15 million in P2, \$54 million in P5. The department has always maintained the level of state match that's required for the state share to be able to deliver this project. We've also accelerated mitigation and acquisitions that we have acquired as much as we can through amicable acquisitions and not expropriation because we cannot expropriate. We've also made a very wise decision to not spend that 15 million, because we have to get a commitment from the core for their share. I don't want us to waste what little dollars we have. And I shouldn't say waste, but spend the dollars we have and have it sit there and not have any utility. Because that's happened with the Lily Bayou that we've spent about \$50 million, I would assume that the number is, on the Lily Bayou that has zero the utility for the citizens. And that's not the responsible thing. So we have the dollars for the state share. We have the ability to deliver it. What we haven't had was the core's share of dollars or the federal government's share of dollars. And that includes working with ARBC to spend those dollars as efficiently as we can. So, we'll be happy to give you a presentation. The most important thing I would say to everyone about this project is it will offer zero utility until the project is complete. Because that is the most important thing. And we've got it divided up into segments of independent utility that will offer something. But the real value of this occurs when it's completed. And that's the travesty of having a project go 20, or 30 years. Because you look at the land use, you look at the population, and you look at the rate at which water hits the system, it's drastically changed from what it was in 1983. And you can look at the property tax and the sales roles to see how much growth has occurred. And that all has to be considered in moving this project forward. And then the last thing I will tell you is when we do debate the issue of asking the core to vacate that project and give it solely to the state, that we're setting a tremendous precedent and tremendous responsibility. Even greater than just the match because we have to maintain that. And as the secretary, we've not disagreed on getting it done. I don't know that taking it back from the core in this financial situation that we're in is the best solution. Because we're going to be putting more burden on the state and the locals to do it without a revenue source. And that is the unfortunate thing that we as a department are only spending \$8 million a year on flood control. And should we be fortunate enough to get additional dollars that will drastically increase. But it's just the fact that our needs go much further than our resources. So we'll be happy to present that at the next meeting.

Ms. Wyatt: And in its entirety and I feel like I got one, two, three, four that have a lot of knowledge, and the rest of us are just trying to get up to speed. So be as thorough as possible and as succinct as possible.

Dr. Wilson: And if I may, Madam Chair, I'll be happy to meet with individuals and small groups in advance of that to give you kind of a background and a backdrop. And I'm sure the others would be happy to do that as well. Because it is a very

comprehensive and convoluted history that we don't necessarily have to get into all of that. But a good assessment, answer questions to make sure really to the core issues that we need to debate and discuss at the table here. We can do that as well.

Ms. Wyatt: That would be great. Thank you.

Representative Hodges: I just want to say one more thing, and we've been saying this for four years, that we can spend millions now or we can spend billions. And we just spent about nine billion. And so we need \$100 million and I think we can find it some way. So thank you very much.

Ms. Wyatt: We hear your passion, but come back with all that data, succinctly.

Representative Hodges: When do you all meet again?

Ms. Wyatt: June 9th, day after my birthday.

Representative Hodges: The last day of session?

Ms. Wyatt: The day after session.

Representative Hodges: Okay.

Ms. Wyatt closed the floor for public comment.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Wyatt: Moving to other business. I have three comments. GOHSEP task force update is in tab 10 as a request of the task force. OCD has provided us with the average median income tiers and a glossary of terms, tabs 11 and 12. Our next meeting is scheduled four weeks from now on Friday, June 9th. Lori will send out more information next week about the location. I'm so happy to say that my co-chair here, Jimmy Durbin, will be chairing that meeting, as I will be in Scotland golfing.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Wyatt: So, can I have a motion for adjournment? Okay, moved by Mr. Olivier.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:33 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jacqui Vines Wyatt
Co-Chair of the Restore Louisiana Task Force

Date Approved: June 9, 2017

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