



JULY 25, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

COUNCIL ON WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Tuesday, July 25, 2023
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

I. Call to Order

- **Chairman Tingle** called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Lori Dupont, Council Secretary

- Gov. Ofc. of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness – Casey Tingle
- Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority – Greg Grandy
- Department of Transportation & Development – Ed Knight
- Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries – Matthew Weigel
- Office of Community Development – Pat Forbes
 - 5 members present, we do have a quorum.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

- **Ed Knight** led the council for the pledge.

IV. Consent Agenda Items

- Approval of October 24, 2022 Meeting Minutes
 - **Motion: Pat Forbes**
 - **Second: Greg Grandy**
 - **Motion passed, minutes adopted**

V. Opening Remarks

Chairman Tingle provided opening remarks. Recognized the work originated for the most part from the Floods of 2016. The funding we are largely working with from HUD has some timelines with it that requires us to work in an expedited fashion. Point of today's meeting is to allocate as many funds as we can so those projects can begin in earnest. The more work that we do transformable projects, that work is complicated, for a variety of reasons. The modeling, environmental reviews, etc. 50% by 2026. Kicked off as a way of doing things differently in Louisiana, rather than individual, boundaries. Attempt to do things differently across the state. Certainly in those most impacted areas, but also in those that weren't impacted, as flooding impacts Louisiana as a whole. We will have a public comment period following each of our action agenda items as they appear on the agenda. Those interested, please fill out a comment card. Recognized Rep. Mincey for attending the meeting.

VI. Background

- Genea Lathers, Louisiana Office of Community Development
- Billy Williamson, Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development

Genea Lathers: Analysis of the CDBG funding as we are at a critical point with the remaining allocations to be funded to the parishes that were affected by the 2016 floods. From our analysis we would like to provide an update of the LWI funded projects, across commitments by parish within the local and regional projects program which includes Round 1, DSP, SPP, and HMGP. First we categorize them by HUD Mid requirements by HUD in terms of servicing those impacted parishes. We line them out by the funding requests that we have already in commitments towards those programs as well as the statements.

Pat Forbes: The requirement is what?

Genea Lathers: At least 50% of the funding must be spent towards HUD Mids.

Chairman Tingle: Definition of MIDs?

Genea Lathers: Most impacted & distressed parishes. We also want to look at the commitments by region and these are the LWI watershed regions 1-9 in terms of how many commitments and projects that we have across local and regional projects.

Pat Forbes: This is all the project rounds before round 2?

Genea Lathers: Correct.

Rep. Mincey: Do you have the same chart that just shows Round 1 for these parishes?

Genea Lathers: I don't have it in this slideshow but I can get you that information. We have staff here keeping notes, so we will get that information to you.

Mr. Williamson: You specifically want it by parish?

Rep. Mincey: Please do. For all parishes.

Chairman Casey: Genea can you go back two slides to the parish slide, just for clarity because we have the HMGP match funds, there are a handful of larger projects that because of global match, if you could speak to that in terms of we have them listed here by the parishes the projects are located in but those dollars are providing the match requirement for projects in other parishes under the hazard mitigation funding. Please make sure I said that correctly.

Genea Lathers: Correct as you stated. In order to provide the match we've hand-picked in terms of parish and dollar amounts to meet that global match requirement but it does include the parishes that were selected through the hazard mitigation grant program.

Chairman Tingle: It may be that as we provide that parish level information that we show it both ways. We show it where the hazard mitigation match is actually occurring, as well as where the projects that are providing that match are located. Both pieces of that is important.

Mr. Forbes: I think there are several HMGP Match projects in EBR parish, so while it shows \$93M, a chunk of that money is covering the match for HMGP in like Livingston, St. Tammany, other parishes, is that accurate?

Genea Lathers: Yes.

Rep. Mincey: For clarification for me, when the title says LWI funded projects, then you have Round 1, DSP, SPP, and HMGP, I'm only familiar with round 1, are the other three funded through LWI?

Genea Lathers: Yes sir. Round 1 is a part of the local and regional projects allocation. Design Support Pilot is also a part of the local and regional projects allocation.

Chairman Tingle: And Rep. the hazard mitigation fund is FEMA funding that went to all of the impacted parishes. It requires, generally, a 25% match and so the LWI funds funded that requirement so that all the parishes could have that funding at 100%. The easiest or the most

efficient way to do that as opposed to adding it to each of those projects individually is to take a few larger projects, fund them with 100% LWI funding and then fund the rest of the projects at 100% FEMA funding. I think showing that math would be helpful to everybody.

Mr. Grandy: Genea, that last acronym, SPP?

Genea Lathers: Yes that is the State Projects and Programs. The changes we are proposing for the council to vote on and to post on our website. This is going to be considered a substantial amendment because of the amount of funding we are moving around. It is required to be posted on our website and there is a 30 day public comment period that we are required to do as part of the process before submitting to HUD.

Mr. Weigel: How are comments submitted?

Genea Lathers: Through our website, and I believe we also have a phone number.

Mr. Forbes: Also by mail or any other way to get them to us. Easiest is through the website. To clarify, not only do we take comments and we respond to each of those comments either via a change to the action plan amendment or explanation on why that isn't going to happen.

Genea Lathers: Correct. In terms of the state projects and programs, we have an allocation currently that includes \$15M for state economic development & resilience and state infrastructure and housing allocation, so that \$15M within state economic & resilience is going to be moved to the state infrastructure and housing allocation, which is the SPP acronym we keep referring to. It does not increase the state projects and programs budget but will look at more definitive projects within state projects and programs, the infrastructure and housing buyouts. The non-federal cost share assistance, as we talked a little earlier in terms of HMGP, our funds are providing the match for that program. In initial estimates we had \$15M additionally added within APA1. We've done more of the recent allocations and looking at the funding within GOHSEP and looking at what allocations were made within the 2020 and 2021 storms and we have the full funding necessary for the HMGP non-federal cost share assistance program. So this will move \$15M as an increase to the local and regional projects and programs allocation. We spoke earlier about cost inflation and the projects that were allocated funds through the round 1 and design support program (DSP), it will increase to \$130M for each round design support is considered to cover cost due to inflation. We think it is substantiated due to the time the applications were submitted in 2020 and what we are seeing now when we go out to construction bids. Round 2 increases to a project funding opportunity of \$225M. LWI region 9 is allocated \$100M for development of large, transformative projects in MID areas within the region. Round 3 as described in the action plan will be removed.

Chairman Tingle: Let's pause here for a minute because there is a lot happening on this slide. This is the basis of what we will be voting on as far as the action plan amendment. The initial \$15M that is being increased, that's coming because we were able to decrease HMGP Match, right, now we can slide it over to the local projects. The second two bullets go to my remarks towards inflation. That is just an estimate, right, to be able to add additional dollars to reflect the cost of inflation?

Genea: Correct

Chairman Tingle: Round 2, really focused those projects in areas that we would pick up the appropriate benefits for low to moderate income, correct?

Genea: Correct and I'll get into that a little bit more in the coming slides.

Rep. Mincey: Great to see that \$100 for Region 9. Will those projects be selected by LWI or the region?

Genea Lathers: I'm going to get to that in coming slides. Rep. Mincey as part of the APA3 the \$100M for region 9 will be for projects that meet the definition of a covered project in accordance with FRN 6109-N-02. A covered project is defined as an infrastructure project having a total cost of \$100 million or more, with at least \$50 million in CDBG funds regardless of source. Additional criteria applicable to covered projects funded with CDBG-MIT funds is to look at the long-term efficacy of the project as well as the fiscal sustainability. We want to promote large, transformative projects and to benefit the MID areas. Region 9 steering committee will vote and push through projects, and we and the working group have been heavily involved with the ARBC board. In the APA we are asking that the projects be approved first by the region 9 steering committee and then submitted to LWI to help support looking at from a working group level the benefit cost analysis and meeting the requirements within a covered project.

Rep. Mincey: If I may, for lack of knowledge, when you say infrastructure, is that a new or a dredging or what is the definition?

Genea Lathers: Different project types that are eligible within the mitigation grant. Floodplain restoration, floodplain preservation, not necessarily new infrastructure. You can look at mitigation impacts of an existing area.

Rep. Mincey: Thank you. For the information of the board, when we set up the guidelines for the ARBC we put in a stipulation that there had to be a 2/3 requirement to approve projects, so they have a tough bar to climb to work together and that was the intention of it.

Chairman Tingle: The way this is worded is that it would reinforce that regional decision making by allowing them to make a decision for the projects that best that funding. Staff are available to walk through all those requirements as decisions are being made.

Genea Lathers: We are going to assign this to our working groups.

Mr. Weigel: Could it be a suite of smaller projects or a covered project that meets some threshold?

Genea Lathers: We are recommending a covered project but we will as a working group work with region 9 to support anything they submit within the \$100M allocation.

Rep. Mincey: Thank you for asking. When you look at Region 9, which is 7 parishes, to find one that will benefit everyone, will be tough, especially when you need a 2/3 requirements. Maybe expand so it's not so restrictive. Would be fair for the region.

Chairman Tingle: Thank you.

Genea Lathers: We discussed earlier CDBG-MIT grant funds LWI does have a requirement that 50% must benefit LMI persons. It must be met. We are currently at 34% LMI benefit. Across the total allocations we are only at 21%. The increase of the \$125 million, in addition to the \$100M opportunity, all of that must benefit LMI persons or households to meet that 50% minimum requirement.

Chairman Tingle: Access where we are mid-stream, it is safe to say we are generally on track as it relates to the requirement that 50% of the funding go to the most impacted areas but our ability to document that 50% of the funds are going to benefit LMI households is lagging behind so we want to be transparent.

Mr. Forbes: We are at 38%, can we assume that the proposals that you are making in the APA for us to vote on today will get us to that 50% requirement?

Genea Lathers: Yes, it would get us to 51% based on these proposals. More on the LMI benefit and challenges. For a project to meet HUD's LMI objective, 51% of people/households that benefit must be considered LMI; they provide census tracts to help determine that benefit.

For infrastructure projects, you are normally determining the service areas based on streets and/or drainage areas that need to be selected when determining that projects. Those census tracts are identified, adding the inhabitants together and calculating LMI percentage. It is difficult for large projects to have a primary LMI benefit because they impact multiple census tracts-even if some communities that benefit have large LMI populations. The state has communicated with HUD about the difficulty this creates in funding large-scale, transformative projects. We have communicated to HUD about this difficulty and will continue, in terms of the impact in the regions and especially what needs to be restored, in terms of mitigation and what we have seen in terms of submissions in order to meet that LMI as well as the benefit overall on a community level.

Mr. Forbes: If you build a project in a census tract, is that where you count the benefit area or is the benefit area who is having their flood risk reduced for that area?

Genea Lathers: Benefit area.

Mr. Forbes: Okay, so you can build something in Ascension Parish and its impacts reach further up to other places, we count all those census tracts?

Genea Lathers: Yes, as long as it is in the benefit area.

Mr. Grandy: The map, we have orange areas identified and then patterned areas identified. If you could give us a legend on what they represent.

Genea Lathers: The pattern identification identified the most impacted and distressed areas. The orange areas by census tract look at those LMI parishes that are already 51% or above within the state.

Chairman Tingle: Bit of our challenge, based on an uninformed look at the map, our most impacted areas where the flood actually happened, doesn't overlay with the areas of the state where we have larger geographic areas of LMI. Discussions with HUD, I'm guessing that since these funds went to a number of states and applicants, others must be dealing with these same challenges. Are we hearing from other states on this as well?

Genea Lathers: New York gave us some data regarding Hurricane Sandy. COSCDA that looks at CDBG funding to support states with CDBG funding has helped to advocate in terms of looking at the LMI benefit and challenges that we have. I think we are doing a lot more now in terms of recent disasters.

Mr. Forbes: That 50% is the standard CDBG-DR percentage of LMI benefit that is usually required?

Genea Lathers: No it is not. We are having these challenges just meeting that minimum 50% requirement but it is normally a 70% requirement.

Rep. Mincey: That is a federally created map?

Genea Lathers: Yes, it came from HUD identifying those census tracts and the most impacted and distressed areas came from what was determined within our action plan.

Rep. Mincey: Does the state have one that differs?

Genea Lathers: Yes, HUD provides this in terms of mapping in an Excel document that helps to map out each of the census tracts in block groups for every parish.

Rep. Mincey: How are the census tracts aligned?

Genea Lathers: Part of the challenge, when you are looking at the census tract and the LMI area block groups that are identified, there can be a margin of error. We are seeing this in our round 2 funding opportunity and what's being presented. There is an opportunity within HUD to look into place data, which is normally reserved for the more rural parishes, which is where

you can impact and show benefit based upon that town or city, as well as an actual survey going out to the actual area and surveying for that LMI area to account for the margin of error.

Rep. Mincey: Considering the sources of all the funding, and we have state funding in there, is it possible to use both federal and state maps/spreadsheets to accommodate that?

Genea Lathers: HUD gives, in terms of identifying the service area, the census tract data. They will allow for a survey for you to prove that the LMI area is LMI. So it is either going to be their data or a survey proving the margin of error.

Rep. Mincey: Their data being data that already exists or their data being the federal data.

Genea Lathers: Their data being data that already exists.

Rep. Mincey: So we could use both?

Ginger Moses: Census data is the federal census data. Guidelines for determining low to moderate income says you can use the census data first, but there is a margin of error in that census data and so if you feel like that error rate would benefit you by doing more work, you can do more work to identify that more specific LMI percentage by doing surveys. There is no state data, it's all federal data, but you can take additional steps to narrow that margin of error.

Chairman Tingle: Rep. Mincey I would just say that we kind of struggle through this a bit. It's not that there is some argument that these funds shouldn't benefit these LMI households. It is what method you use to define that. The projects that we proposed and some that will be proposed have a significant benefit to LMI households, it is just the challenge of meeting the strict definition of how we get there. We are working with other states and seeing if there is a waiver around this.

Mr. Mincey: I don't question the target, we are obligated. It's just the implementation of it and the execution of it that is a concern for me. Not tying our hands too restrictively just because of a percentage of error. I just want us to have the opportunity to work through that.

Mr. Knight: Ginger, can you expand on what all is involved in doing a survey to fix that margin?

Ginger Moses: I have not done one but we do have staff that have worked on that. You go out to all impacted individuals and businesses in that specific area and complete a survey to determine they are LMI or their income levels. For example, this is providing that data on an area benefit. It is very similar to what we do in our housing programs where we determine LMI on a direct benefit, where we gather income information from each individual that applies to our program. So instead of using this data that is out there on HUD's website, it takes a lot of effort because you have to go out and provide the survey to each impacted entity within that area.

Chairman Tingle: Can you speak to the way the math works in determining this and why that creates challenges for larger projects that start to bring in other census tracts?

Genea Lathers: We are looking at area medium income of 80% AMI. When we add multiple census tracts, whether the census tract has 34 or 24 points, unless that total benefit adds up to 51%, then it is not going to meet the 51% national objective.

Chairman Tingle: When we say area, that means comparing within that area, correct? We are not comparing to a national standard for poverty, the area, correct? It can create unusual situations because a community you may look at and think would meet the LMI requirement may not, simply because of the way the math works, correct?

Genea Lathers: Correct.

Ascension Parish President Cointment: The Corps of Engineers had a similar matching project. Specifically look at the LMI. We used a screening tool, Low Climate and Economic

Justice screening tool, which has the LMI in the program. There are areas on this map from the census tract that is not carried over to LMI. Can we make the argument of adjusting the LMI according to their federal data because this is two separate federal agencies providing this information and it does not add up. If we could use both programs it would expand the LMI area.

Mr. Forbes: Within the rules around CDBG funds they are very specific that we use census data, tracts, block groups, but census data is what defines LMI to them. Within the rules of the law that is what we have to do. There are certainly different programs and other measures but HUD requires us to use this measure.

Ascension Parish President Cointment: Census tracts are overburdened or underserved is being disadvantaged. This is federally recognized. Two maps from the federal government. Can we request to look at both screening tools and determine if there is more LMI area so we can achieve the objectives that have come down from the feds since both the federal agencies are producing these two maps, that don't agree with each other?

Mr. Forbes: We can do a waiver request of HUD. Sometimes it is a 9 month period to get a waiver approved. I've never heard of HUD using anything except census tract data or surveys. There are some ways that you can mitigate that in parishes that have high levels of income to go slightly below and still get a benefit – I think I can speak for the staff, we are willing to work with anyone in the state using the expertise we have around the way HUD calculates it to explore every opportunity to find that LMI benefit.

Ascension Parish President Cointment: I don't know if that answers my question. It's their data. Their data doesn't agree. I don't know why HUD can't talk to whatever agency that created the screening tool because it comes from census tracts. I would like to explore that. For example – Ascension/Sorrento, clearly designated as one of those areas, it doesn't show up on LMI but if we use both together since they are both coming from census tracts, it would make more sense to me.

Chairman Tingle: I think as folks who work closely with federal partners with all the projects you do, I know that sometimes what makes sense doesn't always play out. I think we all agree with the spirit of those remarks. We are not trying to avoid the LMI areas, we are speaking on the specific way HUD defines it in the register notice causes us some distinct challenges. Personally, I do think we can certainly take a look at opportunities to potentially request a waiver and to provide alternative methodology in meeting that. Will take under advisement and we will work with the team behind the scenes to see what we might be able to do there. My biggest question is the area piece because the way the comparison happens, we are comparing census tracts within a parish to a parish as a whole, is that correct?

Genea Lathers: Yes, and there are, especially if we use place data impacting smaller areas that are already above the 51% that are easy to push through, as well as those service areas that match up with those 51% or more census tracts. Areas like St. James and other areas that have submitted to us, we are willing to work with those areas.

Chairman Tingle: Just to be clear, what we are attempting to do now to address this potential compliance issue, we allocated and dedicated round 2 funding towards projects that we can document LMI component, correct? Anything we can do for round 1 projects?

Genea Lathers: We have continually looked at that to bring about the number that we come to in terms of the 34% obligated. There were a few projects that we were able to go back to in terms of LMI benefit instead of urgent need. We will continue to do that.

Chairman Tingle: Add to that list the discussion of a potential waiver to provide some sort of alternative approach and at least put HUD on notice that we are interested in that.

Billy Williamson: Where we stand on the modeling. Next steps. Current timeline. Slide 13. Now receiving all the collaborations. Most have been submitted for review. There has been some issues we have ran into with the collaboration review. Moving forward, modeling development under task orders 2 and 3. Task order 4, the add-on work, adds the design storm development; production runs; consequence model development; project proof-of-concept evaluation. Expanded on each. A lot of work on structural. Consequence data. Economic impacts. Last one serves as two functions – how to evaluate; questions the data (adverse impacts). It is not a simple one or two, as we mentioned, to evaluate watershed scale concepts. Use our regional consultants to work with our regional working groups to identify watershed-scale project concepts; incorporate proposed concept to calibrated models; run all relevant design storm scenarios; perform regional consequence analysis for full suite of storm runs. We want to show that process and work through that process. Evaluate those feasible. Since 2016, we have had numerous disasters. So the next time these dollars come through, we will have more of these big projects that we already have ready to use for those dollars.

Mr. Forbes: There is no additional funding required for this modeling task order, correct? That is included in the current budget?

Genea Lathers: Yes. It is already planned and it does not increase the \$145M that we have for modeling.

Rep. Mincey: The statewide watershed modeling, what about a region 8 and region 9?

Billy Williamson: They are included in the seven. Contract areas are the seven areas. Region 7 is region 7 and 9.

Rep. Mincey: Could you circle back and provide an update on just region 8 and 9? If you could provide that.

Billy Williamson: We can give it to you on a HUC8 basis, which is the most accurate. So the Amite River will have its own timeline.

Rep. Mincey: Second question, just on the modeling, the biggest concern on the modeling, and we have spent so much money, we have done so far has not taken a storm into consideration?

Billy Williamson: When I mentioned calibrated and validated models, I believe they take 7 historical storms that they identified in task order 1. So for the Amite, it was likely the storm of 1983, 2016 event, 2021 might have been added, but they identify those relevant, historical storms and that is what they calibrate to. You know what water elevation was like in 2016 because a lot of people went out and collected data, including the Basin Commission. So we have a lot of points to calibrate to. That is what we are doing now. It will be useful to you upfront, we just won't have those statistical events.

Rep. Mincey: Thank you.

Mr. Grandy: Follow-up, the timeline, assuming the council approves the proposed task order for the proof of concept evaluation, what kind of timeline are we talking about? And I understand this takes coordination with the regional steering committees.

Billy Williamson: 2 months from approval, still waiting on some design storm guidance but it is very imminent and we are expecting it, so it will probably take about 60 days turnaround to get the task order out and into contracts. It does have to go through complete contractual review. I would say 6-9 months would be the task order duration.

Chairman Tingle: You touched on it, I just want to reiterate the point that as we out of the watershed initiative in terms of things being new and beneficial for the state moving forward that didn't exist how big of a deal statewide models are. Practically speaking, not for the benefit of the state, but benefiting these regions and watersheds. Could you maybe underline the practical benefit that will come in years and decades to come for having this work done?

Billy Williamson: Really there are so many different things that can come from this. Very useful to places who are looking at really big watershed scale issues. Levee systems and what they are handling right now. Current flows coming through. It will give you a model for whatever area you are looking at. See the changes to that area. It gives you valuable information. Developers can use this before building. Refine down the area. Know where risks are. It will help you identify the risk areas in all the different areas of a watershed. High-quality model for your parishes.

Chairman Tingle: I think it will be one of the big accomplishments of this initiative. We often times speak about how much money is for projects, and rightly so, but there is not enough money to address all the projects that need to be completed in Louisiana, and as we identify additional funding sources moving forward, the existence of these models can help us better select what those projects need to be and hopefully speed up the timeline of developing those projects because we will have a much better data source as a starting point than we had in 2016.

Mr. Forbes: Just be clear, as people do other projects and do other modeling efforts, those will be built on this backbone and it will continue to be refined over time, right?

Billy Williamson: Yes. It is limitless. Valuable to the state for years to come.

Mr. Knight: Long range look. Just the changes in land usage that these models will show will tell us a lot. They are a huge step in the master plan. Big step in the right direction.

Billy Williamson: From a DOTD standpoint, we are looking at identifying our own risk profiles for ongoing resilience initiatives. We want to go and identify a complete inventory of structures and overlay that with our models so I can then go in and triage where we need to get out as a department and start replacing culverts, bridges, raising roadways, etc.

Chairman Tingle: I think it is safe to say that we went from being one of the states furthest behind in terms of this capability to one of the states that is going to be towards the top of the list in terms of a statewide ability that is available regardless where you are in the state of Louisiana.

Billy Williamson: Earlier this year we had the State Floodplain Managers Conference in S. Carolina. When we first started this initiative we were looking to Texas & N. Carolina for how they had developed some of their models. When I went speak at the conference some of those same folks were asking how did we do this? They came to me after my presentation asking how do they do that. We are no longer the caboose, we are driving the train.

Chairman Tingle: I do think it is important to reiterate that point that the real intent of the watershed initiative is to do business differently. That involves building a lot of important projects and protecting people where we can but it also means providing data to make better decisions moving forward.

Rep. Mincey: Can someone provide a Round 2 status? When is the deadline? When is the awards?

Genea Lathers: Currently, we have all pre-applications in through that deadline. They are currently with the regional steering committees. We have asked that the regional steering committees rank and review these projects and get back to the state by August 1. As we stated,

we want to do some extensive LMI analysis to ensure we are looking impactfully at all those projects that have been submitted and give that additional LMI assessment for those projects that have been prioritized by the regions to support meeting our LMI criteria. The working group will review the regional ratings, the updated LMI assessments and recommend projects to the council for funding. Then set another council meeting to review and approve projects. We do want to allocate funding for round 2 before the end of the year.

Rep. Mincey: Next, and I have addressed this with council numerous times, LWI provided \$800k to all 8 regions. At that time region 9 was not structured. I have inquired and asked about it because I thought it was appropriate that we get it. This is a unique region. I had encouraged region 9 back in January to submit a formal request. Has that been done?

Mr. Forbes: You mean to request for the regional capacity building grant?

Rep. Mincey: Yes.

Mr. Forbes: That would take an action plan amendment. Genea would have to look at the budget and see what is available. From what I have seen from the action plan amendment we aren't moving any other money into regional capacity building and all of that is allocated, if I'm not mistaken.

Genea Lathers: Off the top of my head we funded regional capacity building out of the planning and we do have planned funds for regional capacity building, so we can look at the budget closer.

Rep. Mincey: I mean it is something for discussion that could be considered.

Mr. Forbes: Yes, I don't know what the exact budget is, if there is money available, but certainly.

Rep. Mincey: Can someone look into that budget and let me know something?

Chairman Tingle: Yes, we can do that.

Rep. Mincey: My journey with LWI has been pretty eventful. The first meeting I attended was round 1 announcements and I was extremely disappointed that my parish had not received any. So it set me on a journey, right. A lot of efforts have gone with that. The beauty of LWI, initially it was meant to distribute \$1.2 billion across the state through executive order but we have taken that and set ourselves for the future so we can really do some significant floodplain management work across the state. So the future funding that we talked about with future storms down the road, we are structured so we can really do something very beneficial for Louisiana. I want to thank the council for that. Part of that recognition of the importance and the significance of what can come lead me to my efforts to create region 9, so the Amite River Basin is its own region. Still struggling with the money that we could potentially get, y'all made a big dent in that today. Resolutions passed. Thanked Senator White. Thanked the council for recognizing region 9.

Chairman Tingle: Governor's standpoint when we first talked about this initiative, one time grant opportunity that was found for our 2016 flood and after all of the events of 2017 and all of the other states that happened to our country from a risk perspective that year and using those funds to catalyze business differently and really taking a regional approach across the state. Thank you for recognizing that. Doing anything new comes with its challenges. We have learned a lot and I think all of our partners across the state have as well. Now it is to the point of finalizing execution of what's left and then putting our efforts towards these tools that will be with us for a long time so thank you for help in that journey and for the kind remarks as well.

Rep. Mincey: As a legislator, I'm an advocate specifically for my parish and region, but also an advocate for the efforts we are doing statewide. Let me know if I can be of any assistance.

Mr. Forbes: The single most important thing that can come out of this is the watershed level regional management of flood risk that shift from jurisdictional boundaries to watershed boundaries is the whole thing. The Governor told us that he wanted to see a change before he ever knew we had \$1.2B dollars coming so that is one thing that I would sort of differ from you throughout the history of that, he told us in 2017, he got several of us together and said we have to do something different if we are going to do this better. This is the outshoot from that.

Rep. Mincey: Regardless of the catalyst. We are there and we are here. I'm grateful and most appreciative of the efforts of each one of you and the departments that you all represent.

VII. Action Items

A. Approve publication of Draft Action Plan Amendment 3 for the use of CDBG-MIT funds

Chairman Tingle: Having heard the background and context, do we have a motion from the council?

- **Motion:** Pat Forbes
- **Second:** Ed Knight
- **Council Comment – Greg Grandy:** Support specifically the increased allocation for the additional funds relative to inflation.
- **Chairman Tingle:** Motion adopted

B. Approve proposed Task Order 4 for Statewide Modeling Services

Chairman Tingle: Having heard the background and context, do we have a motion from the council?

- **Motion:** Matthew Weigel
- **Second:** Greg Grandy
- **Chairman Tingle:** Motion adopted

VIII. Closing Remarks

Mr. Forbes: I just want to say before Geneva leaves, it looks like you and your team have your work cut out for you as we go through this process of aiding everybody and identifying LMI projects, that's going to be a big push it sounds like. So, I thank you all ahead of time for your work.

Chairman Tingle: Do we have members of the working group here? I'd like to recognize them. If you all would just stand real quick. The real work on the watershed council happens with this group. So I just wanted to publicly thank all of you for the work you do behind the scenes helping us to walk through all of the information and building something new is a lot of challenge. Most of you have been with us from the very beginning and have worked so much of this so I just publicly thank you all. *Applause* I know we will have a future meeting, I know we have some other project stuff to handle, I think in the November timeframe. I am going to close with the focus is now expediting execution of the funding that has been allocated. Finalizing these additional allocations and developing what those projects are and continuing to move forward on a regional basis across the state. Thanks to the public for your continued interest in this endeavor, and those watching by video. We

benefit from some great parish, local and regional partners that have done a lot of work leading up to 2016 and certainly in response to the 2016 flood and helping us at a state level to learn how better to do this so we appreciate that partnership.

IX. Adjournment

- **Motion – Pat Forbes**
- **Second – Ed Knight**
- **Adjourned at 11:00 a.m.**