

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE
AMITE RIVER BASIN DRAINAGE & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Location: 3535 S. Sherwood Forest Blvd., Suite 135, Baton Rouge, LA 70816

January 18, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT DURING ROLL CALL: Edwin Parker, David Hoover, Ben Babin, Jack Harris, James Little, Richard St. Pierre, Larry Thomas, Don Thompson, Kenneth Welborn

MEMBERS PRESENT FOLLOWING APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Lionel Bailey, Angela Machin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Felicia Lee

VACANT SEAT: St. Helena Parish

ALSO, PRESENT: ARBC Executive Director Dietmar Rietschier, ARBC Executive Secretary Toni Guitrau, ARBC Legal Counsel Larry Bankston, Representative Buddy Mincey, Jr.

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Parker.

2. Roll Call (see above).

3. Prayer/Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments on Agenda Items:

4. Minutes

The Board unanimously approved a motion by Thomas, second by St. Pierre to approve the November 2021 regular meeting minutes.

5. Executive Director Report

• Comite River Diversion Canal Project Report as follows:

a. Comite River Diversion Canal. DOTD Report: Real Estate: 84 parcels acquired and 1 in closing status. Utility Relocations are ongoing. LA 964 is 100% designed. CMAR LA 67 and CMAR LA 19 100% designs, construction contract to be executed by January 2022.

b. HCR 46: Representative Buddy Mincey, Jr. updated the Board on the completed CPRA report, per HCR 46. The report of its study and recommendations for any statutory, rule, regulation, or policy changes relative to management of the Amite River Basin was submitted on January 13, 2022 to the governor and the Legislature of Louisiana, which was within 60 days prior to the 2022 legislative session. He said the reason for HCR 46 is because there are believed to be issues with the ARBC. Now that the report is completed, there will be legislation to address the issues. His said his initial intent was to evaluate what has happened and then work together to do more. It was further discussed that changes will be made to the ARBC. Also, ARBC needs to be funded by the state, and by other means, in order to carry out its obligations as stated in RS: 38:3301-3309. ARBC Attorney Bankston told Representative Mincey that the commission sees this as an opportunity. The commission wants to assist by educating him on what has transpired, and to work with them to provide a better Amite River Basin solution. Representative Mincey said he wants to be a part of the solution in making it better. ARBC will submit several errors found in the report.

Rietschier said that the Floodplain Management Plan needs to be updated before the CRDC Project is completed. As a partner, ARBC has focused on the Comite River Diversion Canal Project for the past 20 years which is the largest flood control project in Louisiana. Commissioner Larry Thomas said that he has served as a commissioner since 2006 and that tonight is his last meeting as he is resigning for personal reasons. He said that during the past when there were funding shortages for the Comite River Diversion Project, the ARBC kept the project alive. He is thankful that the project is now fully funded. He said that as commissioners their first priority has always been to the citizens and until issues with the Corps are addressed, along with development in flood zones, the flooding problems will not be fixed.

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- c. Amite/Comite Maintenance/Surveillance Plan (tree removal; clearing; snagging). After a meeting was held with several engineers, the original RFQ was withdrawn. It was determined that it needs to be amended and republished.
6. Bailey presented to the Board the November and December 2021 General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Thompson, second by Thomas to approve the November and December 2021 General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements.
7. ARBC Legal Counsel: None
8. Old Business: None.
9. New Business – None
10. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Thomas second by Thompson to adjourn the meeting.

APPROVED:

/s/ Edwin Parker, ARBC President
Date: 2/15/22

/s/ Toni B. Guitrau, Executive Secretary