

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

Location: The Estuary, 1110 S. River Rd, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

**March 8, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT DURING ROLL CALL: Lionel Bailey, John Clark, Clint Cointment, Brin Ferlito, LeeAnn Fitch, Mark Harrell, Jack Harris, Ryan Larousse, Gary O’Neal, Edwin Parker, Fred Raiford

MEMBER(S) ARRIVE AFTER ROLL CALL: Joseph “Cedric” Shelton – arrived at 2:15 p.m.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rep. Robert Carter

ALSO PRESENT: Gregory Grandy, CPRA; Edward Knight, LADOTD; Monica S. Gorman, Pontchartrain Levee District; ARBC Executive Director Dietmar Rietschier, ARBC Executive Secretary Toni Guitrau, Legal Counsel Larry Bankston, Amite River Basin Drainage & Water Conservation District; Lawrence E. Marino, Oats & Marino; Louisiana State Representative Valarie Hodges, District 64; Louisiana State Representative Buddy Mincey, Jr. District 71; David Mitchell, The Advocate

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:30 p.m. by Chairman Clark.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Roll Call (see above)**

**4. Meet & Greet:** Each ARBC board member gave a brief description of their professional/personal backgrounds. The board is made up of 7 parish presidents or their designee, and 6 governor-appointed professionals with engineering and/or other related backgrounds.

**5. CPRA Overview of ARBC by Lawrence Marino as follows:**

- **ARBC formation in 1981**
- **A description of the Amite River Basin hydrologically and legally**
- **ARBC Authority before and after Act 490**
- **ARBC duties**
  - Exercise that management and control of watershed management
  - Prioritize reduction of flood risk and flood insurance premiums
  - Develop annual plans for watershed management
  - Develop a master plan for watershed management – including projects, programs, planning, permitting, development, and waterway management. Similar to the CPRA Master Plan. Identify objectives, include structural, nonstructural, management, and institutional components. Identify project and programs to do, costs, and justification. Subject to approval of House and Senate Transportation Committees.
  - Promulgate regulations for watershed management in the district, including regarding a comprehensive list of specified topics. List good insight into what ARBC’s management and control responsibility requires. Subject to approval of House and Senate Transportation Committees. Due 1/1/26.
  - Develop and implement a plan to manage and maintain all waterways in the district regarding watershed management.
  - Report annually to parish presidents and parish governing authorities, legislature, and committee of legislators whose districts include any part of the Amite River Basin.
  - Cooperate with parishes regarding their risk mitigation plans to ensure they consider impacts of drainage, flood control, and water resource management. Identify how to participate in FEMA’s Community Rating System.
- **ARBC Powers**
  - Sue and be sued, buy and sell property, make contracts, construct and maintain drainage works of all types, alone or in cooperation with other political subdivisions, enter land to do surveys, expropriate needed property rights, adopt bylaws, control watershed management.

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- **Other Resources Available to ARBC** include DOTD, CPRA, PLD (reimbursement required), contractors. For service contracts, the only requirements are self-imposed.
- **\$8M to CPRA in Act 170**, p.2 for “Implementation Program for the ARBC for the ARB Flood Risk Reduction Study”. Not for regular operations, but for annual plan, master plan, regulations. CEA needed.
- **Authority to levy taxes and issue bonds.**
- **Conflict Issues**  
ARBC commissioners will receive training in the Code of Governmental Ethics. Discussed conflicts, specifically what agencies the privately employed Commissioners (or their companies) can work for.

**6. Question & Answer Session for Board Members**

There was a question-and-answer period to discuss the items listed on the ARBC overview. No action was taken. It was understood to add the consideration of a CEA with CPRA in reference to the \$8M in Act 170, p.2 to the March 14, 2023 regular meeting agenda.

**7. Announcement of Committees**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

John Clark, President - Chair  
Jack Harris, Vice President  
Lionel Bailey, Finance Committee Chairman

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Lionel Bailey, Finance Chairman - Chair  
John Clark, President  
Edwin Parker

**PROJECT INVENTORY COMMITTEE**

Gary O’Neal - Chair  
LeeAnn Fitch

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE**

Clint Cointment – Chair  
Gary O’Neal  
Joseph “Cedric” Shelton

**PROCUREMENT PROTOCOL COMMITTEE**

None – Members to email Chairman Clark if they wish to be on it.

**8. Adjournment**

The board unanimously approved a motion by Harris, second by Bailey to adjourn the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

Note to Minutes: There were no public comments made during this meeting.

APPROVED:

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/s/John Clark/ARBC President

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/s/ Toni B. Guitrau, Executive Secretary

Date: March 14, 2023