**MINUTES OF JUNE 15, 2021 REGULAR MEETING**

**Board of Commissioners of**

**Bayou D’Arbonne Lake Watershed District**

Union Parish Courthouse Annex

303 East Water Street

Farmerville, LA 71241

6:30 p.m.

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

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

D. Agenda Approval – Motion was made by Richard Royal and seconded by Clint Graham to approve the June 2021 Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Approval of Minutes – Motion was made by Clint Graham and seconded by Steve Cagle to approve the minutes of the April and May 2021 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

F. Financial Reports/Budget/Audit:

1. Approve April and May 2021 Bank Account Summary – Motion was made by Richard Royal and seconded by Clint Graham to approve the April and May 2021 Bank Account Summary. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Approve April and May 2021 Bank Statement Reconciliation - Motion was made by Steve Cagle and seconded by Clint Graham to approve the April and May 2021 Bank Statement Reconciliation. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Approve April and May 2021 Financial Report – Motion was made by Clint Graham and seconded by Richard Royal to approve the April and May 2021 Financial Report. The motion passed unanimously.

G. Old and New Business:

1. Lake Report – Ryan Daniel of LDWF – Ryan Daniel with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) provided his annual report to the Commissioners. He said that the three-year crappie study that began in 2019 will be complete in six months. He said that a creel survey will begin this year to see what fish are being caught and taken from the lake and said this is a standard study throughout the state. Mr. Daniel said that once the study is complete, the data will be sent to Baton Rouge for analysis. He said that a similar study was done between 2010 and 2012.

Mr. Daniel said that more fish are being caught from the lake. He also indicated that more electronics are being used to catch fish. He said that the LDWF wants to make sure that if anything has changed, they implement the right regulations to effectively manage the crappie population on the lake. He said that the report on the study will be complete in early 2022.

Mr. Daniel also said that a bill was recently passed that allows the LDWF to make changes to crappie regulations on D’Arbonne Lake without a study. He said the previous legislation did not allow that. He said that in 2012, the LDWF voted, without biological support, to lower the creel limit for crappie to 25 fish despite public comments that were against the change and in 2013, the creel limit was lowered. He said that a state representative from Many, Louisiana, included language in a bill that was intended to manage the crappie for Toledo Bend, and Lake D’Arbonne was included as well, and the creel limits were raised back to 50 fish for D’Arbonne.

Mr. Daniel said that the following year, Representative Walsworth passed a bill to remove the authority of the LDWF to manage the creel limits, specifically D’Arbonne Lake crappie. The new bill by Representative Turner will restore the authority of the LDWF to manage the creel limits on D'Arbonne Lake.

Steve Cagle asked about the bass population and Mr. Daniel said that the last standardized sample was recently done and reflected an abundant bass population. Mr. Cagle also asked if bass were being stocked and Mr. Daniel said that the annual stocking amount of 300,000 was stocked in the Lake in April of this year. He said that 20 fingerlings are stocked per acre.

Richard Royal asked about the vegetation situation on the lake and Mr. Daniel said that overall everything looks fine at this time. He said there is not a big volume of nuisance vegetation this year, such as Giant Salvinia, and he thinks the cold weather has suppressed it. He said Hydrilla is not a big problem this year either.

Bill Carter asked Mr. Daniel if he knew of any push to change the creel limits before the completion of the study. Mr. Daniel reported that he was not aware of the bill prior to it being submitted, and he has not had any discussions with Representative Turner concerning the bill.

Todd DeMoss asked Mr. Daniel what the difference is between Lake D’Arbonne and Lake Fork as far as the bass population, and Mr. Daniel said many factors affect the fish population, including growth rate, mortality rate, age, structure, etc. He said that the simple answer is that all lakes are different.

* + 1. Channel Markers Project - Reimbursement – Neal DeForest said that there has been no update on the reimbursement.
    2. Spillway Beach Area Improvements – Neal DeForest said that materials have been ordered but the supplier will not be able to give him a total amount for all materials until they have been ordered and shipped. He said that the cost of the round floats was around $3,500 and the company does not have a price on the nine piling rings yet. He said the cable and brackets have been selected by the contractor, Kerry Freeman, which he will provide. All materials are being shipped to Mr. Freeman at his address and are estimated will take four to six weeks for delivery.
    3. Lake Level Gauges – Neal DeForest said that the lake level is still too high, but he thinks that it will be dry enough in the coming weeks and will call to schedule the transformer and service line installation by Claiborne Electric six weeks out.
    4. Boat Launch Areas - Maintenance – Steve Cagle said that all ramps could use weed killer due to all of the rain. Richard Royal said the pier at Hog Pen is in very bad shape and he put poles and flagging to keep people off of it. Mr. Royal said that Kerry Freeman volunteered to do the labor and Read Lumber volunteered to donate lumber to replace portions of the pier and they are in the process of doing that now.
    5. Lake Closure / No Wake Policy – Union Parish Police Jury Ordinance – Richard Royal said that he had a brief discussion with a Police Jury member and they are working on reviewing the policy and getting it added to one of their future agendas to have the policy approved.
    6. Approve Revisions to Policies and Procedures - Mr. Carter said that he had previously mailed the revisions to the Policies and Procedures to all of the Commission members, which revisions were required by the legislative auditor. Motion was made by Steve Cagle and seconded by Clint Graham to adopt the revisions to the Policies and Procedures. The motion passed unanimously.
    7. Request to use Road and Ramp by Union Parish Chamber of Commerce for July 4th Fireworks Display – Richard Royal said that the July 4th fireworks show will be on Saturday, July 3, 2021, and the Union Parish Chamber of Commerce is requesting to close Ramp Road from midnight July 2, 2021, to midnight on July 3, 2021. Motion was made by Steve Cagle and seconded by Todd DeMoss to close Ramp Road from midnight July 2, 2021, to midnight on July 3, 2021, and authorize the President of the Lake Commission to enter into an agreement with the Union Parish Chamber of Commerce. The motion passed unanimously.
    8. Use of Debit Card on Louisiana National Bank Checking Account – Richard Royal said that it is necessary to use a debit card from time to time for certain purchases and thus, a debit card has been ordered for the Louisiana National Bank checking account. Mr. Royal said that the debit card should be handled in the same manner as check requests, in accordance with the Policies and Procedures. Motion was made by Todd DeMoss and seconded by Clint Graham to order and use a debit card in the same manner as check requests for the Louisiana National Bank checking account. The motion passed unanimously.
    9. Boat Launch Fees – Ordinance Establishing Fees and Resolution Fixing Amount of Fees – Bill Carter said that he has prepared an Ordinance to establish launch fees at ramps owned by the Commission and it is now time to get the word out to the public that this is what the Commission plans to do. Mr. Carter passed out an overview of the boat launch fees and told the Commission members that these were good bullet points to talk about with the public on how and why the fees will be collected.

He said that Byron Avery has agreed to write an article in The Gazette with an overview of the launch fees and he will also request the Banner to do the same. He also suggested posting the overview on the Commission Facebook page.

Mr. Carter said that in the near future, the public would be informed on when the Ordinance was to be adopted. He said that the Ordinance will allow the Commission to establish the fees and a separate Resolution would be adopted to set the amount of the fees and annual permits.

Several Commission members discussed the launch fees and the importance of informing the public where the money collected from launch fees would be spent. The Commission members also discussed various particulars relating to the collection boxes, permits, etc.

* + 1. Commission Website - Richard Royal said that he is assessing the website and has spoken to a person about updating the website.
    2. Annual Financial Disclosure for 2020 (Due May 15) – No action taken.

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

I. Adjourn – A motion to adjourn was made by Steve Cagle and seconded by Richard Royal. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned.