

PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREATER NEW ORLEANS EXPRESSWAY COMMISSION, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 2014, 10:00 A.M., GNOEC CONFERENCE ROOM, VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA BUILDING, 3939 NORTH CAUSEWAY BOULEVARD, SUITE 400, METAIRIE, LA

PRESENT: Michael R. Lorino, Jr., Chairman; Stephen G. Romig, Vice Chairman; Tommy S. Cvitanovich, Secretary; Anthony V. Ligi, Jr., Treasurer

OTHERS: Carlton Dufrechou; Debbie Lopreore; Cheryl Lambert; Melissa M. Phillpott; Eileen Barthe'; Georgie Bagnetto; Red Thompson; Robert Graham; Crystal Scott; Chief Nick Congemi; Perry Daigrepoint; Phil Meyers, Cary Bourgeois & Gavin Gillen, GEC, Inc; Burgess McCranie, McCranie, Campbell, Sistrunk, Anzelmo, Hardy, McDaniel & Welch; Craig Watson, Blue Williams; Bill Murhammer; Dr. Andrea Calvin, Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation; Rene Chopin, Burk-Kleinpeter; Jim Lynch & Kathy Gambino, Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Svc.; Lisa Daniel, Public Financial Management, Inc.; Jaimee Boyd & Hugh Martin, Foley & Judell; Tammy Sellno, Whitney Bank; Doug Brooks, Jack B. Harper Contractor, LLC; Polly Greene, St. Tammany Farmer; Robert Rhoden, Times Picayune

ABSENT: Lawrence M. Rase, Assistant Secretary Treasurer

The Chairman called the meeting to order.

On the motion by Romig, seconded by Lorino, the minutes of the regular meeting held on May 7, 2014 were accepted as written. Mr. Lorino, Mr. Romig, Mr. Ligi and Mr. Cvitanovich voted in favor of the motion.

On behalf of the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation (LPBF), Dr. Calvin reported the water quality looks good for the most part. The South Shore in particular looks good with Pontchartrain beach having very low bacteria counts. Dr. Calvin stated that last week a volunteer swam from New Orleans to Mandeville in approximately fifteen hours as a fund raiser for the LPBF.

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission
Regular Meeting – June 18, 2014**

On the Drawbridge operations, Mr. Dufrechou reported it is operational again. There were 8 vessel openings last month and 3 test openings.

Fog operations are closed for this year.

Mr. Dufrechou reported in May, Police and MAP responded to 263 breakdowns on the Causeway Bridge and 23 breakdowns on the Huey P. Long.

Mr. Dufrechou reported there were 15 accidents on the Causeway bridge in May. He reported 7 on the Huey P. Long. Several of the accidents were associated with congestion. Chief Nick Congemi confirms that 90% to 95% are due to congestion, people running into the back of others.

Mr. Dufrechou stated that on May 20, 2014, we had the refunding of the 2014 series bonds and it was very successful. On May 27, 2014, Moody's upgraded the bonds to a AAA rating.

Mr. Dufrechou reported that on May 31, 2014, a GMC Sierra went overboard at approximately 3:00 pm. It was 2 miles from the South Shore. Another commuter, Alvin Pike, who was behind the pickup when it went overboard, waved down vehicles and jumped in the Lake to rescue the driver of the pickup truck. Fortunately a PFD was in the back of the pickup which Mr. Pike was able to retrieve for its driver. Also another driver had an additional life preserver in his vehicle and threw it to Mr. Pike. Someone else had a rope. The Carnegie foundation is considering Mr. Pike for a life saving award. Mr. Dufrechou said that it is spectacular that strangers who did not know each other a few minutes before all worked together to save a life. Capt. Lorino stated that

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission
Regular Meeting – June 18, 2014**

commuters of the Causeway follow the news and many are carrying life saving devices such as ropes and life vests to prevent a tragedy on the Causeway.

Mr. Dufrechou stated that the next day at 10:00 am, the Southbound Causeway was closed for an hour and a half to recover the pickup. The driver did state that he was reaching for a cell phone and lost control of the vehicle. Mr. Dufrechou reaffirmed that the higher center of gravity vehicles, like pickups, are the ones most likely to go overboard.

Capt. Lorino asked Mr. Dufrechou if the GNOEC could be reimbursed for the type of accident from the insurance company for our manpower and things of that nature. Mr. Dufrechou answered that in most instances we are reimbursed for the damages to the bridge but not for the manpower. He said some result in litigation.

Mr. Dufrechou stated that on June 3, 2014, there was a head on collision off the Bridge near Troop L on the North Shore. It was in rush hour traffic and induced a back up on the bridge for about four miles delaying motorists for approximately an hour.

On June 6, 2014, a 20 foot Seaquest (boat) was going from east to west under the bridge about a mile from the South Shore when the operator lost steering of the boat and hit the pilings of the Southbound bridge. The accident ejected two people into the lake and we lifted them to the deck. Mr. Dufrechou reported one adult was transported to East Jefferson Hospital. He also reported both people were fine but the boat was damaged and towed by C.E.C. to Bonnabel boat launch.

On June 10, 2014, Senator Landrieu and Senator Vitter both submitted letters of support for our TIGER Grant application to improve the bridge railing system.

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission
Regular Meeting – June 18, 2014**

On June 11, 2014, the work began on the East Causeway approach.

On June 12, 2014, approximately 100 Vespas traveling from Alaska to New Orleans crossed the Causeway Bridge to celebrate the conclusion of their transcontinental journey.

On behalf of the Causeway Charitable foundation, Mr. Gavin Gillen stated they are trying to schedule a skeet shoot fundraiser before the end of 2014.

On the North Channel Bascule Control System Replacement Project, Mr. Dufrechou presented Change Order No. 4. **On motion by Romig, seconded by Lorino, Plan Change No. 4 provides for wiring revisions to existing field equipment to meet the current national electric code in the amount of \$12,607.40 in 30 calendar days. Based upon the recommendation of the staff and its Consulting Engineers, the Commission accepted Plan Change No. 4 on the referenced project. The General Manager is hereby authorized to complete the execution of Plan Change No. 4. Mr. Lorino, Mr. Romig, Mr. Ligi and Mr. Cvitanovich voted in favor of the motion.**

On the Realignment of the Northbound Bridge Spans project, Mr. Dufrechou presented Change Order No. 5 at no additional cost. **On motion by Lorino, seconded by Ligi, Plan Change No. 5 provides for the addition of 30 calendar days to the current 105 calendar day assembly period to provide a total of 135 calendar days. Based upon the recommendation of the Staff and its Consulting Engineers, the Commission authorized the General Manager to complete the execution of Plan Change No. 5. Mr. Lorino, Mr. Romig, Mr. Ligi and Mr. Cvitanovich voted in favor of the motion.**

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission
Regular Meeting – June 18, 2014**

Mr. Dufrechou presented an agreement with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, for the same project, Realignment for the Northbound Bridge Spans. On a motion by Lorino, seconded by Romig this agreement is necessary to amend State Project Number H.009325 of the existing Agreement and add three new State Project Numbers H.011231, H.011206, and H.011217 to repair damage from Hurricane Isaac to various sections of the Lake Pontchartrain Bridge. Based upon the recommendation of the Staff and its Consulting Engineers, the Commission authorized the General Manager to execute the agreement. Mr. Lorino, Mr. Romig, Mr. Ligi and Mr. Cvitanovich voted in favor of the motion.

On the Replacement of Damaged Traffic Signs on the Northbound Bridge and Replace the Traffic signs on the overhead on the Monroe Street Overpass, Mr. Dufrechou presented Change Order No. 3. On motion by Cvitanovich, seconded by Lorino, Plan Change No. 3 provides for the replacement of the overhead signs on the Monroe Street Overpass signs at a total cost of \$17,295.01 and additional 5 calendar days contract time. Based upon the recommendation of the Staff and its Consulting Engineers, the Commission authorized the General Manager to execute Plan Change No. 3. Mr. Lorino, Mr. Romig, Mr. Ligi and Mr. Cvitanovich voted in favor of the motion.

On the Overlay of the East Causeway Approach Road Mr. Dufrechou presented Change Order No. 1. He stated the work actually began on June 11th. Mr. Dufrechou said that engineering estimate for this project was \$2.5 million and the low bid came in at \$2,282,000.00. Thus, we had a considerable savings. Mr. Dufrechou said that this

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission
Regular Meeting – June 18, 2014**

plan change will address Mandeville's request to adding a right turn lane off of the East Approach to Florida to facilitate traffic. **On motion by Ligi, seconded by Cvitanovich, Plan Change No. 1 provides for the addition of a right turn lane from East Causeway Approach Road onto Florida Street in an amount not to exceed \$240,000.00. Based upon the recommendation of the Staff and its Consulting Engineers, the Commission authorized the General Manager to execute Plan Change No. 1. Mr. Lorino, Mr. Romig, Mr. Ligi and Mr. Cvitanovich voted in favor of the motion.**

On the re-striping of the Causeway Bridge, Mr. Dufrechou stated that bids are due 2:00 pm today and contingent upon review this resolution will give the staff permission to sign a contract. **On motion by Romig, seconded by Lorino, bids on Pavement Markings of Bridge Deck are scheduled to be received on June 18, 2014 at 2:00 pm. Contingent upon receipt of a valid bid and subject to the review and recommendation of the Legal Counsel, the Staff and the Consulting Engineers, the GNOEC authorizes the General Manager to complete execution of the contract documents for the project titled Pavement Markings of the Bridge Deck, GNOEC Project No. 423 with the lowest responsible bidder. Mr. Lorino, Mr. Romig, Mr. Ligi and Mr. Cvitanovich voted in favor of the motion.**

On Stantec Consulting, Mr. Dufrechou stated this is authorizing negotiations and agreement to review our historic and current traffic data and develop a forecast for future traffic and revenue for a not to exceed a price of \$30,000.00. **On motion by Ligi, seconded by Cvitanovich, be it resolved that the General Manager is authorized to negotiate an agreement with Stantec to contain substantially the terms**

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission
Regular Meeting – June 18, 2014**

included in their April 28, 2014 proposal and its further authorized and directed, for and on behalf of the GNOEC, to executed such documents necessary and desirable o complete the agreement at a cost not to exceed \$30,000.00. Mr. Lorino, Mr. Romig, Mr. Ligi and Mr. Cvitanovich voted in favor of the motion.

With respect to the Refunding Series 2014 bonds, Mr. Dufrechou presented a supplemental resolution for approval. Mr. Dufrechou asked Ms. Lisa Daniel and Mr. Hugh Martin to give a summary on the Refunding Series 2014. Mr. Martin said that the resolution today represents the last official action by the Commission to complete the 2014 bond issue. Mr. Martin stated it contains general requirements. This authorizes the Chairman and Secretary to execute the final closing documents for the bond issue. Mr. Martin reported that the bond issue has been scheduled to be closed tomorrow (June 19, 2014). He said that the purchasers will wire the funds necessary to repay the outstanding bonds tomorrow. He announced to the Commission that if they have any questions, he would be happy to try and answer them. Mr. Lorino stated that they did a wonderful job and everyone is very pleased with the outcome. Ms. Daniel said instead of negotiating with an investment banker who collected on the front end, they put the bond out for bid on a single day. She stated they received six bids. Ms. Daniel stated Fidelity Capital won the bid at a 3.06093%. Ms. Daniels said there was a savings of \$2.66 million or 15.5% of the refunded bond. Ms. Daniels said she is very happy they can report the fact that GNOEC is saving money. Capt. Lorino thanked Ms. Daniel for a job well done and helping to represent the Commission.

Mr. Dufrechou stated this would be the final resolution for the refunding that authorizes Capt. Lorino as the Chairman to execute the appropriate documents and it is

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission
Regular Meeting – June 18, 2014**

recommended for approval. **On motion by Ligi, seconded by Lorino, Be it Resolved a resolution supplementing the Series 2013 resolution adopted by the Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission on August 7, 2013, as supplemented on September 4, 2013 and on May 7, 2014, in connection with the issuance of Commission's Refunding Revenue Bonds, Series 2014; providing redemption notice; setting forth the bond insurance and reserve policy provisions; authorizing the appropriating officers of the Commission to execute certain documents and certifies deemed necessary in connection therewith; and providing for certain other matters in connection therewith. Mr. Lorino, Mr. Romig, Mr. Ligi and Mr. Cvitanovich voted in favor of the motion.**

Mr. Dufrechou presented a resolution regarding Public Financial Management (PFM) services. He recommended that we continue to use them as the Commissions financial manager. **On motion by Cvitanovich, seconded by Romig, be it resolved that the GNOEC is authorized to enter into a contract with PFM to provide financial services as such contract may be approved by the General Manager acting in his discretion. Mr. Lorino, Mr. Romig, Mr. Ligi and Mr. Cvitanovich voted in favor of the motion.**

Mr. Dufrechou presented an update on the rail analysis and safety shoulders. He stated Texas A & M began with nine options and has screened these down to three. Mr. Dufrechou showed slides indicating a two rail option with 46" height from the existing roadway deck. He said there are two variations of base slates. Mr. Cary Bourgeois confirmed one is 5/8" and the other is 3/4". Mr. Dufrechou said the third option is single rail with a 37" height from the existing deck section. Mr. Dufrechou said these would

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission
Regular Meeting – June 18, 2014**

significantly increase the height of the rails. Mr. Dufrechou said they anticipate testing to happen in the next three weeks. Mr. Dufrechou said once the testing on site is complete, Texas A & M will fabricate a replica of our existing bridge concrete rail, adding their best option, and crash test it at College Station. Mr. Dufrechou said that should happen before the end of the calendar year. Capt. Lorino asked if they will be notified when the crash test will be done. Mr. Dufrechou answered affirmatively. Capt. Lorino asked Mr. Bourgeois if we are keeping the curb. Mr. Bourgeois answered yes. Capt. Lorino asked if the railing was going on top of the existing concrete barrier. Mr. Bourgeois answered yes. Capt. Lorino asked in relation to the height, would they be able to construct the height to keep vehicles from going over the sides and keep them in the lanes. Mr. Bourgeois stated that all the indications from Texas A & M are they can do so. Texas A & M will run tests with a small car, a pick-up truck and a box van. Mr. Bourgeois said the selection criteria is based upon how vehicles react when they hit a rail. Mr. Dufrechou reminded everyone that the reason we are trying to maintain the curb is because we had 263 breakdowns just last month. The curb is a haven of last resort for those involved in breakdowns. Capt. Lorino agreed and said that he is hoping we can keep the curb but it looks like the jury is still out on that.

Mr. Dufrechou showed a diagram showing the Causeway's seven crossovers. He said if there is a breakdown right now, the vehicles are pushed, pulled or dragged to a crossover. On the diagram, Mr. Dufrechou indicated locations for proposed safety shoulders. He stated there will be twelve of these. Each would 676 feet long. He explained there would be in pairs and would be located half way between the existing crossovers. He said this could triple the emergency stopping area for the bridge. Mr.

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission
Regular Meeting – June 18, 2014**

Dufrechou stated that the initial estimate is \$10 million per pair or \$60 million total. He said they could be a tremendous aid to our operations. He said that tripling the emergency area on the bridge will be very helpful in dealing with the breakdowns and could more rapidly get most motorists in distress out of harm's way. Mr. Ligi asked Chief Congemi about the accidents that we currently have, what percentage is caused by an initial breakdown. Chief Congemi stated that a lot of accidents are caused by a caterpillar effect of the traffic slowing and some are caused by the breakdowns. Mr. Dufrechou stated that anytime that threat can be reduced then it would be beneficial.

Capt. Lorino asked to revisit the TIGER Grant, what is the amount of money that we are looking at. Mr. Dufrechou said the request is \$53 million of that GNOEC will fund approximately \$12 million so we are asking for \$41 million from the Department of Transportation. Capt. Lorino asked if it is provided in the next calendar year or is it over a period of time. Mr. Bourgeois answered it should all be available in three to four years. Capt. Lorino stated as Chairman of the board but more so as a commuter and member of this community, he is in favor of any and all solutions to fund this project. He said this bridge has always been funded almost entirely by commuters. Capt. Lorino said this is not a state or federal road and it is ours and no one will do this for us. He said we may or may not have to but if we do, he publically gives his support for raising tolls to fund the safety improvements before even one more vehicle goes overboard and God forbid one more person loses his life. Capt. Lorino stated we have been seeing a steady increase in people go over the side. He said the people that cross the bridge will support it as long as we are an open book and they can see where the money is going and he knows we will do that.

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission
Regular Meeting – June 18, 2014**

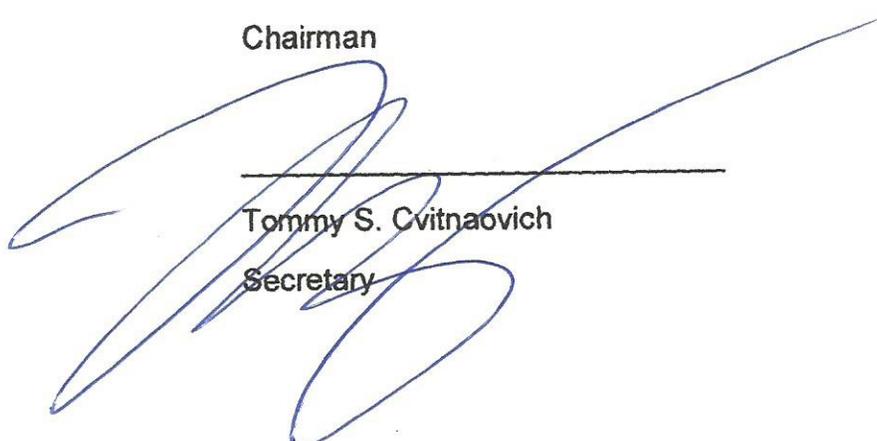
Capt. Lorino stated that it is imperative to have the next meeting on the North shore. Mr. Dufrechou proposed to cancel the meeting in July and host the next commission meeting on the North shore in early August.

There being no further business, the meeting will be adjourned.



Michael R. Lorino, Jr.

Chairman



Tommy S. Cvitnaovich

Secretary