

RESTORE LOUISIANA TASK FORCE
December 2, 2016
Tangipahoa Parish Council Chambers
206 East Mulberry Street
Amite, LA

Approved

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Jimmy Durbin called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM. Everyone's mics are hot, please pay attention to that. The roll was then called.

II. ROLL CALL

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Roland Dartez
Mr. Jimmy Durbin
Mr. Michael Faulk
Mr. John Gallagher
Senator Dan "Blade" Morrish
Mayor Dave Norris
Mr. Michael Olivier
Representative J. Rogers Pope
Mr. Sean Reilly
Commissioner Mike Strain
Mayor Ollie Tyler
Dr. Shawn Wilson

TASK FORCE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Johnny Bradberry
Mr. Randy Cloutre (non-voting, ex-officio)
Representative Edward "Ted" James
Mr. Raymond Jetson
Mr. Adam Knapp
Mr. Don Pierson
Dr. James Richardson
Mayor-President Joel Robideaux
Representative Robert Shadoin
Ms. Jacqui Vines Wyatt

SUPPORTING STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Patrick Forbes, Executive Director, Office of Community Development
Rowdy Gaudet, Office of Community Development
Adrienne Celestine, Office of Community Development
Lori Dupont, Office of Community Development
Kayla Westmoreland, Office of Community Development
Ray Rodriguez, Louisiana Housing Corporation
Dan Rees, Office of Community Development

Ms. Dupont: Sir Chair, 12 members are present, we have a quorum.

LET THE RECORD SHOW THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS ARRIVED AFTER THE ROLL CALL:

Mayor-President Joel Robideaux

III. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 18, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Durbin: A quorum is present, we will proceed to the next item on the agenda, approval of the November 18, 2016 meeting minutes. Do we have a motion to approve?

Representative Pope: Motioned.

Commissioner Strain: Seconded.

Mr. Durbin: Minutes have been approved and adopted unanimously.

IV. CHAIRPERSON OPENING REMARKS

~ Jimmy Durbin, Restore Louisiana Task Force Co-Chair

Mr. Durbin: It's great to be here in the city of Amite. I used to practice law and drive up LA16 to the courthouse here in Amite and, in fact, I've never been to the council chambers so I was looking coming up this road way, Mulberry, and for whatever reason I was looking to the left and went right by and as a magnet went right over and parked in front of the courthouse. I walked in and said, 'Look, can you help me?' Well first you have to take all your metal off and I said please help me, tell me where the council chambers office is located. Across the street at that building over there. Thank you. Then I walk in and I was thinking I was just going to be one of you guys and ladies and my co-chair would be chairing this meeting, which we all planned for, and Mr. Durbin you are chairing, so let me get going. It's nice to be here in Amite. A special thank you to our Parish President Robby Miller for hosting us today in this beautiful setting. On concluding my remarks President Miller will address the task force along with other officials that may be present, they will be invited up by President Miller. Members, please keep in mind that your mics are hot. Please be sure to keep conversations among yourselves to a minimum and push your chairs away from the mics. If anyone in the audience would like to comment on a specific agenda item please fill out a comment card with a notation of which agenda item you would like to make a comment on and send up to the chair. If your comment is not on a specific agenda item, we will address it during the public comment section, which will be last on the agenda. Stafford Act update under tab 4 of your binders is our bi-weekly Stafford Act Update provided by GOHSEP. If anyone has any questions we can address those. Any questions on the Stafford Act update? Moving to next comment, Economic Development RSF and Rental Housing RSF recommendations. We will have presentations, followed by recommendations. Upon the conclusion of each presentation we will vote on a resolution to provide our recommendations to Governor Edwards. Along with the presentation given to us today, the Office of Community Development has held numerous conference calls to discuss, provide and accept input, and answer any questions regarding the presentations and recommendations put forth to us today. I actually participated in one on Wednesday and I was very satisfied with that. Good morning Mr. Mayor-President Robideaux. We are at 13 members of a 21 member task force so please honor the fact that if you get up during an action item to please make sure a quorum is still present. The next meeting will be Friday, December 16, 2016, and Mayor Norris has offered to host us in West Monroe, thank you Mr. Mayor. Last but not least, please do not take your binders with you, take the contents.

V. TANGIPAHOA PARISH OFFICIALS

~ Parish President Robby Miller, Tangipahoa Parish

Parish President Miller: Thank you Mr. Chairman and thank you for having me. First of all I'd like to welcome all of you Amite, LA, Tangipahoa Parish. I believe that Louisiana is the best state in the country and I believe that Tangipahoa Parish is the best parish in the state so you are in the best place in the world and we welcome you. We thank you for coming and we welcome you on behalf of the administration and our council who graciously lets us use this chamber so that we could have this meeting. We also have some members from some of our cities. Mayor Kentwood Gordon, Representative Steve Pugh, Representative Chris Broadwater from St. Helena, Major Coleman and Mr. Joseph, one of our council members, who is actually very interested in this because he is waiting for his FEMA trailer to be set up. Did I miss anyone? Thank you all so much for coming. Before I forget, outside that door there is a hall with donuts, water and cold drinks for you and around noon we will have lunch for you. So, we are doing it a bit better than when you are at the Capitol so we hope that you will remember Tangipahoa Parish when you start making decisions. Some of our comments, I understand that the money that has been allocated from the federal government is not enough to do everything we need to do, I get that. Some of what we are looking at for Tangipahoa Parish probably would fall into the next big, what we are hoping is a significant amount, of investment from the federal government to us, we recognize that too. We do have the housing issues everyone else has, and with that I will go ahead and go through the presentation.

See PowerPoint presentation available on Restore Louisiana Task Force website.

Parish President Miller: I believe that is all I have personally and we thank you for your time. I will answer any questions you may have. Also, I think a couple Representative may have some comments and I ask you to please let them do so.

Mr. Durbin opened the floor for questions.

Commissioner Strain: At the mouth of the Tangipahoa River, you said that there's a hundred yards that needs to be dredged?

Parish President Miller: No sir, about a hundred yards where it hits the mouth, it's 14', when you start getting to the actual channel, we have a study that tells us what the sediment is and what you can do with it, whether it's going to backfilled or pushed back out into the lake. The estimate to actually clear just the mouth is about a little over \$1M. So it's not huge for now but that's just a small, the idea is if we're going to do that it would be a whole lot better working the whole river. That would help a lot.

Commissioner Strain: Now do you have to deal with it as a scenic river? Would you have to deal with that designation legislatively?

Parish President Miller: The law does allow us to do that. It's in there. We have to work with the Corps but being a scenic river does not stop us. That designation does not stop us.

Commissioner Strain: Okay. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Dartez: Thank you, Mr. President, for being here and hosting us today. I know you all have talked about the dredging issue and in a perfect world, and I may have missed it, of the homes that flooded on all three occasions, what percentage of them may not have?

Parish President Miller: It's a little tough to nail down a real number but we believe just in some, I must say experts, their estimates looking at they believe that we could have probably lowered the flood stage by two feet or so, which would have changed dramatically for the areas that the tributaries that flooded leading to the river could have gotten into the river like they were doing so it would have been pretty significant if you could lower it by about two feet.

Senator Morrish: When you talk about the hazard mitigation and the fact that many of the people have been flooded three times and I believe you said the hazard mitigation dollars did not flow fast enough, you've only had three or four people that have actually elevated, is that there only option in hazard mitigation which is to elevate or is it the only option that works?

Parish President Miller: For us to acquire and interpret down in that they take their funds and go somewhere else but the concern we have with the timing and I think you have heard this is we're concerned that we are not only going to lose those residents, not just to Tangipahoa Parish, but maybe to Louisiana because they don't know what to do. They have a home that sitting there with a mortgage and you've heard it, I'm not telling you anything new, but the mortgage, even if it's not a mortgage, if it's been paid for and family owned for the last fifty or sixty years and they have to raise, it's a \$110k and they get \$30k. It may not be practical. We are working on both acquisition and raising, it's just worse than a snail pace I should say.

Senator Morrish: One other question, back to the Tangipahoa River, in 1995 was that done by the Corps or is that a Coast Guard project?

Parish President Miller: The Corps.

Mr. Reilly: Thanks again for having us. This might be a question for Pat but at the top of your list was hazard mitigation planning. Under the Stafford Act can we allocate planning funds or do we have to find another source for that?

Mr. Patrick Forbes with the LA Office of Community Development joined Parish President Miller at the witness table.

Mr. Forbes: I'm not sure, but I'm sure Mark Riley could answer the question for us about FEMA funds but I do know that we are using planning funds from previous disasters Community Development Block Grant funds to

start the watershed planning process on all the impacted areas, including Tangipahoa Parish. So, we are getting that going now.

Mr. Reilly: So, we can check that one off, hopefully?

Mr. Forbes: Yes.

Mr. Reilly: Your comments on the individual hazard mitigation ring true everywhere after every disaster. I've almost given up hope on things like elevating and buying out, the answer has to be in community mitigation projects and the dredging, let's make the water go somewhere else.

Parish President Miller: I think one reason why it's at the top of us is because in the Governor's comments, whenever we first started talking about getting these hopefully bigger dollars, he talks about that we want to do things to stop us from flooding, don't just worry about those individual areas. We liked it because we believe the river issue if we can, we are not going to solve all the flooding, we get it, but we can make it be as efficient as it should be and could be. I want to compliment, before I stop and turn it over to Representative Broadwater and Representative Pugh, I want to commend our citizens, listening to the other parishes, our citizens have really kind of pulled themselves up and taking care of their business and done it. I think that is a great quality we have here in Tangipahoa Parish but it is also kind of a detriment, they're just good at it. They are better at it than the other parishes because they've had to do it so many times and it's tough on them to do it but they step up and get their business put together. We were fortunate that we didn't have very many businesses affected. Our municipalities did not flood, thankfully. Residential, mostly residential, outside of the municipality, so our businesses were open and our citizens could go back and shop at our stores and get themselves put back together. One more, to publicly commend, and I did this a few times but for you guys to know, during the flood there was a group that came into town called Operation Barbeque Relief. It's a barbeque competition whose competitors pulled together and created this organization and they served over 300,000 meals out of the Hammond. They served meals all the way to Lafayette, all the way through to Ascension, in East Baton Rouge Parish, in Livingston. They were setting up in a parking lot with a tent and they would deliver 20,000 or 30,000 meals to those areas and distribute. They actually just showed up. When they called me and asked if they could come I just said sure, and I was thinking we were getting four or five barbeque pits, but this was an incredible operation. Representative Pugh and Representative Broadwater both visited and it was quite impressive, and they took care of us. The second group was a small group of private citizens down in Ponchatoula, they now call themselves the Love Train. It was Trey Harris and a couple of good friends out there and they started cooking at a local little gas station down in Ponchatoula and they served about 25,000 meals for all the people there. It was donated food, donated labor, and it did a lot in those two weeks. Again, we pull together and we did what we needed to do and I just want to make sure that those groups got commended and at this point I'll turn it over.

Representative Pope: I do have one question, and I'll be brief. It was mentioned about your rivers and scenic rivers, is the one you are referring to one of those designated 18 scenic rivers?

Parish President Miller: Yes, sir.

Representative Pope: How do you go about that because we have one that separates East Baton Rouge and Livingston and I'm just curious because we can't get around it?

Parish President Miller: The legislation that was drafted gives us the ability to clean it from Interstate 12 down to the mouth, it's in the legislation that we can do what we need to do. The rest of it falls under the Corps letting us and I think we are in pretty good shape. If you go read the law that created it.

Representative Pope: But was legislation initiated to give you authority to do that?

Parish President Miller: Yes, sir.

Representative Chris Broadwater and Representative Steve Pugh joined Parish President Miller at the witness table.

Representative Pugh: The original bill was done by Senator John Henkel at the time and he had the foresight about it to put in the bill that it could be snaked or dredged for the flow of the river. So it is in the original legislation that Senator Henkel drafted.

Representative Pope: That's very helpful, thank you.

Representative Broadwater: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I'm Representative Broadwater and I represent the central part of Tangipahoa Parish, essentially from the City of Hammond up to Amite, and I want to thank you for the work that you're doing and the listening that you are doing. I know many of you aren't just traveling listening to stories but several of you are living it yourself and I know how difficult that is so I appreciate the work you are doing but I want to make sure that I delivered a message to you from my constituents. The number one thing that I hear over and over again, they certainly understand and are sympathetic to what has happened in other parishes because as our president has said they have lived it three times in five years. For those of you that are getting back in your homes right now, think about as my constituents did, got back in their homes three to six weeks before this next flood and finish your house, replace all your belongings, move your family back in and get your children situated ready for school and lose it all again after three weeks and to do that after you lost it all before five years ago. Our people are incredibly resilient and they have worked, and many of them while flooding here, went to other parishes to help and that's an amazing thing. The one message that they want to send I think is based on something that some of you in the legislature dealt with. You'll recall that back in 1983 the majority of these people flooded too. After I-12 was built the water could not get past that area and north of I-12 throughout my district, they lost everything and they did receive a court award, they were awarded a judgment, a sizeable judgment to assist them with rebuilding and to this day they're still waiting. So, you can understand why they feel forgotten. So, the number one message that my constituents would send to you is, they lost it all in '83 and they were forgotten, to this day they still feel forgotten. Now it's happened three times to them in five years. Their message to you would be, please don't forget us again. Please make sure you keep Tangipahoa Parish in these plans and don't forget them again. Thank you for coming.

Representative Pugh: To my colleagues and former colleagues, glad to have you all here. Just to broaden on what Chris said, the flood of '83 was just devastating. That is kind of the start of the flooding in Tangipahoa Parish and these people like he said they don't want to be forgotten. It's been going on over thirty years and we need to get the people their rightful due. Back in '83 each of them got a mop bucket, a mop, and a broom, they did not get \$2000 credit cards to spend or they didn't get any FEMA money to rebuild or anything like that. A bucket, a mop and a broom, and these people are waiting on their money. Like I said before with the Tangipahoa River, to put it in layman's terms, you can't get a flat out of the mouth of the river. That's how it has built up over the years. Something must be done. I have called Army Corps and they said well it's a scenic river. I said read the bill, the bill says that it can be desnagged and dredged, and anything to improve the flow of the water and undoubtedly the Army Corps has the philosophy don't confuse me with the facts, I've got my mind made up and that's exactly what I feel is happening now with the Tangipahoa River. It is the root of a lot of our problems with drainage and it must be corrected. If there is some money that's left over from Katrina, that FEMA has set up I understand, could be used and it would bypass the Army Corps. I would urge it be used to correct this problem. The people of Tangipahoa Parish are resilient but they're wary. You know, this has been going on since basically '83 and they are just tired of it. We have a wonderful area here, we have a lot to offer, and we are going to wind up losing a lot of our people because they are just tired of rebuilding. So, that is going to be a loss to us and probably move out of state so it would be a loss to the state as well. So, we must do everything that we can to protect the people here in our area and make them feel whole again. Unfortunately, Rogers has gone through it so he knows. Can you imagine, Rogers, going through that three times?

Representative Pope: Let me just tell you, I have. '77, '83, and now. I live the dream.

Representative Pugh: Oh, you have, okay. I hear you. Again, we just ask, work with us and we will do a lot of work, Chris and I will get together and band together. You know, we may not see alike or vote alike on some things but when it comes to Tangipahoa Parish, you can't put a piece of paper between the two of those because we will hold tight and get things done for everyone. We just ask for your help as well and I thank you all for being here and thank you all for being so attentive and I can see the concern in your eyes, so I know that something is going to be done and hopefully quickly because would have thought in six months it would happen again but it can happen tomorrow. Thank you all for your time.

Mr. Durbin: President Miller, is there anyone else?

Parish President Miller: I think we are good. Thank you all very much.

Mr. Durbin closed the floor for questions.

VI. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE UPDATE

~ Julie Baxter Payer, Deputy Chief of Staff,

~ Patrick Forbes, Executive Director, LA Office of Community Development

Ms. Payer: Thank you very much. It's a pleasure to be here today and to be in Tangipahoa Parish. As you can imagine, the Governor was very happy that we were coming here today. So, it's a pleasure to be here. I do want to just briefly say that we have another recovery presentation that we're doing at the Capitol today, so if I sneak out early, that's where I'm going so please forgive me for that. I wanted to just make a short point, I know I've had questions from some of you on the speed of all this recovery of the programs in place and I wanted to just make two points that you can take away with you today. Just to reiterate, we've talked about this at the other meetings, but the speed of this recovery in comparison with other storms, and we know that one day out of your home is too long and so it's never fast enough, but I did just want to give you some encouragement that after Superstorm Sandy, New York and New Jersey had their first appropriation from Congress in three months and two days. That was the appropriation, the first appropriation. We had ours in seventy-six days. Also, we were not able to write our final action plan on how we will spend that \$438M, that you all are working on recommendations for right now, until the federal registry notice was published and that happened on November twenty-first and it looks at this point that the Office of Community Development, under the Governor, Pat Forbes and his very able team will be able to post an action plan for public comment in just over three weeks from that date. That is incredibly fast in terms of writing action plans and I just want to commend Pat and the team. Unfortunately, like President Miller was talking about, it has a little to do with the experience that we have here in Louisiana, but we're very grateful for that expertise. This is unprecedented and I just wanted to drive that point home and recognize that as we go to Monroe for the visit with some of those in the March flooding, like those who are here in Tangipahoa, we recognize the importance of time and so we're moving ahead on that. The Governor is in DC today. He was in DC yesterday and I wanted to bring you just some fresh news from there. We are continuing to estimate that the need from the storm, overall for recovery, will be at least \$3.7B. As you know, and we've talked to you about this at the last meeting, that Shaun Donovan with the Office of Management and Budget from the federal government in the current administration is recommending, for Louisiana, that out of that there be a total of \$3.15B for the entire six state area. That has to do with all of the disasters that happened this year, including Hurricane Matthew, and we are officially hearing that it's about \$2.6B that is being talked about in terms of for Louisiana. Obviously, that's the largest slice of that \$3.15B, but it's still not enough for our total need. We are also hearing that perhaps what's being discussed in Congress may be lower than that amount. So, I want to be very realistic with you that we may be talking about bringing home in this second appropriation less than our total need. So, we will continue to fight through the spring for a third appropriation. As you know, big changes in Washington and so we'll continue to work through that but I wanted you to know that it is a fight on our hands. Our congressional delegation, we are working with them very closely but we may well have a shortage even in the second appropriation. The timing on that, I think you are familiar with, but the continuing resolution needs to be passed by December ninth and so we expect that will be written and voted on early next week, early in the coming week, and so, we are working very hard. The Governor met with several members from other states of the congressional delegation up there, not just our delegation but other states as well. He'll be meeting with some senators today. We're working very hard on that and I just wanted to bring you that news and encourage you that we are continuing in that fight. Very importantly, you have made the recommendation already for the homeowner assistance program and the assistance would look like a state contracted option for homeowners, a homeowner run option for homeowners, and a reimbursement program for those homeowners who have finished, and so today it is very important, and we would urge you specifically from the governor's office, to take a close look and make your best recommendation on a piece of help for renters and a piece of help for, it's called economic development but basically, small businesses and I know that you've had a chance to look over some of those recommendations. We urge you to take the recommendations of the Office of Community Development. They have been very well researched. It's not enough to help every single person who was impacted by this flood in the fifty-six parishes, but we will begin with that and scale up those programs. I want to thank you today for being here and for all the

work that you've done. For those of you who might say in the public we're meeting once every two weeks, we are working daily on this. I spoke with some of you close to daily and I know that you're talking to the Office of Community Development so thank you. I know you're doing this on a volunteer basis and we thank you greatly for that. I want to impress upon the public, for those who are watching, that hope is here, hope is on the horizon. We want to very much let you know that we are not letting grass grow under our feet. We are working as quickly as we can and please know that we know that time is of the essence. Finally, I'm very proud to announce the website that some of you have asked about it is up today and we will be making the announcements next week, but for those of you who are here or watching, it's restore.la.gov and task force, it is your very own website. It is going to talk about everything that you do. We will have the timeline, as you can see, of what we're seeking in federal help, the amounts of money you will see there, how great the need is. You will also see activities being put in place for homeowners, current recovery programs that are available with ongoing help, information about each of you as members and what you bring to the table in this process, and the ability to read various announcements and recommendations that come out of this task force and how to access other programs for which people might have questions as we go into this period, which we reach after each storm, about sort of layering FEMA, SBA, our help that we've created as a state program, so I'm very proud of this. And please be patient with us that we think we've worked through a lot of the kinks on this but please try it and the most important thing that I'd like to say, and I'll end this, is that on this website you can sign up for updates. So, every single member of the public, I would urge you to send your constituents and people that you know and people that have flooded and people who have been flooded who just want information. There's a way to sign up for updates via e-mail and you will get all the information. As you know, when we have the action plan ready to go, and you'll hear more about that from Rowdy and from Pat today, but we will have road meetings in the impacted areas and we will be letting people know, not only through the governor's office and through other state media, but also through this website about where those will be, when they'll be, how people can be involved and comment. That's all I have and I'm happy to answer any questions.

Mr. Durbin opened the floor for questions.

Mr. Dartez: Thank you for the update. The number you are hearing from DC, the overall at \$3.1B, they are, you know, is that a final solid number?

Ms. Payer: That would be for six states. So, the unofficial, some of the numbers we are hearing in terms of what's coming from this current presidential administration is possibly saying that out of that \$3.15B, as much as \$2.6B would be for Louisiana and I would tell you that the numbers are being talked about, that may be included in the continuing resolution, are quite a bit lower than that. So, we really need to work on that and we're working as hard as we can.

Mr. Dartez: I know you guys are. I get the updates every day. I appreciate everything you all do and I understand the federal government and what they are having to deal with but if they do the continuing resolution December ninth and a new administration comes in in January, is that the end all be all or can we approach the new administration?

Ms. Payer: We will approach the new administration. At this point, I'm going to let Pat talk as he just returned this morning, or last night, from DC so he can talk to you.

Mr. Forbes: I want to clarify a couple of things. One, the \$3.15B is carved in stone as far as a request from the White House, but Congress still must decide what that amount is going to be. We can certainly ask for more and in fact plan to. I think Ms. Payer has made it quite clear that even if we got everything that the White House asked for from Congress in this go around, it's not going to be enough for a full recovery. The other thing that's clear is that this CR, or at least everything we've heard, this CR will take them through March or April, something like that. There is going to have to be another omnibus or some other type of bill to carry the federal government through the rest of the year and the hope and expectation is that those Matthew states, almost certainly, are not going to get what they need this CR and so they will be back in the spring and we will be there holding hands with them.

Mr. Dartez: Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Mayor Norris: The initial allocation we are talking about right now, is that included in that number or is that not included in this number?

Mr. Forbes: The Governor asked for an additional \$3.3B and the White House recommended \$3.15B in total for all the 2016 disasters, that allocation would be made by HUD through a calculation of unmet needs, damages and things like that, and what we expect of the \$3.15B goes through is that our portion of that would be \$2.6B.

Ms. Payer: What I'm hearing from our team in Washington this morning is \$2.6B or less, and do know that included in that \$2.6B is the \$438M that we're already talking about appropriating.

Dr. Wilson: Pat, the first allotment that we received is exclusive of that total, correct, it's not included in that amount, it's a 100% new money?

Mr. Forbes: The \$2.6B is not but the \$3. –

Dr. Wilson: I'm with you but whatever we get in this one, that number you're talking about, either the \$3. or less than that, the first allotment that we received currently, is that included in that total or is that in addition to that several hundred million?

Mr. Forbes: I would say that it's a little bit complicated in that when HUD gets this appropriation from Congress, and this is my understanding, they will say okay what are all unmet needs and damages in Louisiana from these two disasters? What are all the unmet needs and damages in South Carolina? In Florida? In Georgia? They will likely combine the \$438M with whatever gets appropriated now and the portion of our \$438M would come out of whatever that allocation would be.

Dr. Wilson: So, that's what I think I heard the question and I was just trying to drive it home.

Mr. Forbes: I think the most important message is, in the very best case scenario, we're close to a billion dollars short of what we think we need.

Dr. Wilson: Thank you.

Mr. Durbin closed the floor for questions.

VII. LA OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

~ **Patrick Forbes, Executive Director, LA Office of Community Development**

~ **Rowdy Gaudet, Chief of Staff, LA Office of Community Development**

Mr. Gaudet: As I sometimes have to tell our staff when I fill in for Pat in meetings, I am a sad substitute for Pat Forbes, but members I'll do my best. I'm going to walk you through the timeline of the action plan as we have it laid out and give you some dates. I would like to start by also joining with you all in commending Parish President Miller as he highlighted previous disasters. We have had ongoing partnership with this parish from several previous disasters and he and his staff work tirelessly and truly are partners in the recovery effort and so we want to continue that, working with him. So, we appreciate him hosting and just appreciate his partnership.

See PowerPoint presentation available on Restore Louisiana Task Force website.

Mr. Gaudet: Just a couple of other points, as Julie mentioned, our next meeting is December 16th and we are going to go to West Monroe. Mayor, thank you again for agreeing to host. We intend to continue to do that, go around the state to host these meetings as that is also another venue to use to educate the public about the programs you all are recommending. The final point is, Dr. Wilson, at our last meeting you had recommended a resolution effectively encouraging the federal government to continue refining its process to get recovery to go as quickly as possible. We intend to have that resolution ready for this task force to review at the next meeting. We want to ensure that it's thorough and that it's detailed, not just containing broad language, but that it has very specific items in it, so we continue to work that and we are going to have that ready for the next meeting for all of you to review.

Mr. Durbin: Rowdy, what about the symposium in Lafayette?

Mr. Gaudet: Thank you for mentioning that. Next Thursday, December 8th, our agency in partnership with several others, LMA, police jury, and federal agencies to include FEMA, are hosting a symposium in Lafayette

at the LITE Center. The target audience is for local governments and that's who we've put the word out to. There's limited spacing, it's not open to the general public, but local governments can come. They will hear expects and receive presentations on resilience opportunities for communities in the state. Lafayette stepped up to the plate through their planning office and agreed to host that meeting and we are truly grateful for that. That's next week and you all have received that information and we will make sure we get the information of the day to you.

Mr. Durbin opened the floor for questions.

Mr. Faulk: The action plan that's being submitted, that covers the March flooding and the August flooding, correct?

Mr. Gaudet: The programs you all are approving are for the March and August flooding. Yes, sir.

Mr. Faulk: I guess to the parish presidents and the representatives, the flooding that occurred in the previous years, is there any actions still being pursued to try to help from the 2012 flooding?

Mr. Gaudet: Yes, we received an allocation related to Hurricane Isaac and we do have some of those grant funds coming into Tangipahoa Parish. That's from a previous allocation, a previous disaster, but it's a program we've previously stood up and that's ongoing now. Does that answer your question?

Mr. Faulk: Yes.

Mayor Norris: The road show you are talking about, are you going to wait until you get approval from Washington before you do that?

Mr. Gaudet: The road show is going to take place, wait it doesn't work on the TV, there we go, make you all turn around, so when we publish for public comment on the 14th, this period of time here is when the road show is taking place. After we publish for public comment, in order to encourage public comment, we are going around the state to encourage folks to get familiar with the programs and educate them about them and encourage public comment.

Mayor Norris: I think that's important, a lot of people, since they don't know what may or may not happen, they're making decisions. They may be selling properties. We also need to ask people that if we're going to be able to make some reimbursement on things that they have done or started, that they need to keep the right kind of records and a lot of people don't know that there's so much uncertainty about it. So, as soon as we can make that information, even if it's not a road show, detailed press releases or whatever we can do so people know to start planning for these things. Also, in your experience in dealing with similar disasters like this, has there ever been any outreach to mortgage holders to try to get them to be more flexible with people that are paying rent and paying mortgage, assuming that there is going to be a response from the state or the federal government?

Mr. Forbes: We have talked with some mortgage companies locally who are in touch with Fannie Mae, Freddie Mack, HUD, all those folks. We have not done that communication directly but we're trying to keep up with what conversations are going on and what leeway is provided.

Representative Pope: Follow up from two weeks ago, last meeting, with the road show, which is good. Where and when have those been established, if in fact they have been established?

Mr. Gaudet: We actually have a strategy meeting about that this afternoon but I've talked with our LMA and police jury partners. Effectively we want to come up with some regional locations. We are going to work with them since they do this twice a year, every year, go around the state for their regional meetings and so we will utilize their help on strategic locations and then we will lay out some dates and communicate that to you all.

Representative Pope: How many are we trying to work in? From time standpoint, around Christmas and whatever and I think you said you wanted by end of January 6th.

Mr. Gaudet: That's correct. It would be a handful and I don't have a number. We're going to talk this afternoon about what that would look like, lay out a schedule, and a calendar.

Representative Pope: And, we'll get that information as quickly as you get it, right?

Mr. Gaudet: Most certainly.

Representative Pope: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mayor-President Robideaux: Just piggybacking off what Mayor Norris had said, Rowdy, when we have a timeline like this and it becomes information that's available to everyone, I want to make sure that we are all clear on HUD approves the state action plan. Does HUD have to approve? What happens if they don't? Because if it's going to extent it, I just kind of want to know if there's even the possibility of it, then I just want to make sure that we all have that information that there is the possibility that it could go longer.

Mr. Forbes: There's absolutely always the chance that HUD would come back and have comments or changes, in essence not approve the action plan, and then ask you to make changes to it.

Mayor-President Robideaux: Do they do that, Pat, during the sixty days or is it do we wait sixty before we really, they have sixty days?

Mr. Forbes: They have sixty days to reply. They could reply to us on day sixty that it is not accepted, and you are right, our clock would go longer. We don't expect that, I think that in the over one hundred action plan amendments we've submitted we might have had one that HUD came back and had questions about and they were fairly quick.

Mayor-President Robideaux: I mean I want to remain optimistic, I just wanted to make sure that we were all clear.

Mr. Forbes: It's a great point because there is the possibility that we get to day sixty and they say no, you've got to change some things and then we start over.

Mayor-President Robideaux: Yes, and with the new administration, I mean you know it's going to be a new Director, I mean it's going to be a whole lot of new faces that we're dealing with so I just wanted to make sure that we were all right.

Commissioner Strain: Further response to Mayor Norris's question in reference to the mortgage holders, within the immediate aftermath of the storm I know that Governor John Bel and we have discussion with Louisiana Bankers Association, specifically about how do we deal with the immediacy of those missed notes and we asked them to send out to their members to do some of what we did in Katrina where they would take the notes and then put them on the end of the mortgage and the only complicating factor we have is that in today's financial environment many of these mortgages are sold multiple times to where the end holder of the mortgage is very distantly removed from the banker that initially set it up but generally speaking, most of the mortgage companies are very willing to put that note on the end, for two reasons. One, they want to make sure that the homeowner can continue to pay the note on that home and; two, that it accrues interest on their part so they don't lose money doing that, they actually make money, so that's generally the methodology and we have not heard really any problems as of yet.

Mayor Norris: That was a very, that's a very important thing, that's going to help reduce the number of bankruptcies or mortgage defaults, and I don't think the mortgage holders are interested in that either.

Commissioner Strain: No, sir, they are not.

Mr. Durbin closed the floor for questions.

VIII. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RSF RECOMMENDATION

~ **Adrienne Celestine, Recovery Programs Director, LA Office of Community Development**

~ **Michael Olivier, Economic Development RSF**

Mr. Olivier: Allow me the opportunity just to be right here because I'm only going to take about three minutes to discuss something. This is not my first time, many of us have experienced catastrophic events. As secretary of the economic development under the Blanco administration I was involved, but so was Adam Knapp, he worked for me. Charlie Walley (sp?) was involved critically for years in the aftermath. Don Pierson was my assistant secretary at the time so we four, we've seen it, but I'd like to say that we are getting tremendous support from OCD, Pat, and his staff. They are doing a wonderful job giving us the kind of support that we need. We also get tremendous support from the Department of Agriculture, you may see Pat Witty with the LA Economic Development and federal agencies attend all the group meetings that we have relative to this economic development process. We too are stuck in a situation where we have very little bread to pass around. The point

is, we have 14,000, over 14,000 businesses that have been impacted, 3600 of them have applied for SBA loans, 1300 of them have been approved, that basically 75% of the businesses are not. So, we're taking our cues from what we had to do with Katrina/Rita on the business recovery side. The big difference is, at the time the state had money and we were able to take some of our money and put it forward to help businesses immediately, we don't have that luxury today, so the money that we're taking out of this first tranche is so little, \$12M, which we are going to have to make some priorities and the first priority you can hear is we have to determine who are the most impacted parishes. Of the parishes that were impacted, there are six. From that point, the small businesses we have to prioritize those and break them down to essential goods and services, and then for future funds that we might hopefully get, we have to set ourselves up for how we are going to be able to aid and affectively affect those businesses later when future tranches are made available to us. By the way, Pat Witty, these essential goods and services, that's not a daiquiri shop. Adrienne is going to outline for you, you already have the briefing in the outline of your book, but she is going to give us more detail on that.

Ms. Celestine began the Economic Development presentation. PowerPoint presentation is available on the Restore Louisiana Task Force website.

Mr. Faulk: Do you all have information, the exact number of businesses in these areas that fall into these categories, number one? Then number two, from what I understand, there are some of these small businesses that have said I'm not starting back up.

Ms. Celestine: I don't have definitive numbers at this time on the exact number of businesses in those areas. We know that we can only serve a small percentage of the total population. We know that there are, FEMA has referred over 21,000 businesses to the SBA, so we know the population of affected businesses is pretty large and with this allocation we will only be able to serve a small population of those. Our intention is to expand the program to assist additional businesses once another allocation is awarded.

Mr. Durbin: With all due respect, let's hold our questions until after Ms. Celestine has completed her presentation.

Ms. Celestine restarted her presentation on the 2nd slide of page 3.

Mr. Durbin opened the floor for questions.

Representative Pope: I defer to Mayor Norris.

Mayor Norris: Oh, no. He's older than me. We are going to go by age and good looks.

Representative Pope: Well, that would be me then. I do have one question. You outlined two programs, \$12M. That would be an allotment on each program?

Ms. Celestine: Our intention in the action plan is to list the \$12M as allocation to all three programs. We envision that the bulk of the funds will go to the Business Loan and Grant Program, but during the course of our program development we find that we do have a partner for the bridge loan program or need funds for the survey or TA, we could then advert some of those funds without needing to do an action plan amendment.

Representative Pope: My second question is, I agree with what Mr. Olivier said there is not enough money to do what we need to do with businesses, small businesses, or whatever. How would these businesses be selected? Would it be a first come, first serve?

Ms. Celestine: No, I believe that the economic development working group has decided to have an open application period and determine if there are enough funds to serve everyone who applies during that application period. I don't think there is a wish to do proration's so we may have to do some additional prioritizations at that point if we receive more applications than we have funds available.

Representative Pope: So, we are going to do an application process.

Mr. Olivier: Yes, and then we will make a determination from that point.

Representative Pope: And if you have more applications than you do dollars, then you will come back and reprioritize?

Mr. Olivier: Yes, sir.

Mayor Norris: The administration of the program a little bit hazy on that, are you talking about one that would administer for the six-parish area or are you talking about each of those six parishes having some agency that would implement?

Ms. Celestine: What we've done in the past is once a NOFA is issued we've chosen organizations that represent each of the areas that were affected. Some areas, for example, after Katrina there were several organizations in New Orleans just because the sheer volume of businesses that were affected there. Whereas, Lafayette only had one so it would depend on the organizations that were already operating in those areas or willing to expand in those areas but we will definitely look at the geographic service area of those organization in selecting.

Mayor Norris: OCD would make that selection?

Ms. Celestine: Yes, correct.

Mayor Norris: What about reimbursements of businesses that have started back on their own but is there any possibility reimbursements?

Ms. Celestine: Yes, we will be able to reimburse certain expenses.

Mr. Forbes: To be clear, because the loans and grants are for operating capital, it becomes kind of fungible at that rate.

Mr. Reilly: Real quick, Pat, on the small business bridge loan program it seems to me that because we don't have to wait on federal funds that can move a little more quickly, right? It's a guarantee. Can we get those cranked up quicker?

Mr. Forbes: That's not actually the case.

Mr. Reilly: The bridge loan program? Since it's administered in the banks and it's their money and ours are guaranteed.

Ms. Celestine: We would actually have to have the funds available for the guarantee.

Mr. Reilly: Okay so, we actually have to have the funds in the bank. Second question is, you are looking first program sponsoring banks, it would seem to me that there ought to be a mechanism for small business an existing bank with a relationship and execute, ad hoc if you will, is that something we can do because that strikes me as something that's, you know, friendly to the applicant.

Ms. Celestine: Yes and I think, as we have talked about, I don't know if that's specifically an excluded option but those banks would have to agree to our programmatic guidelines and sign an agreement with us.

Mr. Forbes: There is another slight difference and I hate to get into the weeds in CDBG stuff here but whenever we do those loans through a community development non-profit they get to keep recycling them and they're not really CDBG funds anymore, so they are a lot easier to help keep your economy generating. When we go through that bank, it's probably going to be program income coming back to us.

Ms. Celestine: He's talking about the guarantee program.

Mr. Forbes: Oh, the bridge loan.

Mr. Reilly: It would seem to me, it's the banks money, right, and we are just creating credit worthiness.

Ms. Celestine: And as I think Secretary Pierson pointed out in one of the working calls yesterday, larger banks don't always want to participate in programs like this but there may be an appetite for it but we haven't explored that yet.

Mr. Olivier: We are going to explore it with the Commissioner of Administration if there is some opportunity for some guarantee that the state can participate in.

Mr. Reilly: So we can crank this up faster?

Mr. Olivier: Yes but this is just exploratory at this point.

Commissioner Strain: Mr. Chairman, but if we do that, generally with Washington if you do something in advance of their approval with their funding, they don't accept it, is that correct? I mean there's often some, unless it's signed.

Ms. Celestine: Well, what was done after Katrina is the state put up the first tranche of loan guarantee funds for the program to get up and running and then we added CDBG funds to the program later and they were okay with that.

Mr. Olivier: Also I want to mention under technical assistance there is a gap, limit, on the technical assistance.

Mayor-President Robideaux: Yes, just continuing that, as Mr. Reilly said, then we at some minimal amount ought to commit some money to establishing the program?

Mr. Olivier: We are exploring that.

Mayor-President Robideaux: Right, okay, whether if it's enough to help anybody really doesn't matter but it certainly speeds up the process so that when the line of credit is available, the programs in already in place. Maybe only one or two people took advantage of it until then.

Mr. Olivier: Commissioner Jay Dardenne has a great background in this.

Commissioner Strain: So the state can put a guarantee without putting up cash based on the full faith and credit of the state.

Mayor-President Robideaux: Piggybacking off of what Mayor Norris said, often times some of the most resilient and most important people to a community are those that kept their businesses open and borrowed money any way that they could to keep people employed or to replace the capital equipment that they needed to and it's those individuals that really helped maintain some level of economy going on and so I would hate for them to be punished and to be excluded from some reimbursement if they did beg, borrow, and I guess not steal but, just made it work in some way, shape or form, I wouldn't want them to not then be eligible for the long term funding because it is significantly lower rate than what they probably gave up either if they pulled out all of their retirement or remortgaged their home, so if we could keep that in mind as we are developing the program.

PUBLIC COMMENT

April Wehrs, Executive Director, Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce

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Ms. Wehrs: Thank you all and unlike you, I'm very inexperienced at this. I'm glad to say this is my first disaster from a Chamber of Commerce perspective. Not only do I represent the Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce, which is the business community that was most adversely affected, I'm also the chair of the Louisiana Chambers Association, that's all the local chambers of commerce across the state of Louisiana. We've been in touch with them to see how this has affected their small business communities as well but with the chambers of commerce it was the boots on the ground. We're the ones that are in direct contact every day with the small business community. So I go and get grassroots information to come back to you. I love that a lot of the comments that you are making, for instance Mayor, when you refer to the already gotten there their act together so to speak. It has been very rough on them. A lot of them are dealing with \$200,000 a month payroll. They never let their people go, they continue to pay them. We have people who have \$40,000 a month payrolls. We're a private, nonprofit organization. There's really nothing out there for us either, so as an organization that has been doing everything we could to rebuild the small business world, we've run into the same obstacles that they have. We knew it was going to be an issue right in the beginning to because they were going to be so displaced with no place to conduct their business activities. We offered, we have an acre of land inside the city limits of Denim Springs, we flooded as well, 42 inches on the lower level and 15 inches on our upper level but we never missed a beat. We continued to keep promoting the business interest. We went to SBA, we went to economic development, and we went to every entity trying to get temporary office facilities put on our location to be able to continue the process. Where I'm going with that is that we've been very proactive in trying to make sure that the business community is back up on their feet, particularly the ones that the small independent private business owner who is probably the last one that was looked at, although the mayors know that they need their larger retail back up and running, you need that sales tax piece but what they've done and dealt with on their end has been no less than astounding to see them individually. I met with over fifty business owners this past week and I said if there was anything that you would want or need. Do you need business counseling? No. What do you need? We need cash in hand. So the faster that you can get some kind of money back into their hand that they've already depleted, we're mimicking them. We're watching our funding drop significantly, and by the way, they are our constituents so if they aren't able to pay dues or pay into the process and the programs that we have in place then we can't function any longer either. We have launched some significant programming that has brought exposure. A lot of people don't realize how devastated Livingston Parish was and then they also after didn't realize how back together it had gotten. So, we

made sure we put it back to business programs, etc. They need the exposure pieces. I don't know if any of the funding pieces in there would allow to channel that kind of stuff into an organization such as ours that helped to really get the word out about the fact that they are back up and open for business. By the way, they paid to have their own debris removed. I don't know if there's some kind of way that you can credit them on that piece but people paid anywhere from \$1000 to \$10,000 to remove debris. It was conflicting whether the commercial area was going to have that pick up piece or not, and when I talked to business owners that spent anywhere from 3 to 4 to 5 or \$6000 on debris removal, so if it would, it would go a long way in even taking a look at them to help them recoup some of those costs as well. Their rainy day funds are already kind of really starting to decline significantly. You talk about the funding sources, we love the idea of a community bank being a piece that would be able to disperse those funds for them. More locals contact the relationships that they already have in place on that piece. The jobs piece has been significant as well. We've been really trying to help on that end to get those retailers who cannot find the employees because the housing is not there and all that ripple effect things that people are dealing with. Primarily what they need is quick and fast as possible. Again, I thank you all for the opportunity to address and if there's any questions I can answer about the local business vibe. The other day we had a meeting and we had about forty people in it. How many of your homes are flooded? Thirty people in the room their homes were flooded. So, their business owners that have that piece as well as no way to rejuvenate their income right now as they are rebuilding their place.

Representative Pope: Thank you, April, for coming today and making your presentation. Do you know exactly, not exactly, we don't know anything exactly, but do you have an idea of the total business that were affected in your parish?

Ms. Wehrs: That is the million dollar question. We immediately after the flood we have about 520 businesses under our membership, we have access also to an additional thousand businesses or so that we can look in our database to see what happened with them. We immediately started calling them. We surveyed them right in the beginning. How many of you were flooded? It was about 70% had some impact from the flood but then on top of that the individual call so we know at least two hundred of them their physical property was flooded and it's just very hard to come up with the data we know that seventy five to eighty of them were not flooded. Some of them who have offsite locations. It's very hard to ask the questions in the survey because you say if you will how are you impacted, but everybody was impacted in some kind of way and if they had an off site or if they had a location maybe in Baton Rouge or if they have a Hammond location they were able to continue their operations in some kind of way. Those are the ones that are going to have the most success. I'm not so sure on what you're looking at for the priority businesses. We definitely support the one on the childcare piece extensively. We do see that some of the others, as far as critical needs go, if you're a contractor right now you're pretty busy. If you're a pretty good contractor, you're darn busy. We have one on our board and the guy can hardly see straight because of lack of sleep, etc. for trying to get everybody back up and running. So it is a tough question to answer.

Representative Pope: Okay. We did a similar survey and you can't get a handle on it. So many of them were affected, I get that. Second question, and I'm taking a shot at SBA, I have to do this at every meeting, do you have an idea as to how many businesses have made applications to small business administration?

Ms. Wehrs: I can tell you when we surveyed them how many of them would not.

Representative Pope: That's the interesting point, I think I know the answer but I wanted the public to know the answer.

Ms. Wehrs: 70% said that they would not seek the SBA piece. They were all very disappointed, and you all pretty much know this, but in the beginning they were very disappointed to learn that there were no grant opportunities formed besides the state lobbying to put in the rebirth funds etcetera. Then following that it moved into the collateral piece so they sort of learned they had to put their homes up as before that wasn't an SBA loan requirement. So it left a real strain on them but that 70% were not. About 30-35% were using their personal funding and their personal money. That's why I think that if there's a way to look at maybe a business that was flooded as well as if their home was flooded. Some of them are not always the most critical needs but they still provide and employ several people, and I get that there is some data that you'll use to back that piece up.

Mr. Durbin: Thank you, April, we appreciate you coming today. Moving to tab 8, this is the resolution on economic development. Mr. Reilly motioned for approval.

Commissioner Strain: Seconded.

Mr. Durbin: Is there any objection to the resolution that has been motioned for approval? Any objection to my left? None. Any objection to my right? None. Unanimous, thank you.

IX. RENTAL HOUSING RSF RECOMMENDATION

~ Brad Sweazy, Chief Operating Officer, Louisiana Housing Corporation

Mr. Sweazy: I'm Brad Sweazy with the Louisiana Housing Corporation and I'm the Chief Operating Officer. We are going to present to you today programs that we think would be best to address the rental housing issues that came out of the March and August floods. As I've heard said, we have a little bit of bread and a lot of people so these programs are focusing on immediate need and also working on long-term assistance and also working on restoring and repairing properties that were damaged.

See PowerPoint presentation available on Restore Louisiana Task Force website.

Mr. Durbin opened the floor for questions.

Mayor Tyler: Did you get any data for northwest Louisiana? I did not notice anything about housing or that particular part of the state from the March flooding.

Mr. Sweazy: Yes we do have data. Cato in particular.

Mayor Tyler: Caddo and Bossier. I'm from Caddo, not Cato.

Mr. Sweazy: If you look at the six most impacted parishes, especially in the March floods, that six impacted parishes on the HUD register it's a little different for renters. There's about 5%. So, if you look at those six, some of those six in the March floods, they had less total rental damage than others that weren't in the six, about 5%. The August flood is a little different. Pretty much out of the August flood the top six were the top six.

Mayor Tyler: Okay. I'm just concerned in that we had flooding at least three times in the last two years. Of course, some of those same people, same citizens, were impacted, so I'm just trying to see where we fit into the equation.

Mr. Sweazy: Our program, the one with the annual allocation, we are serving people up there. We work with the housing authority, and even with that, our annual allocation with our home funds, when we see the impact has 5 to 10 families, if you will, we're working with the non-profits for the annual program that's not part of the disaster to help build and address affordable housing.

Mayor Tyler: We have a lot more than that but, okay, we will talk.

Representative Pope: I ask my question to everyone, that's the selection process. I believe I heard you say we got \$20M to disperse. This could help, in the neighborhood of, 1,000 families, is that correct? How will they be selected?

Mr. Sweazy: Ultimately, the goal is going to be for elderly families that were displaced. The selection process we're looking at would be like an open application that would close based upon the scoring criteria but on priority and need.

Representative Pope: Open application. How will these renters know about this open application?

Mr. Sweazy: We have a waiting list.

Representative Pope: I don't doubt that but we may have some out there left out, that's my concern. We need to be fair with this and I'm not knocking you, I'm just saying a general statement.

Mr. Sweazy: We are going to do outreach in all the parishes. We are going to hold at least two meetings in each parish, and our Louisiana Housing Authority, which works with the continuum of care, is on the ground, so we feel as if a lot of the families we already know are on our list and we are in touch with them. We will work with the family and direct them to the landlords.

Representative Pope: Well, in difference to the Mayor and myself, you said elderly first, so that covers it all.

Mayor Norris: Just for clarification, what do you consider elderly?

Mr. Sweazy: 62 and older.

Mayor Norris: Now you just offended everybody up here. We consider you to be immature. Is this going to be administered through the Louisiana Housing Corporation? You aren't going to have to put out an RFP or have someone administer this program?

Mr. Sweazy: No, we can run it all.

Mayor Norris: I guess being elderly myself I missed part of it but are you going to issue one check to a landlord annually?

Mr. Sweazy: That's right.

Mayor Norris: Is that after the fact?

Mr. Sweazy: Yes, that would be after the inspection and the tenant occupies the unit. Then we will do a recertification. We will go back out and make sure that the tenant is still living there, that they're charging the same rent, still meets quality control, and then we will issue another check the following year.

Mayor Norris: So, you are issuing a check with anticipation of them living there a year?

Mr. Sweazy: That's right, after the fact.

Mayor Norris: So, if they do move out or die, since they are all elderly most are on a short string.

Mr. Sweazy: If there is a move out or change in tenancy, we will make sure that the next person who moves in is eligible.

Mr. Forbes: And they are obligated to inform you of the change and if they don't they must forfeit the money.

Mr. Sweazy: That's right.

Mayor Norris: This really isn't directly related to flooding, the flood victims, is it?

Mr. Sweazy: Yes it is. The priorities will be given to those who were displaced by the floods.

Mr. Durbin closed the floor for questions.

Mr. Durbin: Committee we are moving to tab 10 of your binders, the resolution before you is two pages in length dealing with the rental housing presentation you just heard.

Mr. Dartez: Motioned.

Mr. Gallagher: Seconded.

Mr. Durbin: Motioned by Mr. Dartez, seconded by Mr. Gallagher. Is there an objection on my right? No. Any objection on my left? No. Resolution passed unanimously.

X. THE BENEFITS OF AN INTEGRATED MENTAL HEALTH MODEL FOR DISASTER RECOVERY
~ David Aguillard, Executive Director, Catholic Charities Behavioral Health
~ Paula C. Davis, LCSW-BACS, Clinical Director, Catholic Charities Behavioral Health,
Adjunct Instructor, LSU School of Social Work

Mr. Aguillard: Thank you all very much for your time this morning. I know that there's a lot of extremely important and weighty matters on your agenda and we're appreciative that you're using some of your limited time to listen to us today and we'll probably move rather rapidly through some of these slides as we move up to the two recommendations that we will end on. I would like to point out that the intent of us today is to try to help round out the discussion to where we're not just talking about infrastructure but also about the social and emotional cost to these disasters. That we need to talk about drainages and roads of course, yes, but also there are families and people that struggled for years, if not decades, following some of these disasters. My name is David Aguillard, I'm the executive director of Catholic Charities for the Diocese of Baton Rouge and we encounter this as an obstacle in recovery time after time after time. That is that the emotional and psychological costs that trauma is leaving you. I've sat in positions similar to yours. I worked in state government in the governor's office in the state of Missouri and the Division of Children and Family Services in Missouri. I specifically worked on starting new programs and implementing integrated programs across departmental lines and so I know that it is much easier to sit here and talk about these things than it is to implement them. That's why I brought along Paula Davis, our clinical expert to try to help explain some of the data behind our recommendation here.

Ms. Davis: Again, I want to say thank you for having us here and I appreciate you introducing me as Paula C. Davis. I know there is another Paula Davis, she's a representative in the house and she is a lovely, lovely lady but she made my life very difficult when she ran for office. Also I'm an Adjunct Instructor at the LSU School of Social Work and there I have taught classes on how to diagnosis mental disorders and also how to treat mental disorders.

See PowerPoint presentation available on Restore Louisiana Task Force website.

Mr. Durbin opened the floor for questions.

Mr. Olivier: May I make a statement? As Secretary of Economic Development during the Katrina/Rita recovery process we got to see a lot of NGOs out there who were quote delivery services, some of which were nefarious to say the least. Catholic Charities was the champion of all. I never got a report, every time someone wanted to direct some funds, I directed them to Catholic Charities because I knew they would get the biggest bang for their buck. So I know it doesn't relate to specifically what you are doing but your reputation precedes you in this, for me anyway.

Mr. Aguiard: Thank you very much.

Mayor Norris: I don't quite understand what your recommendation is specifically.

Mr. Aguiard: Specifically, there are two. One is that we understand you will be making recommendations, yourselves, to FEMA or the federal government on improvements that can be made to disaster recovery, so one of my recommendations is that this concept of integrating mental health so that it is a seamless part of disaster recovery programs be done instead of a separate service that's accessed through an 800 number or that you've got to make an appointment and go downtown or that some of these mental health services that are available now are time limited as you get three visits and it's over. We know that some people aren't ready to deal with the psychological trauma, sometimes until months or years afterwards, and that's typically how long our recovery efforts go, they go three to five years after the disaster. So, one recommendation is to have this be an integrated, seamless, natural part of disaster recovery. The other recommendation is that when SSBG funds come, if they're awarded to us, that there be some money set aside, right now, for this particular disaster to pursue this model of integrating mental health. So, one is a recommendation for the future when you make your recommendations to FEMA and the other is in the current situation to be able to address it.

Mayor Norris: I was looking at the cost benefit slide. Is that a suggestion of how this could be implemented?

Mr. Aguiard: I'm sorry?

Mayor Norris: The cost benefit slide talks about integrated teams of ten LPCs and one clinical supervisor costs about \$1M. It would serve up to \$10,000 per household. Would that be how the program might be structured if funding was approved?

Mr. Aguiard: Yes, the way it's billed right now, and we actually had a more complex slide up there but the interest of time I pulled it out, the way the program is structured right now is there are individual disaster recovery teams that consist of a disaster case manager supervisor, 10 recovery specialists, half time data entry specialist, and one construction specialist. What we would like to do is, we have 10 teams right now, what we would like to do is have one behavioral health specialist within each one of those teams and then a clinical supervisor of those teams, the same way we have a construction manager overseeing all of the construction specialists that's within each team. Does that make sense?

Mayor Norris: Well, yeah, it does make sense. I know this is a service that would be very beneficial, no question about it, because the people that I've dealt with over the years, not just this disaster, is very often just, throw their hands up, they don't know where to go or what to do and it gets worse as time goes by with no resolution, but what would you recommend, if you could recommend something specific, as to a sum of money that would be appropriate?

Mr. Aguiard: We can do this right now, within our model, for about \$1M.

Mayor Norris: For both disaster areas?

Mr. Aguiard: Both disasters, yes sir. We can do it within our model, if we just layer this in within the structure that already exists because we don't have new costs. We have the space, we have all the other infrastructure built.

In the past six weeks we have hired nearly 200 people to respond to this disaster, so we've got a new office space, we've got all the equipment, we've got the telephone lines, we just need the people, so we can do it for an incremental cost rather than a fresh start up of a new business or a new initiative.

Mayor Norris: So, we would be leveraging our money with funds that you've already raised or sources of funds that you have.

Mr. Aguiard: Right. Now, we would have some of the funds that we have that we, donations that have come to us, we can dedicate those more to all those unmet needs that we're going to be encountering six months, twelve months from now because we know that we're not going to get. We typically see, after Isaac for example, we saw that after people have exhausted everything that's available, the folks who are left in disaster case management, who we are working with on recovery, typically have about \$15,000 of unmet needs. A lot of times these unmet needs have resulted because of their difficulty in dealing with the psychological stress. They have missed their appeal dates, they aren't paying attention to what they need to do. Some people, and this might seem kind of funny, might have drywall to put in somebody's house but they might not be ready for the drywall, they might not be capable of picking up the phone to order the drywall, and that is one of the things our recovery specialists do, track those kinds of things, so it's kind of a two-way street of an agreement between a family and a recovery specialist that in return for their active engagement in their recovery, we will help them locate the resources. One of the resource that is needed is mental health services, and those are very difficult to access. We can deliver drywall, we can deliver lumber, we can pick them up and carry them to the Council of Aging office, and we actually end up frequently doing this. We kind of grew into this model naturally by encountering families with needs and then sending our social workers with our recovery specialist into people's homes or getting someone from Louisiana Spirit to come join our recovery specialist to go visit a specific family in the first place.

Mayor Norris: I would just make a statement that in my experience in dealing with people that are dealing with disasters, that would be very beneficial, if these are people that have capabilities, and it seems like a small amount of money, maybe too small amount of money, to do what would be required.

Mr. Faulk: So, what you are asking us is to recommend plugging an existing service you already have?

Mr. Aguiard: Right.

Mr. Faulk: The only thing it would do is give additional staff to people to address some of those needs and would go for an extended period of time?

Mr. Aguiard: Right.

Ms. Davis: What we would like to do is have a mental health person be a part of each team so they can follow that family along with recovery, and it would go for an extended period of time. The thing about Louisiana Spirit, it's time limited, and as David said people receive three or four sessions and we know that is not really enough, and oftentimes people are not dealing with the impacts of the storm. They are so busy with this part, like the sort of basic needs of getting their house together, that they're really not dealing with the other traumas that they've experienced and so that would be one way to do it.

Mr. Aguiard: And I want to be clear, we are not criticizing Louisiana Spirit, it is a necessary component of recovery. We work with them closely, we've made over 100 referrals to them in the past couple of weeks, and we developed and worked with them on this integrated value tool that we've described briefly a few minutes ago. I want to make sure that that's understood, they have a necessary component of what is needed in disaster recovery as well.

Mr. Dartez: I represent parishes and I remember after the oil spill, Alaska actually reached out to us and they showed us their numbers and you're right, alcohol abuse, domestic, and everything ramps up, and I remember it was a component of the oil spill recovery that dealt with mental health and some funds for that. Are you all familiar with that? I don't remember any of the specifics but I think it goes to what Mr. Olivier talked about, you guys and your reputation precedes itself, but were you all a part of that or was that Louisiana Spirit? I remember the Louisiana Spirit, I didn't get into the weeds of what they did but I remember a major discussion on trying to help these folks not to get back only from an infrastructure aspect but from the mental health aspect as well.

Mr. Aguiard: We know, like the slide here, these results after the BP oil spill, this is despite all of those services that you are talking about. So, in our experience, the issue with those is that they are inaccessible by the time limited or they are just discrete isolated layered on services on top of disaster recovery, instead of being, it's kind

of like and this might be a goofy example but going into a convenience store to get gas, well they also happen to have milk and eggs, they integrate that and make it accessible and easy and so convenience stores end up selling a lot of milk and eggs, so you would expect them. If we can integrate this into the natural part of the recovery process, those services would be more accessible, used more frequently, and we should be able to see a reduction in these cases.

Mr. Dartez: And the lessons learned from that, I'm sure you all know what was successful as far as mental health components and what wasn't, and that is what you are asking us about today. So, basically what you learned is the \$1M you need to implement the programs for success and putting in mental health professionals and team members and following a household until they get back to where they need to be.

Mr. Aguiard: Correct. SSBG money, in addition to the storms that the parish president talked about, remember there were the tornadoes as well and we've been dealing with all that over the past year, not just the March floods and the August floods and Isaac, and some others in between as well.

Mr. Durbin: While you are still here, I ask that Mr. Forbes come and take a seat next to you and speak on explaining the Social Service Block Grant program, which was mentioned earlier and I wrote that down but I'm not sure I understand it.

Mr. Forbes: Yes, sir. Since the beginning, the Governor has been requesting \$92M in Social Services Block Grants in addition to the CDBG request that's in and the transportation requests that's in and the Comite River Diversion and all those things, included in all those is an additional \$92M Social Services Block Grant. The primary indicators for that, the support for that at Congress, is in fact mental health impacts of disasters on communities and so this would be an exceptionally appropriate place for those funds to be used. To be clear, Catholic Charities is providing these disaster case management services in one particular area of the state through a FEMA grant that we have but we have five other non-profits providing similar disaster case management services around the state. They may not all be as willing, or as able as Catholic Charities, to deliver this integrated mental health care service but I think that goes to the point of having the model done through these folks so that we can see that it works and see how those things integrate, but it's a perfectly appropriate, in fact, almost perfect it seems to me use of those block grant funds should we get them.

Mr. Durbin closed the floor for questions.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Durbin stated that there were no requests for public comment.

XII. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Durbin: I'm going to go back over the other business. The next task force meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 16, in West Monroe, hosted by Mayor Norris. Also about the binders, please do not take the binders, take the contents only.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Durbin: To adjourn is in order.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:47 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jimmy Durbin
Co-Chair of the Restore Louisiana Task Force

Date Approved: January 20, 2017 *LD*