

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE
AMITE RIVER BASIN DRAINAGE & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Location: Louisiana State Capitol 900 North 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

January 9, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT DURING ROLL CALL: John Clark, Jack Harris, Clint Cointment, Kenneth Dawson, Randy Delatte, Brin Ferlito, LeeAnn Fitch, Marrill McKarry, Gary O'Neal, Edwin Parker

MEMBERS ABSENT DURING ROLL CALL: Lionel Bailey, Robert Carter, Fred Raiford

ALSO PRESENT: Gregory Grandy, CPRA; Ed Knight, LADOTD; Executive Director Rachael Lambert, ARBC, Executive Secretary Toni Guitrau, ARBC; Legal Counsel Larry Bankston, ARBC; Lawrence E. Marino, Oats & Marino

ALSO ABSENT: Monica S. Gorman, PLD

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by ARBC President Clark.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call: See above.

4. Minutes – There were no public comments.

The Board unanimously approved a motion by Dawson, seconded by O'Neal to approve the December 12, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented.

5. Financial Statements – There were no public comments.

The Board unanimously approved a motion by Parker, seconded by O'Neal to approve the December 2023 General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements, as presented.

6. Report by ARBC President – There were no public comments.

Clark announced that, as ARBC President, he formed a Project Committee that will include commissioners Raiford, Delatte, Cointment, Harris as Chairman, and himself. This committee is formed to review projects that suit the Amite River Basin best and then to present them to the full board. Cointment said he hopes the meetings will be held by Zoom.

7. Report by ARBC Executive Director Rachael Lambert – There were no public comments.

Lambert provided a presentation updating the board on the following:

- LWI Region 9 – Action Plan Amendment #3 – Modifications/Comments with approval: \$100M allocation: If an identified project has a total cost of \$100M or more, and \$50M or more in CDBG funds, an APA will be required. Lambert received the Office of Community Development Cooperative Endeavor Agreement late Friday that required an electronic signature, and it is an agenda item for action to approve said signature.
- All Round 2 Projects Conditionally Awarded
 - Clearing & Snagging Comite North of Hwy 10 \$13,736,114
 - Clearing & Snagging Comite South of Hwy 10 - \$13,200,364
 - Taylor Bayou Regional Improvements - \$8,856,263
 - Kennedy Heights Drainage Improvement Project - \$3,743,795
 - Lower Bayou Conway Drainage Improvements - \$1,926,000
 - John Leblanc Detention Improvements - \$536,232
- Annual Plan: Final Plan was delivered to the House and Senate Committees. Public Meetings in 1st quarter of 2024 are scheduled as January 9th, 5-7 pm, E. Feliciana Alumni Center, January 22nd, 5-7 pm, Ascension Parish Complex and January 29th, 5-7 pm, Main Goodwood Library.
- Master Plan: One Addendum has been issued and anticipate a 2nd Addendum soon. Revised RFQ Timeline as Advertisement on December 13, 2023, Opening on January 30, 2024, Award on March 12, 2024. Deadline

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for Completion is December 31, 2024. Deadline to submit to legislature is February 28, 2025. Commission to decide on Evaluation Committee.

- USACE Amite River Tributaries – 2nd DRAFT. Public Comment Period through January 29, 2024. Public Hearings are set for January 16th, Ascension Parish Library Galvez Branch, 6-8 pm, January 17th, EBR Library Central Branch, 5:30-7:30 pm. Watersheds that intersect with an Env. Justice area were targeted/modeled. Damages were estimated based on the water surface elevations from the highest of the two conditions, extreme rain with normal highwater downstream and negligible rain with storm surge downstream. With this proposed plan, the Corps would be flood-proofing or elevating approximately 3200 structures. Delatte said that he sees no data that shows they looked at dredging the Amite River. He has a meeting on the 20th with the USACE's Colonel to address these issues. Cointment asked if there has been a study to determine whether the Corps' requirements of the elevation heights are equal to, less than or greater than the parishes requirements in the area where they are doing the floodproofing/elevation projects. For example, if the Corps is raising structures in Ascension Parish to the elevation they have determined and Ascension's requirements are less, will they continue to build new homes at a lessor elevation than they are elevating these structures. Cointment said it is defeating the purpose if the two aren't equal to or greater than the Corps' determined elevation. If they are not, then it would be a flooding issue that would have to be addressed repeatedly in the future. Delatte agreed with Cointment and requested this be included in the comments submitted. Lambert said this is something that the Board could consider including in its Master Plan.
- **CRDC Project Status.** Monthly updates can be found on the ARBC website at www.amitebasin.org as provided by the USACE.

8. Report by Legal Counsel – There were no public comments.

- Bankston advised the Board to authorize legislation to formalize district boundaries. The new district boundaries include Iberville Parish and portions of Ascension Parish, west side of Airline Highway. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Parker, seconded by Delatte to authorize Bankston to seek a legislative author for the formalization of the new boundaries in the next legislative session.
- Act 490 of 2022. If the ARBC board has any changes, revisions, or suggestions they would like to bring to legislators regarding Act 490 of 2022, the board should consider those now so they can prepare legislation, act on it, and present it to a potential author for revisions in the legislature. Bankston recommended reaching out to Senator Lambert regarding SB 539 of 2018 Regular Session that requires that the location of the meetings be rotated among public buildings in Ascension, East Baton Rouge, and Livingston parishes. He requested the Board submit any comments regarding these before the February meeting. Cointment suggested any items for discussion on the agenda should be included in the board packets.

9. Old Business

- **Master Plan RFQ Committee:** The Board agreed that O'Neal would chair the committee and Cointment would be vice chairman. Deadline for submission of RFQs is January 16, 2024.
- **OCD CEA for \$100M (Region 9):** Lambert said that the CEA was received late on Friday from the Office of Community Development for the \$100M allocation for Region 9. It is for the most impacted and distressed areas. The ARBC would prepare an application for the projects. There is a list of requirements that are put into the application to send to ODC that includes how much each would cost, the hydraulics and engineering, and the basics of the projects for them to review and approve that it meets the requirements of the funding. The Board unanimously approved a motion by O'Neal, seconded by Ferlito to ratify Lambert's signature on the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement.

10. New Business – There were no public comments.

- Letter of Support – City of Central Projects, BRIC & FMA. Resolution 1174. The projects are Draughan Creek Regional Detention Basin, Shoe Creek Channel Improvements, and Beaver Bayou Culvert Improvement. After much discussion it was agreed that the ARBC needs a process for granting Letters of Support in the future. The Board received a presentation on said projects from Stokka Brown and Spencer Johnson of CSRS. CSRS had ran different models to determine that the Shoe Creek project would not increase

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the flow of water downstream. The Board unanimously made a motion by Parker, seconded by O’Neal to approve the Letter of Support for the City of Central, as requested.

- Letter of Support – City of Baton Rouge Projects, BRIC & FMA. Resolution 1175. The projects are the HED-01 Diversion Culvert and Detention Pond, and the JCK-02 Lively Bayou Detention Project, located in the City of Baton Rouge. A presentation by Melissa Kennedy of HNTB. It was determined the projects would cause no impact downstream. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Cointment, seconded by Dawson to approve the Letter of Support for the City of Baton Rouge.

11. General Public Comments. Cindy O’Neal suggested the Board include in their process a 60–90-day review of any future Letter of Support request(s).

12. The Board unanimously approved a motion by O’Neal, seconded by Cointment, to adjourn the meeting at 11:53 am.

APPROVED:

/s/John Clark/ARBC President
Date: March 12, 2024

/s/ Toni B. Guitrau, Executive Secretary