

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

Location: Marriott: 5500 Hilton Drive, Baton Rouge, LA

**February 23, 2021**

MEMBERS PRESENT DURING ROLL CALL: Edwin Parker, David Hoover, Lionel Bailey, Ben Babin, Willie George Lee, Angela Machen (5:03 pm), Richard St. Pierre, Don Thompson, Kenneth Welborn

MEMBERS ABSENT: Felicia Lee, James Little, Jerry Thibeau, Larry Thomas

ALSO, PRESENT: ARBC Executive Director Dietmar Rietschier, ARBC Executive Secretary Toni Guitrau, ARBC Legal Counsel Larry S. Bankston, District 71 Representative Buddy Mincey, Jr.

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Parker.
2. Roll Call (see above).
3. Public Comments on Agenda Items: None
4. Minutes  
The Board unanimously approved a motion by Bailey, second by St. Pierre to approve the January 2021 regular meeting minutes. Note: Following the vote, Machin entered the meeting at 5:03 pm.
5. Financial Statement Report  
Bailey presented to the Board the January 2021 General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Hoover, second by W. Lee to approve the January 2021 General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements.
6. Executive Director Report
  - Comite River Diversion Canal Project: Rietschier said that the construction of the Project is currently in the hands of the USACE and DOTD. ARBC remains 1 of 4 partners of the Project. Monthly meetings are held to provide updates and discussion amongst the 4 partners. He provided the status of the construction, real estate, rights-of-way, and utility relocation of the project. Utility relocations and right-of-way acquisitions are going on simultaneously all along the channel.
  - Rietschier presented the LA DOTD Report: Utility Relocations and ROW acquisitions are ongoing as follows: 56 out of the 83 parcels acquired, all have been appraised and the rest under negotiations, utilities continuing to relocate, LA 964-bridge design complete, LA 67-bridge design at 90% complete, LA 19-bridge design at 60% complete.
  - Rietschier provided a hand-out to the Board in reference to Proposed Governance – Louisiana Watershed Initiative Region 7. Many of the authorities and functions enumerated in the proposed governance for Region 7 are already included in the ARBC governance for the Amite River Basin. A protocol needs to be defined between ARBC, LWI and CRPC for this purpose. ARBC also has issues with the “authorities” in the proposed governance recommendation, specifically authority to “review” all flood control programs and projects. Hoover did not agree with ARBC being under the CRPC as 7A or 7B or any other Region. He would like to see ARBC excluded from being under the Watershed Initiative. Bankston said it would take an act of the legislature to set a geographical area. He understands that the ARBC wishes to remain its own independent entity, and should be the model for other watersheds in the state.
  - Rietschier brought to the Board’s attention the need for several rain/river gages to be evaluated and perhaps are in need of repair. One is the gage at “Manchac at Amite”, and several rain gages in Mississippi. These impact the forecast abilities in Louisiana. There is also the need for other gages to be installed. He is planning to contact USGS about these gages.
  - Bankston said in reference to the Watershed Initiative, with the 1.2 billion coming from HUD, Louisiana needs to demonstrate that it would set up a mechanism to evaluate projects. Bankston told Representative Mincey that ARBC would look forward to meeting with him in regard to this matter.
7. ARBC Legal Counsel:
  - ARBC recently received from DOTD an Act of Subordination that needs ARBC’s approval. At Bankston’s recommendation, the Board unanimously made a motion by Hoover second by Bailey to add to the agenda “Subordination for McHugh Road” to move DEMCO lines.

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- Subordination for McHugh Road – DEMCO: The Board unanimously made a motion by St. Pierre second by Lee to approve said request, to authorize Executive Director Rietschier to sign it and Bankston to certify it as the attorney for ARBC.
  - Bankston said he is monitoring for any future legislation concerning the Watershed Initiative - Region 7.
8. Old Business: None
9. New Business
- Flood Awareness Month Proclamation – March 2021: The Board unanimously approved a motion by Hoover second by Babin in support of Parker proclaiming March 2021 as Flood Awareness Month.
10. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Hoover second by Bailey to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 pm.

APPROVED:

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/s/ Edwin Parker, ARBC President  
Date: 3/16/21

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/s/ Toni B. Guitrau, Executive Secretary