

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

Location: **Livingston Parish Council Chambers, 20355 Government Blvd., Livingston, La, 70754**

August 12, 2025

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT DURING ROLL CALL: John Clark, Jack Harris, Lionel Bailey, Ryan Byrd, Clint Cointment, Pete Dufresne, Brin Ferlito, Mark Harrell, Ed Parker

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT DURING ROLL CALL: Randy Delatte, Fred Raiford

ALSO PRESENT: Brian Lezina, CPRA, Larry Marino, Oats & Marino, Randy Clouatre, Sr., PLD, Ed Knight, LADOTD; ARBC Executive Director Paul Sawyer; ARBC Executive Secretary Toni Guitrau; ARBC Legal Counsel Larry Bankston, Bankston & Associates

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 Parker, seconded by Harris to approve July 8, 2025, regular meeting minutes, as presented.

5. Financial Statements. There were no public comments.

- The Board unanimously approved a motion by Bailey, seconded by Parker to approve July 2025 General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements, as presented.
- The Board unanimously approved a motion by Bailey, seconded by Parker, to approve the corrected June 30, 2025, General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements, as presented.

6. Report by Executive Director Paul Sawyer. There were no public comments.

- **Upper Amite Flood Reduction and Restoration Project.** Sawyer stated that ARBC has executed the Purchase Agreement with the sellers. This project is to identify abandoned or degraded sand and gravel pits. These efforts would restore these isolated areas back to their natural condition. Upon approval of Resolution 1190-Amendment #1, Resolutions 1192 and 1193, the ARBC will commence with due diligence this week. There is a 120-day window in which this is to be completed. ARBC is following the rules and guidelines of the state of Louisiana capital outlay programs, so more time was budgeted to accommodate that. Capital Outlay has \$2 million in Priority 2, which may be converted to cash in the September/October time frame. They are working with Senate Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Committee Chairman Franklin Foil to coordinate with the state bond commission to elevate that priority 2 allocation to a priority 1 or cash allocation. He and President Clark are arranging a meeting with COA Taylor Barras and his deputy commissioner Patrick Goldsmith to talk about the allocation being elevated to priority 1. They will also discuss next year's capital outlay process and any potential revenue streams for the ARBC to conduct and to broaden the scope of its operations. He and President Clark are meeting with environmental firms and with the state to begin those restoration efforts.
- Sawyer has participated in meetings with the USACE and other stakeholders on the CRDC Project and the "5 Bayous Project" in EBR Parish. He and Commissioner Harrell participated in a phone call this morning on an LWI project specifically for the status of the Taylor Bayou Project. ARBC has very limited visibility on all of the LWI projects in Region 9. As the Regional Coordinator, ARBC should have knowledge and awareness of all of the projects. These projects are in the Amite River Basin and affect all 7 parishes in the basin. Sawyer said there are over 40 projects in the Amite River Basin and he will inquire into each one and report back to the Board on their progress.
- Comite River Diversion Canal Project. 85 out of original 89 required parcels acquired with 4 additional parcels required for Brook Lake under appraisals. There are currently additional parcels required for C&S three bayous. Forty-eight of sixty-two relocations are complete. The remaining utilities are under various stages of relocation. USACE is currently analyzing whether additional relocations are needed for C&S three bayous. LA 964- 99.4% complete. LA 67 is 99.6% complete, LA 19 is 6.1% complete. All original contract items and punch lists are complete.

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- Sawyer reported that the ARBC website is being modified with the full intention of creating greater facility for people to participate and to provide comments, share ideas as well as being able to contact the ARBC more easily. The plan is to provide the public with more resources to review. He has also started sending out a newsletter via email and Facebook which is intended to be a touch point to invite people to come to our website to view all its resources.

7. Report by Legal Counsel. There were no public comments.

- Bankston stated he has been working with ARBC staff on the purchase agreement matter mentioned in Sawyer's report.
- Bankston reported there has been an extensive public records request concerning the ARBC Master Plan. This has been responded to, and the information has been given to the individual who made the request. Even with much of the information being available online, much effort and work into providing the rest of the information. Bankston stated that if anyone wants to learn more about the Master Plan or the financial aspects of the commission, much of that information is available directly on the ARBC website.

8. Old Business. There were no public comments.

- Presentation by Intracoastal Consultants, Kevin Gorman – Status of St. James West Shore Connector Levee Project. This \$10 million project is included in the ARBC Master Plan as part of the \$100 million Amite River Basin major projects program. The connector levee will be an additional feature to the West Shore Lake Pontchartrain protection project, and it will connect ring levees around St. James communities to protect them from Amite River flood waters and Lake Pontchartrain storm surge.
- Resolution 1190 – Amendment #1 – a technical correction to change the name from GCR, Inc to MB3 Inc. dba Civix. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Cointment, seconded by Parker to make said correction.
- Resolution 1192 – The Board unanimously approved a motion by Cointment, seconded by Parker to approve said Resolution authorizing the engagement of ELOS Environmental, LLC for Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment Services.
- Resolution 1193 – The Board unanimously approved a motion by Cointment, seconded by Bailey to approve said resolution authorizing John Clark, President, or Paul Sawyer, Executive Director, to act on behalf of the Board in all matters pertaining to the Capital Outlay Project, including certifying requests for State disbursements, and affirms the availability of unrestricted funds for the required match.
- E. Feliciana Police Jury Resolution of July 7, 2025 Discussion. At the July 8, 2025 ARBC regular meeting, Bankston read an East Feliciana Police Jury resolution opposing the inclusion of upper Amite reservoirs in the ARBC Master Plan. At that time, it was agreed to place this matter on the August 12, 2025 ARBC regular meeting agenda. After discussion, the Board unanimously approved including said resolution as part of the ARBC Master Plan. A roll call vote was taken and was as follows:
YEAS: John Clark, Jack Harris, Lionel Bailey, Ryan Byrd, Clint Cointment, Pete Dufresne, Brin Ferlito, Mark Harrell, Ed Parker
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Randy Delatte, Fred Raiford
ABSTAIN: None

9. New Business. There were no public comments.

- Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire – The Board unanimously approved a motion by Bailey, seconded by Cointment to approve the Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire, as presented.

10. Public Comments and/or ARBC Board Members discussion on General or Non-Agenda Items.

- ARBC Commissioner Edwin "Ed" Parker, formerly ARBC President for three years, announced that this would be his last meeting. Commissioner Parker has served various state entities for 38 ½ years, nine of which were serving on the ARBC Commission. ARBC Commissioners gave a standing ovation in honor of his many years of public service.

11. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Harrell, seconded by Dufresne, to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

APPROVED:

/s/John Clark/ARBC President
Date: September 9, 2025

/s/ Toni B. Guitrau, Executive Secretary