

**August 13, 2024**

MEMBERS PRESENT DURING ROLL CALL: John Clark, Jack Harris, Clint Cointment, Brin Ferlito, Mark Harrell, Cindy O'Neal, Gary O'Neal, Edwin Parker, Fred Raiford, Rick Webre

MEMBERS ABSENT DURING ROLL CALL: Lionel Bailey, Ryan Byrd

Governor-Appointed Vacancies - 1

ALSO PRESENT: Brian Lezina, CPRA; Randy Clouatre, Sr., PLD, Executive Secretary Toni Guitrau, ARBC; Legal Counsel Larry Bankston, Bankston & Associates/ARBC; Lawrence E. Marino, Oats & Marino

ALSO ABSENT: Ed Knight, LADOTD

**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 Webre, seconded by Raiford to approve the July 9, 2024, regular meeting minutes, as presented.

**5. Financial Statements** – There were no public comments.

The Board unanimously approved a motion by O'Neal, seconded by Cointment to approve the July 2024 General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements, as presented.

**6. Amendment #1, Administrative Budget 2024-2025.** There were no public comments. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Harrell, seconded by Harris to approve Amendment #1, Administrative Budget of 2024-2025, as presented.

**7. Report by ARBC President – No public comments.**

- **OCD/ARBC CEA Amendment** – A request from ARBC that the CEA be amended to reflect the language as written in Action Plan Amendment 2 that recognizes Region 9 and Action Plan Amendment 3 which allocated \$100 million to Region 9. The CEA was written from OCD to ARBC rather than to Region 9. Cointment was in contact with OCD via email. He stated the initial request to OCD was to figure out the path forward for submittal of the 4 major projects and how \$100 million will be allocated. The response from OCD was an email from August 5<sup>th</sup> stating the 3 projects may be submitted independently by the parishes Ascension, Livingston and St. James, and Bayou Manchac would be a joint application by PLD and ARBC. Once the applications are in, OCD would cancel the current CEA with ARBC. There would then be 4 individual CEAs for each project. Clark said the way it is currently written ARBC would be responsible for all 4 projects. The Board discussed this further (refer to Old Business- LWI Regional Coordinator update).
- **Ward Creek Channel Improvements Discussion-** ARBC received a letter for solicitation of views. Raiford updated the Board on the importance of this project.
- **Bayou Manchac Project.** ARBC is in talks with PLD. ARBC has prepared a draft Letter of Intent. This will be discussed by the PLD Board at their upcoming meeting. ARBC Commissioner Clouatre, representing PLD, said PLD looks forward to working together. They will not lose focus of the mission as they all represent people and try to do the best for projects.

**8. Report by Legal Counsel**

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

Location: Louisiana State Capitol, Room 3, 900 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

- Bankston stated in reference to the draft Letter of Intent, the PLD will meet on the 19<sup>th</sup> and they will send ARBC a response.
- RFP/RFQ Permanent Engineer or Engineer Employment: Harrell said that in his opinion ARBC needs to advertise to hire an Executive Director immediately. G. O'Neal said that a few meetings back he had made a motion to issue an RFP for an Interim Program Management and one of their tasks would be to help ARBC go through the Executive Director process. He stated he didn't know if this was still the will of the ARBC Commission. Cointment stated he agreed with G. O'Neal but if the Board went with a long-term contract with a company in addition to an Executive Director, they would need to be certain it is within the budget. Bankston stated the current contract with Louisiana Water Institute can be extended from \$100,000 to \$250,000. Bankston asked if it is the pleasure of the Commission for him to proceed with the advertisement of the director. Clark stated funding is a challenge and if ARBC gets a new director ARBC will need funding.

**9. Old Business – No Public Comments**

- Report/Presentation by Garvin Pittman, The Louisiana Water Institute. This presentation is available on the ARBC website at [www.amitebasin.org](http://www.amitebasin.org). Pittman provided a brief summary of the ARBC Master Plan, Regional Capacity Building Grant, recent meetings attended, and LWI offer of support (Project Application Assistance). Mr. Pittman will continue to work with ARBC Master Plan Team and with OCD-RCBG Team.
- Monthly Report/Presentation by Dewberry – Status of the ARBC Master Plan. Reviewed Data and Survey Collection Status, Sediment Sampling, and TWI Sediment Cores. Discussed Outreach and Engagement, Ordinances and Codes, Existing Conditions Assessment, LWI Modeling Schedule, Flood Risk Baseline, Initial Review of Channel Surveys, Existing Sediment Conditions, Areas of Concern and Mitigation Strategies, Mitigation Banking, Floodplain conservation/Preservation, Governance, Funding and Financing, and Maintenance. LWI Regional Floodplain Management Plans. LWI versus ARBC Requirements. ARBC outline generally checks all LWI requirements. Good collaboration between ARBC and LWI to meet both goals. This presentation is available on the ARBC website at [www.amitebasin.org](http://www.amitebasin.org). Regarding CRS programs/ratings, G. O'Neal suggested that a parish that ARBC holds property in could contact ARBC requesting it to provide a letter that it is open space that is not planned to be developed in the next 2 years. Cointment stressed the importance of getting survey data at least 1000' into the lake in order to understand how sediment effects the lake for future projects.
- LWI Region 9 Coordinator Update: (refer to agenda item ARBC President's Report) ARBC requests that OCD consider the issuance of an additional amendment to the CEA that would direct any of the Grant Funds to Ascension Parish for its New River Stormwater Management Pump Station Project, \$40,000,000; EBR Parish for its Bayou Manchac Restoration and Wards Creek Realignment Project, \$30,000,000; Livingston Parish for its Lower Amite River Dredging Project, \$20,000,000 and St. James Parish for its Westshore Interconnect Levee Project, Phase 2, \$10,000,000. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Harrell, seconded by Harris to approve Bankston to prepare this request in the form of a Resolution for submission.
- CRDC Project Status. Bankston informed the Board that last week ARBC received notice as a property owner that Florida Gas is proceeding. Larry Marino stated it is a 3-month process. Florida Gas has an application filed with FERC. There is a 2-part process with a 2-month period for comments and a month period to get the permit from FERC after which Florida Gas can begin the actual work. Real Estate Status: 85 out of the required 89 parcels acquired. Utility Relocations Status: USACE sent new HDD guidelines to DOTD on July 27, 2022, that was immediately passed to utilities. Utilities are trying to be incorporated into designs now causing some redesigns and in return delays. 45 out of 60 relocations were completed. The other 15 are under various stages LA 964 Bridge is 79% complete. LA 67 Bridge 75% complete. LA 19 Bridge under assembly period, redesign to avoid FGT. Monthly updates can be found on the ARBC website at [www.amitebasin.org](http://www.amitebasin.org) as provided by the USACE.

**10. New Business – There were no public comments.**

- Presentation by LDEQ – LWI River and Rain Gauge Network Funding Status

**11. General or Non-Agenda Item(s) Public Comments: None****12. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Cointment, seconded by O'Neal, to adjourn the meeting at 12:06 pm.**

08.13.24 Minutes

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE AMITE RIVER BASIN DRAINAGE & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
Location: Louisiana State Capitol, Room 3, 900 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

APPROVED:

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/s/John Clark/ARBC President

Date: October 8, 2024

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/s/ Toni B. Guitrau, Executive Secretary