**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 20, 2016**

**Board of Commissioners of**

**Bayou D’Arbonne Lake Watershed District Regular Meeting**

Union Parish Courthouse Annex

303 East Water Street

Farmerville, LA 71241

1. Roll Call – President Bruce Hampton called the meeting to order. Commission members present were Bruce Hampton, David Hopkins, Steve Cagle, and Cary Brown. Trotter Hunt and Terri Towns were absent. Also present were Bill Carter, Ron Riley, and Robert Lemoine.
2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance – Cary Brown led the invocation, and Steve Cagle led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Public Comment Registration – No one signed up to make a public comment.
4. Agenda Approval – Motion was made by Steve Cagle and seconded by Cary Brown to approve the agenda as passed out. There was no objection, and the motion passed unanimously.
5. Approval of Minutes – Motion was made by David Hopkins and seconded by Steve Cagle to approve the minutes of the August 2016 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.
6. Treasurer's Reports – The August 2016 treasurer’s report was presented. Motion was made by David Hopkins and seconded by Steve Cagle to approve the report. The motion passed unanimously.
7. Old and New Business:

1. Channel Markers – (a) FEMA Claims – No discussion.

(b) Repair Status – Ron Riley stated that Steve Cagle has graciously been adding the GPS coordinates of the broken and missing poles, which has taken a lot of time. We are getting to where we can find the poles now. Bruce Hampton expressed his appreciation on behalf of the Commission to Mr. Cagle for his work. At this point, we are just waiting for more data to complete this work.

2. 2016 Drawdown – Mr. Riley passed out two EDSM (Engineering Directed and Standards Manual) manuals. One is for flood control and the other is for drawdown. He stated that he just learned today that D’Arbonne Lake has the only flood control gates in the State of Louisiana on a lake that is maintained by DOTD. Bruce Hampton said he just found out about this from Marshall Hill today, as well. Mr. Riley stated that as far as flood control, the District Administrator, Marshall Hill, has the authority to use his own judgment to open the gates within the constraints of the water levels downstream so people downstream are not flooded. The other directive is addressed to drawdowns. To have a drawdown, we have to request from Wildlife & Fisheries that they allow us to drawdown and then Wildlife & Fisheries has to get in touch with the DOTD’s Chief Engineer in Baton Rouge. If he agrees, then he sends the approval to Marshall Hill, and Marshall Hill implements the drawdown. This is the first time we have gone through a drawdown with these tainter gates. We have been guessing, and we have empirical relationships that say this and that, but we do not know how it will work until the gates have been tried. Those empirical relationships say when the bayou level is below 60 feet, you can only open the gates two feet. This is where Marshall Hill is trapped because he goes by the letter of the law. Right now, it is at 57 feet. That is the plan that has been adopted and signed by the State and by the Commission. Mr. Hill will go by that plan because of liability. If you open it eight feet, you might take someone’s house out downstream. There are downstream effects that have to be taken into consideration, which is why there are limitations. Once the downstream level goes over 65 feet, you can open anything you want to, however wide you want to. But right now, we are in that range where the bayou is low, below 60 feet at 57 feet, and actually water is coming through the tainter gates, and the downstream level is going down, not rising. We did not know this was coming. We are doing two inches a day, when we were hoping for four inches a day. Mr. Riley recommended that the Commission either write a letter or pass a resolution asking DOTD to do something and send it to Marshall Hill for his response. When we open those gates, we don’t know what will happen or how fast it will happen. Mr. Riley suggested that the Commission requests some trial and error gate openings, for example, six inches and wait 24 hours to see what happens. After getting the results, if there is no problem, do another six inches and wait 24 hours to see what happens. Mr. Riley further stated that you cannot open the gates to produce water that goes out of the lake higher than history. When we had the old gates, we could do four inches a day when there was no rain. There were four old gates, which was 100 square feet. But on the tainter gates, one gate is 120 square feet, and the water level is dropping because we’ve had rain. This is not a traditional drawdown. Corney is still rising. Claiborne Lake is rising. Bill Carter suggested adding an additional provision that if any steps are taken that do not comply with the gate opening manual, then those provisions in the manual be suspended during this trial and error drawdown. There was a motion by Steve Cagle and seconded by Cary Brown to authorize President Bruce Hampton to contact the DOTD and request that they take additional measures to increase the drawdown up to four inches per day to kill the Hydrilla, provided there are no detrimental effects downstream and to request that the drawdown be extended to December 15, to the extent that this motion is contrary to current drawdown procedures, that current procedures be suspended during this period of time. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Carter also recommended that Ryan Daniel be invited to the next meeting to discuss this in more detail. Bruce Hampton stated that he just emailed Ryan and he will ask him to do that. Robert Lemoine asked while the water is down if there is a collection point while cleaning up debris? Mr. Riley stated that the Police Jury tried that after the March flood, and everyone tried that, but DEQ would not agree. Mr. Hampton agreed that there is not a site where we can do that. Whoever does that would have to comply with EPA or any other rules in effect, as well as the Policy Jury. They will probably need to take it to the landfill. Mr. Hopkins stated that he was not here during the last drawdown, and he would like to keep track of which repairs are being done to each ramp during the drawdown and the cost. Mr. Hampton stated that we authorized the budget amount for each ramp, so we have to keep it at that cost. Mr. Hopkins stated if we do not need the whole budget for one ramp, we may need it at another ramp, and everyone agreed. So whomever is doing the repairs, Mr. Hopkins asked that they keep him advised so he can bill it correctly.

3. Lake Information Pamphlet – Update – No discussion.

4. Boat Ramp Rules/New Signs – Update – Mr. Cagle stated that they are all up, the spelling is correct on them, and they look good. He also stated that the only complaints they have had are concerning the two or three in Lincoln Parish.

5. Mega Ramp – Update – Mr. Hampton said there is nothing to discuss as this meeting, so they agreed to pass on this tonight.

6. Maricopa Island Project – Update – No discussion.

7. Commission Website – Update – Mr. Lemoine passed out a printout of some ideas for the website. The first printout is a basic website for the Bayou D’Arbonne Lake Watershed District with suggestions for titles across the page, along with some ideas of how to break it down under each category to help people find information. Mr. Lemoine stated that he and Bill Carter discussed possibly having a Committee or point person who can give him the authority for the design of the website so he can get the website up within a few days. Mr. Lemoine stated that he has secured the address of [www.lakedarbonne.org](http://www.lakedarbonne.org) for one year. Mr. Lemoine also provided his invoice with some optional items (e.g., Social Media) for the website. Mr. Hampton suggested focusing now just on the website. Mr. Hampton also asked whether the rules and regulations would be on the website, and it was agreed that they would be on the website. Mr. Hopkins questioned the contact information for the Board members, and Mr. Hampton stated his preference that his personal email address be on the website rather than adding a new email address for each of the Board members. Mr. Lemoine also stated that under “Info” any information or links can be added there, for instance, regarding wildlife, tournaments or a calendar of events, not as a promotional guide but for informational purposes only. That can be continually updated. Bill Carter suggested that Mr. Lemoine to put something together with a password so it can be accessed from Trotter Hunt or anyone else who is tech saavy to check. Mr. Hampton appointed a committee consisting of himself, Trotter Hunt and Cary Brown to develop this and change it as needed. Mr. Hopkins stated that he will use the sheet Mr. Lemoine handed out as an invoice. (Tape ended!)

**(Recorder malfunctioned)**

8. Annual Dam Inspection – Report –

H. Public Comment – None.

I. Adjourn –