

September 19, 2011

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District was held on Monday, September 19, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. at the Water District office, 1016 St. Mary Street, Thibodaux, LA

Present were:	Hugh Caffery, Chairman	Jake Giardina
	Gene Harrell, Vice-Chairman	Gene Harrell
	Robert Thibodaux, Secretary/Treasurer	Greg Nolan
	Larry Dugas	

Absent: Dr. Darby Chiasson

Also present were: Judge John LeBlanc; Shannon Haynes, OCPR; Donald Arceneaux
Matt Ledet, T. Baker Smith; Alma Robichaux, BTNEP; Charles Breaud
Lloyd & Daisy Brown; Donald Falgoust; Robert Mire; Stacy Sagona
Bruno Deleo; Nick Porto; Jerry Waguespack; Ed Harlan
Archie Chaisson, Jr., Director; Jana Langley, Administrative Coordinator

Mr. Ron Animashaun, reappointed commissioner, and Mr. Greg Nolan, new commissioner, were sworn in by Judge John LeBlanc. The Board thanked Judge LeBlanc.

Vice-Chairman Gene Harrell stated that he would like to recommend that we recognize Mr. Donald Arceneaux for his years of service to our Board representing Assumption Parish. We will have a gift for Mr. Arceneaux at next month's meeting. The Board and audience applauded Mr. Arceneaux.

Mr. Shannon Haynes, OCPR, gave an update on the dredge project as follows:

- The north side sewer line connection is complete, and they are working on the south side connection. The sewer line should be complete by the end of the week depending on the weather.
- Boat ramp is mostly complete, and are clearing out the parking area.
- Dirt in two locations, at the Dupre location, and the other across from access#4.
- Excavation will be done after the sewer line is complete south of the bridge. Rock will be placed on the downstream side of the Cy Bean Bridge.
- The access point at Reach 3 will be also cleaned up.
- All items should be complete in two weeks.

Commissioner Larry Dugas asked if they are going to level out and clear out around the boat ramp area, and Mr. Haynes answered yes. Mr. Haynes stated that they are supposed to go out there tomorrow, and will make sure that they have that done.

Chairman Hugh Caffery asked if the Aucoin property is completed. Mr. Haynes answered that the concrete was removed and dredging was done last week. They are still working with Mr. Aucoin.

Commissioner Robert Thibodaux asked Mr. Haynes if they ever got it straight with Mr. Deleo's electrical line in the bayou. Mr. Deleo stated that they still did not take care of that electrical line.

Mr. Deleo advised that they came last Thursday and they dug half the property and they left. Mr. Hayes stated that he forwarded Mr. Deleo's message to Mr. Earl Paddock. Mr. Deleo stated that they came back this morning and finished the work on his property. Mr. Hayes asked if it is like it should be, and Mr. Deleo answered no but it is better than it was.

Mr. Nick Porto asked about the cypress trees. Chairman Caffery stated that Mr. Earl Paddock has a program for communicating to the residents who want cypress trees replanted. Mr. Hayes stated that he will talk to Mr. Paddock regarding the cypress trees and planting of the trees.

Vice-Chairman Harrell advised that on August 19th they received a punch list, and he asked if dirt is going to be put on the Himel property which has big crevasses in it. He also asked about the LeGleu property which has an area that goes almost straight down, and it has areas that are showing signs of dropping off. Mr. Hayes stated that they will look at the property. Chairman Caffery asked if we could get an update of the punch list that was sent on August 19th.

Ms. Daisy Brown read a letter to the Board regarding their property which is located at 1804 East Bayou Road in Donaldsonville. She stated that the purpose of their appearance here today is to notify the responsible parties of what they consider to be possible dangerous conditions at the rear of their property. There is a depression (hole) in the ground on what has been deemed to be state land which could be hazardous. They lost access to more than 30 feet of perfectly sloped and perfectly maintained bayou border land. The perfect slope, which is cut with a riding mower, was made into a sharp cliff-like drop into deep water. Part of the backyard is now a dangerous and unsightly place which is impossible to reach for maintenance. Treeroots were left exposed which could result in the death of a large tree and possible property damage.

Ms. Brown stated, at this point at a minimum, they are requesting the same solution that was applied near the bridges to correct the run off (apply dirt and white rocks) be applied to correct the depression so as to prevent any injuries to folks using said land. She stated she wanted to make sure as a matter of record so that if nothing is done at least if somebody is injured everybody knows about it. Chairman Caffery asked that Ms. Brown leave her letter with us, and it will be forwarded to Mr. Paddock to respond to it.

Mr. Chaisson showed a video of the boat trip the board members, the state engineers, and he took to check the un-dredged part of the bayou from Belle Rose south.

Commissioner Jake Giardina advised that the video is a beautiful explanation of why futuristic planning for Bayou Lafourche is of utmost importance. Chairman Caffery stated that this is a good video to take to the planning meeting. Commissioner Jake Giardina stated that it is of dire importance that we make a before and after video.

Mr. Chaisson advised that we received a letter from Mr. Ronnie Duke with the Corps of Engineers that a permit is not required from the Corps of Engineers for additional maintenance dredging since all dredged material will be hauled off-site and not deposited within wetlands.

Moved by Commissioner Jake Giardina, seconded by Commissioner Larry Dugas to dispense with the reading of the minutes, and approve the minutes of August 12, 2011 and August 15, 2011. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Commissioner Robert Thibodaux, seconded by Commissioner Vice-Chairman Gene Harrell to approve the accounts payable for August. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Greg Nolan asked how much money we are withholding from the contractor until it is decided the job is complete or satisfactory. Mr. Chaisson answered that it is 10% retainage. Chairman Caffery asked when the project will be reviewed for acceptance. Mr. Chaisson stated that at the end of the contract they sign off on the substantial completion. There is a forty-five day waiting period to make sure all liens are paid off, and then they submit the application for the retainage.

Commissioner Jake Giardina stated that even if there are slides, if the engineers say to put it at a certain slope and the contractor did it the way he took the contract then it is not their responsibility. It should really go back to the engineers. The question is whether it was designed right or wrong.

BAYOU OPERATIONS:

CREWS: Harvesters were moved to Thibodaux, cutting short the northern cutting, at the request of the City of Thibodaux water plant. The machines are currently in the vicinity of Leighton. Second crew is working with the tug clearing hydrilla south of Thibodaux. There was no tree cutting in the last month with the tug being south of Thibodaux. Crew is alternating between the tug operation and clearing snags at the bridges with vegetation and trash from TS Lee.

EQUIPMENT STATUS: Trucks: all operational; Boats: all operational

Harvesters: both operational. Hydraulic pump on #2 went out and had to be replaced. Machine was down for two work days. Misc. equip.: operational

PUMP STATION:

RIVER STAGE: Beginning August: 11.46; Ending Month: 7.23; Current Stage: 6.14

PUMP OPERATION: No. Days Siphon: 6; No. Days Pumping: 25

STATION MAINTENANCE: Fire extinguishers sent in for 5 year maintenance inspection. Gaffey out for station's overhead crane annual inspection. Poirrier Construction installed new roof on station office.

Moved by Commissioner Jake Giardina, seconded by Commissioner Larry Dugas to approve the finance report. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Caffery stated that we now have a Bayou Lafourche summit schedule. The kick-off meeting is October 10th at Nicholls at their newly renovated Peltier Hall. There will be break-out meetings over the following four days. The wrap-up meeting will be held October 17th. Our objective is to get as many of the 300,000 people that this bayou serves in attendance. Mr. Stevie Smith, the facilitator for the summit, is working to put together agendas and a list of people and entities that need to be included in the summit. A letter will be mailed to all these individuals. The goal of the summit is to develop a long range plan for the management and improvement of the bayou. We will develop a plan for the future, and then go to the legislature with all the input of the people.

Ms. Alma Robichaux, BTNEP, asked permission to put the announcement of the summit on their website, and Chairman Caffery answered please do because it would be wonderful for everybody.

Commissioner Larry Dugas advised that he spoke to the city and parish officials regarding the Claiborne Street exit, and reported that the area has been cleaned out. They still have an area by the railroad that needs cleaning.

Mr. Chaisson reported that we received the hydrilla flies to put in the bayou. The larva is shipped in hydrilla mass. They put the first batch in the bayou on August 31st and the second on September 14th. They will be shipped as long as funding is available.

Mr. Chaisson stated that they made the first pass with the tug from Lockport to Thibodaux on August 19th. He showed a graph line of the harvesters and tug operation before and after to show how the tug has helped with the hydrilla problem.

Mr. Chaisson advised that the raw water supply sub-committee of the Terrebonne Parish Council has a meeting Wednesday, September 21st at 3:00 p.m. Chairman Caffery stated that Stevie Smith will attend that meeting to let them know about the summit. Mr. Chaisson stated that he will attend the meeting.

Mr. Chaisson stated that the October monthly meeting is scheduled the same day as the wrap-up meeting for the Bayou Lafourche summit. He recommended moving the monthly meeting to October 24th, and the Board agreed.

Mr. Chaisson reviewed the budget summary for the 2012 operational budget. Mr. Chaisson announced that a public hearing will be held October 24, 2011 for the 2012 operational budget.

Commissioner Robert Thibodaux stated that last month we moved the barge south of the weir and we spent \$12,537 to move it. We moved the barge four times over the last eight years. We spent \$43,000 so if we have to move it back again we will spend another \$12,500 for a total of \$50,000. He advised that his personal opinion is that he feels it is in our best interest that we build another barge, and we can have one north and one south of the weir. Commissioner Thibodaux stated that the bayou crew is doing a good job cutting the hydrilla with the barge.

Commissioner Larry Dugas asked if it would be possible for us to operate both barges at the same time with the crew we have, or would we have to hire someone else. Mr. Chaisson answered yes we would have to stop using the harvesters. Mr. Chaisson stated that he prefers to use the harvesters north of Thibodaux because it does not spread the hydrilla. The clippings on the south side the weir float down to the Raceland area, and it starts getting brackish and the salt kills it off.

Commissioner Jake Giardina stated don't you think from what you have seen so far the tug is actually a lot more productive in getting rid of the hydrilla than these harvesters that are going along in the bayou. Commissioner Giardina advised that we ran it for just a short time, and got a tremendous amount done which was shown on the graph. He stated that it would be interesting to see how many hours you had on the hour meter of the engines when you dropped it off, and then see how many hours you have now so you can see how many you ran it. You got a tremendous result out of it. If you put the harvesters aside and transfer the tug north of the weir and do the same thing up there you wouldn't need more people, and you would have a lot more productivity. Commissioner Giardina stated you may have two harvesters running chopping hydrilla but it only takes one guy to run the tug. Mr. Chaisson stated two for safety.

Vice-Chairman Harrell stated that if he heard Mr. Chaisson correctly there is concern about cutting hydrilla on the north side and letting it flow because it will just regenerate. Mr. Chaisson stated that is correct.

Commissioner Giardina advised actually if you spend \$50,000 in eight years that is about \$6,000 a year you spend on moving the tug yet 5% interest on \$300,000 is \$15,000. When you look at the owning and operating cost of the harvesters you may have enough savings there to cover your added interest.

Matt Ledet told Mr. Chaisson good luck with USGS. Mr. Chaisson told Mr. Ledet that he received his e-mail regarding the data plan for the gages. He will find out what USGS data they use. Mr. Chaisson advised that he will talk to USGS to find out what data plan they use. Chairman Caffery stated that they are having problems with readings at the Rita Bridge.

On motion by Commissioner Jake Giardina, seconded by Commissioner Larry Dugas the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Hugh Caffery, Chairman

Robert Thibodaux, Secretary/Treasurer

