

PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREATER NEW ORLEANS EXPRESSWAY COMMISSION, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2017, 10:00 A.M., VOA BUILDING, 3939 NORTH CAUSEWAY BLVD, SUITE 400, METAIRIE, LA 70002

PRESENT: Shelby P. LaSalle, Jr., Chairman; Anthony V. Ligi, Jr., Vice Chairman; Patrick W. Fitzmorris, Secretary; Stephen Romig, Member; P. Lindsey Williams, Member;

OTHERS: Carlton Dufrechou; Melissa M. Phillpott; Eileen Barthe; Stacie Heffker; Lt. Mike Kelly; Lt. Thea Andras; Robert Graham; Red Thompson; Craig Watson, Blue Williams; Cary Bourgeois and Verdi Adam, GEC; Faimon Roberts, The Advocate; Andre Monnot, Principal Engineering; James Gregg, HNTB; Mike Lorino, Council St. Tammany; Cullen Ledet and Ralph Eppehimer, Modjeski and Masters, Inc.

The Chairman called the meeting to order.

On the motion by Mr. LaSalle, seconded by Mr. Fitzmorris, the minutes of the regular meeting held on January 18, 2017 were accepted as written. Mr. Ligi, Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Williams and Mr. Fitzmorris voted in favor of the motion.

Mr. LaSalle asked the audience if anyone had any comments or questions for the Commission. There were no comments or questions.

Mr. Dufrechou reported in January and February the Drawbridge operations included four vessel openings, 11 test openings, and 4 incidents. He reported one day of fog operations on February 6. Mr. Dufrechou reported breakdown responses in January were 108 on the Causeway Bridge and 27 on the Huey P. Long Bridge. He stated for the month of February,

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission  
Regular Meeting – March 8, 2017**

breakdowns responses increased to 253 on the Causeway Bridge and 49 on the Huey P. Long Bridge for a total of 302 breakdown responses.

Mr. Dufrechou explained the increase in breakdowns for February, resulted from flaws in prior month counting. He stated under counting was realized late last year and has been corrected.

Mr. Dufrechou reported in January, there were 20 accidents on the Causeway Bridge. He stated 9 occurred Northbound, 10 Southbound, 1 in the Northbound Toll Plaza. Mr. Dufrechou reported 2 were caused by breakdowns. He reported a total of 17 accidents on the Huey P. Long Bridge. Mr. Dufrechou stated 8 were Eastbound and 9 Westbound. Mr. Dufrechou reported in the month of February there were a total of 21 accidents on the Causeway Bridge. He stated 11 occurred Northbound, 7 Southbound, 2 at the North Toll plaza, and 1 in a crossover. He reported 8 were caused by breakdowns. He also stated in the month of February 14 accidents occurred on the Huey P. Long Bridge. He reported 6 Eastbound, and 8 Westbound.

Mr. Dufrechou reported on January 20, State Police requested our police and MAP (Motor Assistant Patrol) assistance with a potential jumper on the Crescent City Connection Bridge. Both Lt. Kelly and Lt. Andras were part of the response team. Mr. Dufrechou reported 3 total bridge closures. Due to severe weather on February 7, the Causeway Bridge closed from 12:10 pm to 12:30 pm. On February 9, Causeway Northbound Bridge closed from 6:11 pm to 6:23 pm due to three, two vehicles crashes. On February 23, Causeway Southbound closed from 7:50 am to 8:25 am due to three separate crashes and a vehicle fire.

Mr. Dufrechou was asked by the Commission, regarding the breakdowns, if the problems are mostly mechanical, flats or running out of gas. Mr. Dufrechou asked both Lt. Andras and Lt.

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission  
Regular Meeting – March 8, 2017**

Kelly to reply, Lt. Kelly stated it's a combination of things such as issues with motors, water, gas and tires. Lt. Kelly will review the data more closely and report back.

Mr. Dufrechou showed a photo of the GNOEC Police promotions ceremony held Wednesday, January 18, at the Maintenance Facility. Mr. LaSalle recognized the following Police Officers: Sergeant Michael Kelly was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant; Sergeant Thea Andras promoted to the rank of Lieutenant; Corporal Mikel Melton promoted to the rank of Sergeant; Corporal Matthew Haley promoted to the rank of Sergeant; Officer Shenandoah Jones promoted to the rank of Corporal; Officer Scott Huff promoted to the rank Corporal; and Officer Shawn Rice promoted to rank of Corporal.

Mr. Dufrechou showed a photo of Officer Mike Johnson who rescued a Seagull on the Causeway on Saturday, February 4. He reported the bird had a minor injury to the tip of its bill. He stated there were no indications of any other injuries. The bird allowed Officer Johnson to catch it and rode patiently in his lap to the North end of the bridge, where it was released into the lagoon.

Mr. Dufrechou showed a video and two pictures of a vehicle pursuit on the Causeway on February 8. He stated the drunken driver was reported by a motorist on the bridge at 7 pm. operating the vehicle recklessly. Mr. Dufrechou reported after intercepting the SUV on the bridge, the driver refused the stop and the chase ended along I- 12 South of Covington. Lt. Kelly added this was the driver's 4th DWI offense.

Mr. Dufrechou showed a video of an accident involving a DWI in Crossover 2000 on the Causeway on February 11. Mr. Dufrechou reported the officer pulled the vehicle into the Crossover at approximately midnight. The driver attempted to make a U-turn in crossover 2000

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission  
Regular Meeting – March 8, 2017**

and struck a marked Causeway Police vehicle. Mr. Dufrechou showed four pictures of a 3-car accident Southbound at 11.5-mile marker on the Causeway on February 15. Mr. Dufrechou reported the 3-car accident was due to a breakdown. Lt. Kelly confirmed the 3-car accident was the result of engine failure. Lt. Kelly also reported once the engine shut down, the vehicle stopped in the right lane causing a second vehicle to slow and activate hazard lights. The third vehicle failed to recognize the emergency lights and struck the second vehicle. Lt. Kelly stated after vehicle three struck vehicle two, it rear ended vehicle one.

Mr. Dufrechou showed one video and two pictures of a vehicle fire at the 17.5-mile marker on the southbound span on, February 23. Lt. Kelly reported this accident resulted from backed up traffic from a previous crash. Lt. Kelly stated the driver wasn't paying attention and rear ended the back of another vehicle causing a three-car accident. He also stated the driver of vehicle one crashed into the back of vehicle two which cause the motor to burst into flames.

Mr. LaSalle asked if the crashes increased this month for a particular reason. Mr. Dufrechou reported that crashes seemed to be increasing since late last year. Three of the crashes in January were associated with the drawbridge repair that was completed in one day. Mr. Dufrechou stated the second crash was the vehicle fire at the 17.5-mile marker Southbound on February 23.

Mr. Dufrechou indicated that enforcement on the bridge is stronger than ever. He stated that he appreciated the efforts of all our officers. Mr. Dufrechou and Lt. Kelly agreed the average citations issued per month total about 1,200.

On the Consulting Engineering Services Mr. Dufrechou recommended award to highest rank firm which was Gulf Engineering and Consultants (GEC). Mr. LaSalle stated before taking a

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission  
Regular Meeting – March 8, 2017**

vote that he is involved in a legal matter with one of the submitters for the RFQ and so he has decided to abstain from voting on this. On motion by Mr. Romig, seconded Mr. Williams, On December 16, 2015, the GNOEC issued RFQ No. 20151201-001 for Statements of Qualifications from qualified firms interested in providing consulting engineering services on an as needed basis. On February 10, 2016, six responses were received by the GNOEC. After evaluation, consideration, and upon recommendation from GNOEC staff and legal counsel, the GNOEC hereby authorizes the General Manager to begin negotiations with Gulf Engineers & Consultants (GEC), the highest ranked firm, for consulting engineering services on an as needed basis. If negotiations are unsuccessful, staff is authorized to open negotiations with the next highest ranked firms. Mr. Ligi, Mr. Romig, Mr. Williams and Mr. Fitzmorris voted in favor of the motion with Mr. LaSalle abstaining from the vote.

On the Safety Bay Improvement Project, Mr. Dufrechou recommended advertising an issuance of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for design engineers. On motion by Mr. Ligi, seconded Mr. Fitzmorris based upon the recommendation of the Staff and the Consulting Engineers, the GNOEC is seeking Statements of Qualifications from qualified firms interested in providing innovative and alternative engineering design services for the GNOEC Safety Bay Improvement Project. The purpose of this RFQ is to 1) establish a list of qualified firms to design the Safety Bay Improvements; 2) obtain initial competitive innovative and alternative design/development proposals from up to five qualified firms; and 3) then select a qualified firm providing the most advantageous, implementable, and cost effective proposal with the least impacts to commuters to perform the services. The firm acting as the GNOEC consulting engineer shall be precluded from acting as the design engineer for the Safety Bay Improvement Project. Accordingly, the GNOEC hereby authorizes the General Manager to

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission  
Regular Meeting – March 8, 2017**

advertise the issuance of a RFQ for professional design engineering services for the Safety Bay Improvement Project. Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Ligi, Mr. Romig, Mr. Williams and Mr. Fitzmorris voted in favor of the motion.

Mr. LaSalle congratulated GEC for being selected as Consulting Engineer for the GNOEC.

Mr. Dufrechou introduced Andrea Monet with Principal Engineering who presented a PowerPoint regarding their Mandeville proposals. (Please see attached for the PowerPoint).

Mr. LaSalle noted President Trump's Fifty National Infrastructure projects. The proposed Safety Improvements for the Causeway are included in the President's priority projects. He stated that he met with Congressman Scalise, as well as Senator Cassidy's and Senator Kennedy's staff regarding the future safety improvements for the Causeway. Mr. LaSalle stated it was a productive meeting.

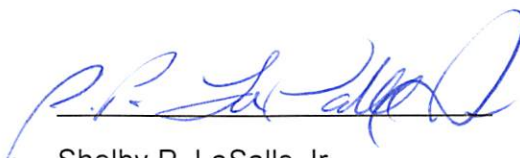
Mr. LaSalle asked the staff, and the Bond Counsel, to investigate the feasibility of bonding in two steps (Safety Bays and Rails) and then report back to the Commission. He stated the Safety Bays should start as soon as possible. Mr. LaSalle presented Mr. Ligi with a gavel for his service as GNOEC Chairman. Mr. LaSalle said that he has big shoes to fill; he stated that Mr. Ligi was a great Chairman. Mr. LaSalle also recognized St. Tammany Councilman Mike Lorino. He stated several years ago Capt. Lorino started the safety improvements and public input process. Mr. LaSalle stated Mr. Ligi then carried it through and got the approval, of both Parishes. Mr. LaSalle stated that he will now try and implement the improvements. Mr. Ligi stated it was always a pleasure to serve for this wonderful organization. He stated having served in the Louisiana Legislature; he feels that the GNOEC is one of the top public entities in the state. Mr. Ligi stated that the GNOEC staff does an outstanding job. He thanked the staff

**Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission  
Regular Meeting – March 8, 2017**

for making everything easy for him. Mr. Ligi also stated that the GNOEC has a great Commission.

Mr. LaSalle reminded everyone the next meeting is tentatively scheduled on April 5, 2017 and it may be on the Northshore. **REVISION – The next Commission meeting was changed to Thursday, April 27, 2017 at 10:00 am in the VOA building on the South Shore.**

There being no further business, the meeting was be adjourned.



Shelby P. LaSalle Jr.

Chairman



Patrick W. Fitzmorris

Secretary