

June 17, 2019

The regular monthly meeting of the Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District was held on Monday, June 17, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. at the Water District Office, 1016 St. Mary Street, Thibodaux, LA

Present were: Gene Harrell, Vice-Chairman
Greg Nolan, Secretary/Treasurer
Donald Schwab
Francis Richard
Ray Mayet
Eli Miles, Jr.
Chris Domangue
Barry Soudelier
Lance Authement

Absent: Hugh Caffery, Chairman; Jake Giardina; Scott LeBlanc

Also present were: Pernell Pellegrin, CPA, Martin & Pellegrin; Greg Chatelain, Delta Coast
Ryan Perque, FOBL; Stevie Smith, All South Consulting Engineers; Alma Robichaux, BTNEP
Barry Marionneaux, Attorney; Josh Bordelon; Robert Mire; Bonnie Nolan
Ben Malbrough, Executive Director; Jana Langley, Administrative Assistant

Gene Harrell, Vice-Chairman, chaired the meeting in the absence of Chairman Hugh Caffery.

Terrebonne Parish Commissioner Donald Schwab was reappointed to the board, and was sworn in by Mr. Barry Marionneaux, Attorney.

Gene Harrell, Vice-Chairman advised that any public comments on any agenda item can be made at any time by simply raising your hand, and asking for permission to speak.

Moved by Commissioner Francis Richard, seconded by Commissioner Ray Mayet to dispense with the reading of the minutes, and approve the minutes of May 20, 2019. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Commissioner Ray Mayet, seconded by Commissioner Eli Miles, Jr. to approve the accounts payable for May. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Commissioner Francis Richard, seconded by Commissioner Barry Soudelier to approve the finance report for May. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Ben Malbrough reported that the river is still elevated in the range of 30 ft. in Donaldsonville. We are still siphoning around the clock with all four pumps with the exception of rainfall events in which we cut back a little.

Mr. Malbrough advised that we started working with Lafourche Parish to apply herbicide to the water hyacinths. We put the spraying operations on hold because we were confronted by an upset resident.

Mr. Malbrough stated that he met with the state historic preservation office today regarding the archeological cultural resources review on the pump station site. This is part of the 404 permit process. The high river is causing an issue because we need the batture to do our survey. The area of survey will only be focused on the excavations due to the pump station and the discharge pipe where they know there may be relics of Fort Butler. We will go straight into backhoe excavation because of the historical work that the state office has already done.

Vice-Chairman Gene Harrell asked who will do the excavations, and Mr. Malbrough answered that we have gotten two quotes. This will be an additional service that will be required for the consultants to bring on another contractor.

Mr. Greg Chatelain, Delta Coast, reported that the legal part of the contract is complete on the North Water Control Structure Project. The technical specs are 99% complete. They are in the process of marking up their plans, and they should be done in a couple of days. They are expecting to bid the project out before the end of the month.

Vice-Chairman Gene Harrell asked about the sediment trap, and Mr. Malbrough answered that the sediment was surveyed at the end of last year. The hopes were that when we do the pump station construction we can clear out the sediment trap at the same time. We are trying to get the sediment conveyance permit so that we can discharge the sediment over the levee and back into the river before the next dredging.

Mr. Pernell Pellegrin, CPA with Martin & Pellegrin, advised that they examined the District's books and records and gave three opinions regarding the 2018 annual audit report.

Mr. Pellegrin advised that the first opinion is whether the financial statements prepared by our staff are fairly stated. He advised that they issued an unmodified opinion, which is a clean opinion.

Mr. Pellegrin stated that the next opinion is whether our accounting procedures that we have in place are sufficient to produce accurate financial statements in the course of the employees during their normal duties. He advised that the District has a very small accounting staff, and we do not have proper segregation of duties. It does not cause any problems because of the lack of segregation of duties.

Mr. Pellegrin advised that the third opinion and most important is whether they found any instances where the District did not comply with grants, laws, and regulations. They issued an opinion that they did not find any instances of non-compliance.

Mr. Pellegrin went over the revenues, expenditures and capital improvements for the 2018 audit.

Mr. Pellegrin stated that Jana Langley is doing a great job with the books. Vice-Chairman Gene Harrell thanked Jana Langley for keeping us out of hot water.

Commissioner Francis Richard asked Mr. Pellegrin if he has any recommendations regarding the audit, and Mr. Pellegrin answered because of the lack of segregation of duties, the day-to-day operations of the District should be monitored.

Moved by Commissioner Donald Schwab, seconded by Commissioner Greg Nolan and unanimously approved to accept the 2018 annual audit report as presented by Mr. Pernell Pellegrin.

Mr. Malbrough stated that Lafourche Parish Government has been working on the Overlook Pavilion Project many years. Our previous permit to them expired, and they are requesting a new permit.

Move by Commissioner Donald Schwab, seconded by Commissioner Greg Nolan to approve the permit application for Lafourche Parish Government to construct a Bayou Overlook Pavilion on Bayou Lafourche across from the Cajun Bayou Visitor Center in Raceland, LA. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Malbrough advised that he had previously gotten approval from the Board to acquire any and all property necessary for the construction of the water control structure in Labadieville. The wording of the resolution did not explicitly say lease or right of way. It is being brought back to the Board since this is a long term lease only to be terminated by us. This is the lease on the LA1 side of the Hwy. 1010 bridge.

Moved by Commissioner Ray Mayet, seconded by Commissioner Greg Nolan and unanimously approved to ratify the executed Act of Right of Way and Servitude Lease Agreement with Tex-Emma, Inc. for property along LA 1 for the North Water Control Structure. The lease shall be perpetual unless terminated by the Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District.

Mr. Ryan Perque gave an update on the Friends of Bayou Lafourche as follows:

- ❖ They completed a program last Tuesday called Float with Friends. They partnered with Hi-5, an organization that assists at risk youth and their families with after school and summer time programs. The program was funded by Danos Foundation through a grant to have the paddle event. Mr. Perque showed pictures of the paddlers.
- ❖ They are working with the Assumption Parish Policy Jury to submit an application to the Louisiana Recreational Trails Program. They have approved the land management agreement and have earmarked \$20,000 for the project. They agreed to be the owner of the improvements once done.
- ❖ We were approached by Lafourche Parish Government to put in a bayou access point. It will connect to the existing walking trail. The details are being worked out to submit a grant.
- ❖ We should be able to begin construction on the Nicholls Bayou Side Phase 1 this year with funding from Louisiana Recreational Trails Program, with some potential match dollars, and the State's capital outlay bill.
- ❖ We should be able to break ground and complete the access point in Raceland this year. We have a least two projects for next year so things are starting to fall in place.
- ❖ This weekend is the Creole Fishing Tournament in Grand Isle. They have announced that Friends of Bayou Lafourche will be a beneficiary of this year's tournament so that opens more exposure for Bayou Lafourche.

M. Malbrough stated that we have been working with the Friends of Bayou Lafourche for three years now. If you add up the total projects this year and next year it could be potentially about \$500,000 worth of projects. These projects will immediately give access to people all along the bayou from Napoleonville to Raceland.

Mr. Malbrough stated that there have been significant strides made by Ryan Perque and his organization over the last few years. He advised that the Nicholls project was included in the capital outlay bill for several million dollars.

Mr. Perque stated that Friends of Bayou Lafourche obviously would not be here if were not for the support of the Fresh Water District. He thanked the Board for their kind of commitment they have shown to them, and being patient with them as they get these things going.

Commissioner Greg Nolan asked how the north water control structure will affect the dredging, and Mr. Malbrough answered that the area immediately adjacent upstream and downstream of that structure will be dredged to the final depth.

Vice-Chairman Gene Harrell asked for any public comments, and there were none.

Moved by Commissioner Francis Richard, seconded by Commissioner Lance Authement and unanimously approved the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Gene Harrell, Vice-Chairman

Greg Nolan, Secretary/Treasurer

