

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE
AMITE RIVER BASIN DRAINAGE & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

3535 S. Sherwood Forest Boulevard, Suite 135, Baton Rouge, LA

June 16, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT DURING ROLL CALL: Don Thompson, Ben Babin, Anthony “Tony” Rouchon, John Brass, Willie George Lee, Jerry Thibeau, Kenneth Wade Welborn

MEMBERS ABSENT: David Hoover, William “Carey” Jenkins, Terry Louque, Larry Thomas

NOTE: Vacant Seat(s) Livingston Parish, St. Helena Parish

ALSO PRESENT: ARBC Executive Director Dietmar Rietschier, ARBC Executive Secretary Toni Guitrau,
ARBC Legal Counsel Larry Bankston

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Thompson.
2. Public Comments on Agenda Items: None
3. Minutes
 - The Board unanimously approved a motion by Babin, second by Lee to approve the May 2015 regular meeting minutes as presented.
4. Financial Statement Report
 - Rouchon presented to the Board the May 2015 General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Rouchon, second by Babin to approve the May 2015 General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements.
 - Amendment #2 - Administrative Budget 2014-15. There being no public comments, the Board unanimously approved a motion by Thibeau, second by Brass to adopt Amendment #2 - Administrative Budget of 2014-15, as presented.
5. Report by Executive Director
 - Rietschier reported that the Floodplain Management Plan may be completed by July of 2015.
 - Amite River Weir: Ponchartrain Levee District (PLD) is working with engineer for revisions to the weir on the Amite Diversion Canal.
 - Real Estate – HTRW – DOTD took over last year and there are delays with the HTRW’s. They are still behind and it needs to be done even if that means that DOTD needs to hire a consultant so Real Estate can move forward. Utility Relocations have been identified along East side of US Hwy. 61.
 - Brooks Lake: The Corps plans to do an analysis of the need for that feature. This is an estimated \$4 million feature. At the present time the Corps does not have the funds to complete such an analysis. He requested that the Commission allow him to get a response from the Corps on if we can do it. Then consider that ARBC undertake a study of need, otherwise it will not be done. ARBC already has a list of consultants. Rouchon stated he thought that the Corps was already moving away from doing Brooks Lake. Delmar stated that Brooks Lake is on the full west side, if the Corps was interested in doing it they would have already started the design and construction. Because the DOTD and ARBC has shown interest in doing away with it, the Corps has shied away from any design work and has opted to move on to other things. The whole thing about post authorization change being done administratively part of the problem is internal. They are trying to check with their legal section to determine where the value is within their authority to change. If not, it would require congressional change to delete the feature. If they determine it is under that dollar amount where they can do it without going back to congress then they can say here is what is being proposed can we do away with it. Rouchon said ARBC shouldn’t spend any money if everybody is leaning away from it. Bankston said no one with the Corps is proceeding to make a determination. Bankston pointed out that this issue needs to be resolved now because of the issue of construction would be on the State Police property. If Brooks Lake feature could be eliminated, it would greatly improve our chances to work out a deal with State Police for a flowage easement.
 - Request to have a meeting to discuss “only” finances for Phase 1. Rietschier wants the non-federal sponsors to develop a Phase 1 budget and identification of revenue sources.
 - CRDC/Federal Funding: Rietschier said the next construction feature will be Bayou Baton Rouge Drop Structure and La. 964 will be completed after drop structure. OMB refused to fund \$18 million for KCS RR and Hwy. 61 bridges which are the key to Phase 1. Next is a construction contract for Bayou Baton Rouge Drop Structure. We need to express our position that we should start with lower end moving upward. William Delmar, DOTD, stated there is no construction contract currently planned for either La. 964 or Bayou Baton Rouge Drop Structure. He said the current plan the Corps has is a Design Contract for Bayou Baton Rouge Drop Structure in opposed to doing the previous Design Contract for Hwy. 964. In this case, they are moving west from the original design of the bridge to the design of the drop structure. As far as the Construction Contract, OMB did reject the \$18 million dollar package request so the Corps decided to break one part of the contract into 3 separate \$6 million packages. The \$18 million was for the entirety of the railroad bridge. This includes building the bridge, digging the canal under the bridge and bypassing it. Since they already have the contract for bypassing Hwy. 61, they are going to finish constructing that. As soon as both bypasses are constructed and built they will then activate them. Then they will begin with building the railroad bridge first then the Hwy. 61 bridge. As of now, they only thing planned for the drop structure is the design.

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- Mitigation: Rietschier reported that the Corps purchased 218 Habitat Units for \$8,289,000. Thompson asked approximately how many acres is it per unit. Bankston stated that it varies from bank to bank. Some banks it takes four acres per unit and some banks only two per unit.
 - Report by Delmar, DOTD: DOTD Environmental has completed the majority of the HTRW surveys for the McHugh Swamp Area. The remainder are being reviewed and improved. A Phase 2 HTRW will be needed for the Beech Grove Farm property, Parcel 39. DOTD Real Estate is going to order appraisal for three parcels in McHugh Swamp and review all the appraisals previously performed. DOTD Utility Relocation is continuing work on the coordination efforts with the utilities located on the west side of Hwy. 61 near the railroad tracks. Also, they are working to acquire more precise estimates for the utilities on the east side of Hwy. 61. DOTD Project Management prepared an annual breakdown for the budget. House Bill 2, Capital Outlay, has been sent to the Governor. The project did not receive any new money.
6. Report by ARBC Legal Counsel: Per Diem: HB 709 passed and is ready for the Governor's signature. This will allow for a maximum of \$112 per meeting and but will remain at a maximum of 24 meetings per year, one per day.
7. Old Business: None
8. New Business: ARBC Office Lease Renewal:
- The Board unanimously approved a motion by Thibeaux, second by Lee to renew, for an additional 3 years, the office lease contract at the same amount of money per month with Hebert Interests, LLC. This will expire December 31, 2018.
 - Thompson proclaimed June 2015 as Flood Awareness Month.
9. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Rouchon, second by Brass to adjourn the meeting.

APPROVED:

/s/ Don Thompson
Don Thompson, ARBC President
Date: July 21, 2015

/s/ Toni B. Guitrau
Toni B. Guitrau, Executive Secretary