

In the Levee Loop !



News of the Flood Protection Authority

April 15, 2017

Organizational Culture Working Group

Governmental entities are coming to realize what private businesses have long recognized—***organizational culture counts***. What is organizational culture? It's the way a company or entity does things. It's developing and sustaining customer service standards, both external customers (the public) and internal customers (co-workers). It's employee development, training, communication, trust and morale.

The recent employee survey was a first step in understanding The Flood Protection Authority's current organizational culture and identifying areas that need improvement. A working group has been formed by Board President Joe Hassinger to develop and implement positive steps to make The Flood Protection Authority an even better place to work—to ***improve our Organizational Culture***. Look for positive developments from this initiative in future newsletters.

THE FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY—EAST COMMISSIONERS

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*“Things do not happen.
Things are made to happen.”
John F. Kennedy*

2017 State of Flood Protection Summit



Speakers left to right: Walt Leger, III, Speaker Pro Tem-State Representative, J. P. Morrell, State Senator Dist. 3, Wesley Bishop, State Senator Dist. 4, Rachel Perez representing Bill Cassidy, U.S. Senator, and Chip Kline, Dep. Director Governor's Office of Coastal Activities



Jay Lapeyre, Chair, Nominating Committee Flood Protection Authorities, Windell Curole, Chair, Coastal LA Levee Consortium, Mike Park, Ops. Div. Chief, Corps of Engineers, Ken Graham, Meteorologist-in-Charge, National Weather Service, Robert Turner, Director of Engineering and Ops, and Joe Hassinger, President

Message from the President

I want to thank everyone for their cooperation with, and suggestions for, the restructuring. It has involved a tremendous amount of work, but has been accomplished smoothly and professionally. So, thank you all. The Board really appreciates the collaboration and teamwork.

Our 2017 State of Flood Protection Summit was held on April 7th. The event featured presentations by Bob Turner, USACE, CPRA, National Weather Service, Levee Consortium, Nominating Committee, and several state and federal elected officials and me. The Summit was our opportunity to present to the media, public and other stakeholders a report on the status of our flood defense system and the Flood Protection Authority. We received great feedback, so I thank everyone who participated in the planning and execution of the event. Much appreciated!

Joe Hassinger

To see highlights of the
2017 State of Flood Protection Summit
go on You Tube
<https://youtu.be/6BVM7dLE6cQ>

Regionalization of Flood Protection

The reorganization and consolidation of the administrative staff brings The Flood Protection Authority-East one step closer to the regionalization of flood protection mandated with the passage of Acts Nos. 1 and 43 of the First Extraordinary Legislative Session of 2006 and the Constitutional Amendment passed by the voters of the State of Louisiana. The driving force in the reorganization effort is the Authority's critical mission of flood protection. The Authority's functions have been divided into two major divisions in order to bring the appropriate focus to the critical mission of regional flood protection. The Engineering and Operations Division will be headed by Bob Turner, Director of Engineering and Operations. Mr. Turner will be supported by Stevan Spencer, Chief Engineer and Gerry Gillen, Chief of Operations. The Administrative and support functions will be headed by Derek Boese, Chief Administrative Officer. The individuals in the upper level of the administrative organizational structure assumed their new roles on April 3rd.

The reorganization, which is headed by President Joe Hassinger and Vice President Rick Luetlich, presents a tremendous opportunity for the Authority and levee districts not only to bring regionalization to flood protection, but also to regionalize support functions to achieve greater efficiencies, implement improvements and offer greater service to employees and the public.

In the formal presentation of the reorganization plan to the Board at its April 16th meeting, Vice President Rick Luetlich expressed his appreciation for the energy and attitude being brought to this effort by staff. He also informed the Board that management is attempting to address some of the issues expressed in the recent employee surveys concurrent with the reorganizational issues.

The reorganization process has allowed staff to review many of its procedures and processes and to identify and put in place a number of efficiencies and cost saving measures. The regionalization brought about by the reorganization will ensure the consistent application of policies and procedures across the levee districts, uniformity in training and provide greater opportunities for employees to advance through promotion. The Authority's recent standardization of benefits across the Authority and levee districts enhances the ability of employees to move across the organization.

The development and implementation of a fully reorganized regional structure will take some time. The completion of the process for the Finance function will take several months and includes upgrades and improvements to the Authority's technology and financial software systems.

The majority of the Authority's Operations and Maintenance employees, who are the backbone of the organization and the key to The Flood Protection Authority's success, will see little to no difference in their day-to-day duties and chain of command. Please be patient, cooperative and flexible and see the positive growth that results from the Authority's self-examination and the identification of opportunities to bring about consistencies and improvements, resolve problems and conflicts, and unify The Flood Protection Team.

The new structure will have no impact on the Authority's emergency operations. The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that was in place in 2016 remains in place and dictates responsibilities and chain of command during a storm event. When the EOP is activated, Bob Turner will be in charge.

Meetings will take place with all levels of the organization to receive valuable input from the people who operate, maintain and support flood protection. All employees are encouraged to provide comment, submit ideas, express concerns or ask questions about the reorganization.

Online Suggestion Box Launched

Over the years, some of the best ideas for improving employee morale have come from surveys and anonymous suggestions. Please help us by continuing to provide your feedback through our new anonymous online suggestion box on the Flood Protection Authority web page. Just navigate to the SLFPA-E home page and select the green "Suggestion Box" button on the left hand side; just above the red "Fight Fraud" button. Your feedback will help management better understand what needs to happen to improve work-life balance, improve safety and improve efficiencies.

Excellence in the Workplace

Pete Bauer Recognized by The Flood Protection Authority

Peter Bauer, LBBLD Operating Engineer Superintendent, was recognized by The Flood Protection Authority at its February 16th Board Meeting. Pete is in charge of all Pump Station personnel and operations, and took on the responsibility of supervising the levee crew in 2015, essentially becoming responsible for all field operations at the LBBLD.

Pete joined the LBBLD as a Pump Station Operating Engineer on August 5, 1999, and over the past 17 years developed a comprehensive understanding of virtually all aspects of flood protection in St. Bernard Parish. Pete's easy going demeanor and positive attitude are a testament to his leadership ability. After Hurricane Katrina Pete was heavily involved in the reconstruction of the damaged Pump Stations and the construction of the St. Bernard portion of the HSDRRS, providing valuable input about the functions and operations of the system. Pete has been an invaluable employee and a great friend to his fellow employees. His dedication and contributions have been critical to the success of the LBBLD.



Mechanics Commended for Extra Efforts

Letters of commendation were presented in March to O.L.D. Mechanics Marvin Duret, Lionel Irons, Jackie Johnson and Craig Simon for outstanding work and extra efforts put forth while providing mechanical support for the Orleans Levee District's grass cutting and levee maintenance operations.

Technology Safety

In this fast-paced world, cyber criminals are becoming more sophisticated and devious each day, hoping to catch technology users off guard and stealing identities and personal information. Spoofing and phishing are two widely used methods.

What is Email Spoofing? Email spoofing is the forgery of an email header so that the message appears to have originated from someone or somewhere other than the actual source.

What is Phishing? Phishing is a form of fraud in which the attacker tries to learn information such as login credentials or account information by masquerading as a reputable entity or person in email, IM or other communication channels.

Banks and other legitimate businesses or institutions will never ask you for personal or confidential information by email. Unscrupulous cyber criminals can also spoof your employer – The Flood Protection Authority will never ask you for personal or confidential information by email. If you receive a suspicious email from Flood Protection Authority staff, contact the individual by phone or the IT Department to authenticate the email source.

IRS CAUTIONS ABOUT EMAIL SCAM

The IRS has issued a warning about a dangerous email scam currently circulating nationwide and targeting employers, including tax exempt entities, universities and schools, government and private sector businesses. The scammer poses as an internal executive requesting employees Forms W-2 and Social Security Number information from company payroll or human resources departments.

WORKPLACE SAFETY IS A TOP PRIORITY !
Please submit workplace safety tips and ideas to share
with your coworkers.

Ten Healthy Ways to Manage Change at Work

Chandra Chaffin

- 1) **Acknowledge the change.** Recognizing and accepting change is one of the first steps towards managing it.
- 2) **Face your fears.** Make a list of your fears and write down what you would do if each fear came to pass. Knowing you have a plan can help defuse anxiety.
- 3) **Confront your feelings and seek support.** Face your feelings about fear of transition and reach out to close colleagues, partners, and friends to talk and process.
- 4) **Stop the fearful thoughts and replace them with positive ones.** Fear of change derives from creating negative scenarios about the future. Stop negative thoughts in their tracks and turn them into something positive. Ask yourself questions. *In the past, when I handled change well, what did I do? What actions did I take that worked for me? How did I manage my physical and mental health?*
- 5) **Be flexible and embrace change.** Instead of hiding from your fear and creating defenses to keep it away, be open and flexible to taking on new challenges and tasks. Approach change with an open attitude. Frame change as an opportunity for learning.
- 6) **Be part of the change.** Adopt an attitude of anticipation and excitement. Welcome change as an opportunity. Get involved in new committees and work teams. Be an influencer and driver of change so that you will feel empowered and less fearful.
- 7) **Communication, communication and more COMMUNICATION.** Be proactive in finding out what the change involves. Talk to your supervisor and your co-workers to get their understanding. Keep the sessions positive. Ask constructive questions to elicit meaningful information and help you gain a better understanding. Go to reliable sources and beware of rumors.
- 8) **Reduce stress and anxiety.** In times of stress, you may feel tired and un-energized. Focus on being strong, healthy and resilient. Feelings of calm and control help you make good, clear, and rational decisions. Focus on exercise and nutrition, breathe deeply, and smile
- 9) **Have a sense of meaning.** Take stock of how valuable you are to your organization and the mission. Acknowledge your successes and the skills and attributes you offer the organization.
- 10) **Continue to work and see the big picture.** It may be tempting during times of reorganization to sit back and see what will happen, as the work you are doing or supervisor may change. However, until you have a new direction, its best to focus on achieving your designated goals and tasks. Remember, the mission must still be accomplished.

Weston, B. (2015, February 23). Ten Tips for Dealing with Change Positively in Your workplace [Web log post]. Retrieved February 1, 2017, from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/10-tips-dealing-change-positively-your-workplace-ban-weston>

WE NEED FEEDBACK!

Please send ideas, topics and suggestions for future newsletters. We are also looking for levee district news items and items of interest about employees. Don't forget to send pictures.

Original articles are welcomed.

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