



FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY

Your Flood Defense System

PRESS RELEASE

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FPA-East Board Response to St. Bernard Parish Millage Vote

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New Orleans, LA – On Saturday, August 15, 2020, voters in St. Bernard Parish rejected a 8-mill, 10-year property tax for drainage. Passage of the millage was expected to pave the way for the Parish government to assume internal pumping and drainage responsibilities in St. Bernard Parish, as they had agreed to do starting January 2020. The Flood Protection Authority-East (FPA) is pressing forward with litigation to accomplish the transfer of the pumping and drainage function from the FPA to the Parish, with or without the Parish's acquiescence. The FPA will continue pumping and drainage operations until either the litigation to enforce the agreement to transfer operation to the Parish is concluded or the funds for that function are exhausted in December 2021. Regardless of the status of the transfer of pumping and drainage to the Parish, the FPA will continue to operate the levee system and flood control structures in St. Bernard Parish, as it does in Orleans and Jefferson Parishes.

As a result of negotiations for a voluntary transfer from the FPA to the Parish rather than the FPA unilaterally divesting pumping and drainage, the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), the FPA Board of Commissioners and St. Bernard Parish Government reached an agreement in June 2019 for St. Bernard Parish to assume all pumping and drainage functions by January 1, 2020. Under the agreement for the Parish to assume pumping and drainage, the CPRA committed to investing \$4 million to improve pump stations in St. Bernard Parish, and the FPA would have given the Parish \$4.9 million

in January 2020 and an additional \$1.9 million in January 2021, funds amounting to more than 3 years of operating costs for pumping and drainage. In November 2019, during the final preparations for transfer from the FPA to the Parish, St. Bernard Parish Government abruptly notified the FPA that the Parish would not proceed with the transfer on January 1, 2020, in breach of the agreement reached. In response, the FPA filed a lawsuit to enforce the agreement. That litigation is currently moving forward.

FPA Board President, Herb Miller, stated, "We believe our message is clear - that we will divest ourselves of drainage responsibilities. The Parish should honor the agreement reached in 2019 and do what is best for the residents of St. Bernard Parish." Miller added, "The Board of Commissioners put in more than five years of time and effort to make sure the people of St. Bernard Parish received the drainage and hurricane protection they deserve and need. Now that we are in a heightened point of Hurricane Season, it's important for the Parish to make the right decision and comply with the original commitment."