

**MINUTES OF
SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY-EAST
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON APRIL 15, 2021**

PRESENT: Mark L. Morgan, Chair
Jason P. Latiolais, Committee Member
Herbert T. Weysham, III, Committee Member

The Operations Committee of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East (Authority or FPA) met on April 15, 2021, in the St. Bernard Parish Council Chambers, St. Bernard Parish Government Complex, 8201 West Judge Perez Drive, Chalmette, Louisiana. Mr. Morgan called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Opening Comments: None.

Adoption of Agenda: The Committee approved the agenda as presented.

Approval of Minutes: The Committee approved the minutes of the Operations Committee meeting held on February 18, 2021.

Public Comments: None.

Safety Minute:

Mr. Morgan explained that the Operations Committee instituted the inclusion of a Safety Minute on its agendas in an attempt to change the FPA's culture on safety and improve its safety record. He advised that he suggested to Kelli Chandler, Regional Director, that she leave an open slot for a direct report on safety.

The Safety Minute was provided by Marvin Brown, OLD Foreman C, Department 313, Operations & Maintenance-Levees. Mr. Brown has been with the FPA one-year and ten months. He supervises Levee Maintenance Foremen A, Heavy Equipment Operators, Mobile Equipment Operators and Laborers, works with two fellow Levee Foremen C in carrying out their responsibilities, and assists the East Jefferson and Lake Borgne Basin Levee Districts as needed. Mr. Brown is a US Navy veteran (retired), US Merchant Mariner holding a 200-ton captain's license, and has CDL Class A experience with heavy equipment and hazardous material transport.

Mr. Brown's presentation was on safety culture. He explained that the safety culture of an organization must be progressively evolving. Safety as a culture includes organization and placing a high level of importance on safety beliefs and attitudes. A positive safety culture can improve the workplace, employees' health and organizational performance. He stated that during the time he has been employed by the FPA he has witnessed a positive change in attitude towards safety both in Department 313 and the

agency as a whole. The FPA's safety culture can be improved with upper management leading the way by providing personal protective equipment and safety training to help create a sturdy foundation, along with management and employees setting goals, measuring safety trends, developing an improvement plan, empowering employees to make safety a priority, and implementing a safety awards program.

Mr. Brown explained that Department 313 has made improvements when it comes to safety, but there is still much to be done. Their goal is to achieve a record of zero accidents/incidents, which can be done using a progressive approach with the support of upper management by continuing in-house training, partnering with outside professional occupational/equipment trainers, and implementing safety programs. In addition, in order to achieve this goal each employee must do their part by believing and adhering to the FPA's safety rules and regulations, making safety their personal responsibility, always following the correct procedures, never taking short cuts, taking responsibility for their actions, keeping the workplace and equipment clean, sanitized and well maintained, always being alert on the job and aware of their surroundings, and continuing good communications.

New Business:

A. Discussion of the proposed award of a contract to Coogan & Coogan, Inc., in the amount of \$149,625.00 for the Operations Facility Signage Project.

Darren Austin, Director of Operations, explained that the signs are for eight facilities (three PCCPs and five complex structures) and provide direction for emergency services, deliveries and FPA tours. Meyers Engineers designed the signs to withstand 150 MPH wind loads and the two PCCP signs on the unprotected side are designed to withstand wave action. The contract for the signage project was anticipated to be under the public bid law contract limit of \$250,000; therefore, four sign companies were invited to bid and three submitted bids. The engineer's estimate for the project was \$129,000. Coogan & Coogan submitted the lowest bid in the amount of \$149,625.

The Committee will recommend that the Board approve the award of the proposed contract to Coogan & Coogan.

B. Discussion of the proposed award of a contract to Gill's Crane and Dozer Service, Inc., in the amount of \$217,500.00 for the Lake Borgne Basin Levee District Pump Station 5 Bridge and Station Repairs.

Mr. Austin advised that the contract for the Pump Station (PS) 5 Bridge and Station Repairs was anticipated to be under the public bid law contract limit of \$250,000; therefore, five companies were invited to submit bids. The project is construction only with a 60-day contract period. Meyer Engineers designed the project and will provide inspection services. The repairs were identified in the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) and FPA for improvements to Lake Borgne Basin Levee District (LBBLD) pump stations (PS);

therefore, funding for the project will be reimbursed by the CPRA. The primary focus of the proposed project is the trash screen bridge. PS 5 does not have automated trash rakes; therefore, equipment must be taken to clean the trash screens in front of the pumps. The failing timber vents are salvageable; therefore, the cross members of the vents will be replaced under the bridge with concrete caps. The work will be staged to allow FPA personnel to have continuing access. The project also includes the demolition of an unused water cistern and wind screens for air intakes. Gill's Crane and Dozer Service, Inc., which has performed work in the past for the FPA, submitted the lowest bid in the amount of \$217,500 and provided a performance bond. The Engineer's estimate for the project is \$190,000.

Derek Boese, Chief Administrative Officer, explained that under the IGA, the CPRA will provide a total of \$4 million to fund LBBLD PS projects. Since the turnover of the pumping and drainage system to St. Bernard Parish Government (SBPG) was in litigation, CPRA entered into the IGA with the FPA so that needed work on the pump stations could proceed in the interest of public safety, otherwise the \$4 million would have been designated for other purposes. The PS projects that the FPA is proceeding with had the concurrence of SBPG, CPRA and FPA. He noted that the SBPG's referendum on a proposed ad valorem tax for drainage will be on the ballot for the April 24th election.

The Committee will recommend that the Board award the proposed contract to Gill's Crane and Dozer Service, Inc.

C. Discussion of the proposed award of a contract to Lou-Con, Inc., in the amount of \$195,900.00 for the Permanent Canal Closures and Pumps Bulk Tank Offloading System.

Mr. Austin explained that the bulk tank offloading system will service all three PCCP facilities, which store from 80,000 to 300,000 gallons of fuel to allow the stations to run at full capacity for a five-day period. The intent is to offload some of the stored fuel for use at the LBBLD pump stations and other FPA facilities in order for the fuel to be refreshed. The fuel in the PCCP storage tanks is recirculated and cleaned. The project was designed by Jacobs Engineering. Mr. Morgan pointed out that if the fuel is not used for a period of time, it would have to be replaced; therefore, he recommended offloading some of the stored fuel for use at other facilities and for equipment.

Mr. Latiolais noted that only two bids were received with a 40 percent difference between the bids. Mr. Austin explained that bids were by invitation and that the FPA had difficulty locating companies that would bid because of the specialized nature of the work. The project includes piping changes at the three sites along with control circuitry. Mr. Morgan advised that he would recuse himself from the vote due to a past relationship with Lou-Con, Inc.

Mr. Latiolais and Mr. Weysham recommended that the Board approve the award of the proposed contract to Lou-Con, Inc.

D. Discussion of the proposed award of a contract to Shavers-Whittle Construction, LLC, in the amount of \$321,416.50 for the Landside Runoff Control Improvements – Reaches 2-5 Jefferson Parish Lakefront Levee Project.

Chris Humphreys, Director of Engineering, advised that the proposed project for Reaches 2 through 5 is a continuation of the Reach 1 project for which a contract was awarded several months ago. The project includes restoration of the berm that directs runoff into the storm drains in order to keep it from going onto residential properties. Eight companies obtained plans and specifications and four submitted bids. The bids range from \$321,416.50 to \$397,012.50. The project was designed by Evans Graves Engineers and the engineer's estimate for the project is \$355,589.85. The low bidder, Shavers-Whittle Construction, LLC, has extensive experience on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) projects. Staff recommended the award of the proposed contract to Shavers-Whittle Construction, LLC.

The Committee will recommend that the Board approve the award of the proposed contract to Shavers-Whittle Construction, LLC.

E. Discussion of the proposed award of a contract to Python Corporation for a Pilot Study to evaluate a potential repair and restoration procedure for the New Orleans Lakefront Seawall Steps at a cost of \$140,000.

Mr. Humphreys explained that the seawall steps were constructed in the early 1930's and stretch across 5.5 miles of New Orleans Lakefront from the Seabrook Bridge to the West End and that restoration is needed to extend the life of the structure. Multiple pilot studies are being done due to the challenges in determining the best performing and most cost effective method for the 5.5-mile project. Python Corporation, which is known for concrete restoration, was asked to provide a proposal for a pilot study, which includes development and implementation of a method on one monolith (approximately 40-ft.). A contract under \$100,000 was awarded to Madcon for a pilot study using an epoxy-type method. Although the configuration of the shoreline and wave direction changes along the 5.5-mile stretch, the steps are relatively the same along the entire length, basically allowing the same forms, applications and methods to be used. Much was learned about the seawall steps and their condition as a result of the seawall erosion control project.

Ryan Foster, FPA Engineer, advised that the intent of the pilot projects is to determine the most performance and cost effective method(s) and the cost feasibility for 5.5-mile project. The FPA is attempting to utilize a method that would not necessitate dewatering the entire 5.5 miles of seawall steps. The seawall steps had been overtopped through the years causing erosion. The Seawall Area Erosion Control Paving Project included the construction of a pile supported seawall plaza area to protect the back end of the seawall. The current pilot projects are for the protection of the surface of the seawall steps, which are experiencing cracking and voids. The 5.5-

mile project would be broken into phases similar to the Seawall Area Erosion Control Paving Project.

The Committee will recommend the award of the proposed contract for a pilot study to Python Corporation.

F. Discussion of a proposed Intergovernmental Agreement between the FPA and Jefferson Parish for the construction of the Lake Villa Pond Hydrologic Enhancement Project and a rip-rap maintenance lift to raise the 17th Street Permanent Canal Closure and Pumps Training Berm.

Mr. Humphreys advised that the proposed IGA with Jefferson Parish would allow the FPA to assist with the Lake Villa Pond Hydrologic Enhancement Project and to construct a rip-rap maintenance lift to raise the Training Berm at the 17th Street Permanent Canal Closure and Pumps (PCCP). The Lake Villa Pond Hydrologic Enhancement Project, which is located east of the Suburban pump station between the levee and the lake and bordered by the rock dike, will mutually benefit both Jefferson Parish and the FPA and would reestablish the hydrologic connection with the lake, as well as create marsh and structural capacity in the pond. In part, the IGA allows the FPA to provide some of the structural components to a maximum of \$278,500. The PCCP Training Berm is a rock jetty that directs water from the pump station northward into the lake and is nearing the 6-ft. height elevation that the FPA is required to maintain. Jefferson Parish intends to construct a rock jetty or groin adjoining the berm to deflect wave energy from Bucktown Harbor; therefore, it would be to the FPA's advantage to construct the maintenance lift in conjunction with proposed rock jetty. The FPA would pay for half the cost of construction up to \$100,000.

Mr. Boese stated that the Jefferson Parish Council at its April 14th meeting approved the proposed IGA, which includes both projects. The FPA was presented a great opportunity to construct the PCCP Training Berm maintenance lift concurrent with Jefferson Parish's rock jetty groin. He stated that he had been working with Jefferson Parish almost six years for the FPA to take the flood protection component of the Lake Villa Pond Project and for Jefferson Parish to deal with the eco-restoration and educational aspects of the pond. Jefferson Parish will handle the work and the permitting for the project and the FPA will have review and inspection rights. He recommended that the FPA enter into the proposed IGA with Jefferson Parish.

The Committee will recommend that the Board approve the execution of the IGA with Jefferson Parish.

G. Discussion of the proposed adoption of an updated resolution authorizing the Regional Director and/or the Director of Engineering to invoke the provisions of LA RS 38:301(D) and to grant right-of-entry to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and its authorized agents to accomplish surveys, drillings and examinations as provided in RS 38:301D required in connection with the construction of levees and flood protection, provided, however, if a property

owner objects to the right-of-entry the Regional Director and/or Director of Engineering may at her/his discretion bring the matter to the Board.

Mr. Humphreys advised that the Agenda Items G, H and I were approved by the Board in 2008, 2010 and 2009, respectively, in order to expedite access to property and to mandate survey requirements. The original resolutions referred to the three former levee district directors and were updated to include the Regional Director and Director of Engineering. Item G provides authority to the Regional Director and Director of Engineering to invoke RS 38:301D to grant access to the USACE or its consultants to do surveys, soil borings or other necessary studies to design and build the levee system. Since most of the construction has been done, the use of this authority would be infrequent; however, it should be maintained in the event it is needed.

H. Discussion of the proposed adoption of an updated resolution authorizing the President, Regional Director and/or Director of Engineering to negotiate and execute all servitudes, deeds and rights-of-entry for the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity project upon approval by SLFPA-E Counsel or the Office of the Attorney General.

Mr. Humphreys explained Item H deals with rights-of-entry for the USACE to do work on the levee system. The authority provided in this resolution is used regularly. The FPA uses outside legal counsel for the legal work along with its Executive Counsel.

I. Discussion of the proposed adoption of an updated resolution regarding the Acquisition of Real Property, Rights-of-Way, Servitudes and other Real Property holdings.

Mr. Humphreys explained that Item I mandates the FPA to acquire and maintain property, rights-of-way and servitudes in accordance with the appropriate law and under the direction of a Louisiana registered land surveyor.

The Committee will recommend that the Board approve the updated resolutions (Agenda Items G, H and I).

There was no further business; therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.