

**MINUTES OF  
SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY-EAST  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON MAY 19, 2022**

PRESENT: K. Randall Noel, Chair  
Roy M. Arrigo, Committee Member

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The Finance Committee of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East (FPA or Authority) met on May 19, 2022, in the Joseph Yenni Building, Second Floor Council Chambers, 1221 Elmwood Park Blvd., Jefferson, LA. Mr. Noel called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**Opening Comments:** Mr. Noel advised that prior to the meeting he discussed with staff the potential effects of inflation on FPA projects in relation to the certification of millage rates for the levee districts. He requested that the Director of Engineering, Chris Humphreys, prepare a comparison of costs for the past few years versus current costs and potential costs going forward so that Commissioners can be fully aware of the impact when certifying millage rates for calendar year 2023. The Board's last opportunity to roll forward millage rates for the East Jefferson Levee District (EJLD) is next year for calendar year 2023 and later this year for the Orleans Levee District (O.L.D.) for calendar year 2023.

**Adoption of Agenda:** The Committee adopted the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes:** The Committee approved the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on April 20, 2022.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Regional Finance Director's Report:**

Denise Businelle, Regional Finance Director, provided the following report:

- PRONTO training is continuing. PRONTO will go live on July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The FPA continues to experience supply chain issues with delays in shipping and increased costs, particularly higher fuel prices. The delay in receiving vehicles may have a slight impact on the budget. Funds were re-budgeted for equipment that was not expected to be received until FY 2023. The radios that had been delayed arrived in April.
- In anticipation of storm season, Finance staff participated in all six training meetings with FPA staff to answer questions relative to filling out forms for FEMA reimbursement.

- The contents of two large shipping containers were shredded as previously discussed. Additional financial records that must be retained will be digitally scanned and the paper records will be shredded. Journal books that date back to 1897 to the 1900s were discovered and will be retained for historical purposes.
- The Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 financial audit will commence soon.

### **New Business:**

#### **A. Discussion of the proposed roll forward/certification of the East Jefferson Levee District millage rate for calendar year 2022.**

Mr. Noel advised that next year (2023) is the last year that the Board will be able to roll forward the EJLD millage rate prior to the next reassessment. Ms. Businelle pointed out that should the Board wish to roll forward (increase) the EJLD's millage rate this year, it would receive approximately \$350,000 of additional revenue (about 3 percent of anticipated revenues). She suggested that the Board not roll forward the EJLD millage rate this year because of the effects of inflation and excessive costs on people who are still trying to repair their homes after Hurricane Ida and that the Board consider rolling forward the EJLD's millage rate next year. She noted that she did not live in East Jefferson Parish.

Mr. Noel inquired about the cost of the dolphin project. Mr. Humphreys advised that the project cost is currently about \$4 million and is about one million dollars (or about 20 percent) over the estimate.

Kelli Chandler, Regional Director, explained that the last reassessment occurred pre-COVID with the results first reflected in calendar year 2020. The next reassessment will take place in another year.

Mr. Noel explained that over the past 12 months there has been a big jump in property values. There was not as big a jump in property values prior to COVID. Ms. Chandler pointed out that the assessments have not caught up with the recent increase. He recommended that the EJLD millage rate not be rolled forward this year; however, residents in East Jefferson should be prepared for the rate to be rolled forward next year due to prices increases. Mr. Arrigo agreed with Mr. Noel's recommendation.

#### **B. Presentation and discussion of the quarterly budget to actual report.**

Ms. Businelle reviewed the highlights of the third quarter budget to actual report. She explained that most of the expenses through the third quarter (March) are less than budgeted and that this is probably due to supply chain issues.

Ms. Businelle advised that the budget estimate for the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal Erosion Mitigation Project on the East side of Veterans Boulevard significantly increased due to the determination that was made after the assessment to use steel beams and that the

cost of steel had significantly increased. The project is currently under design and will continue through FY 2023 and FY 2024.

Ms. Businelle explained that a determination was made not to demolish the EJLD Lesan Facility and that discussions are on-going about utilizing the facility for police training. Ms. Chandler advised that the facility is currently being used for storage and active shooter training for police. Hold harmless agreements are in place with outside police agencies who use the property for training. She further advised that staff is moving forward with the legal requirements for the sale of the Plauche Court property (the former EJLD Administration Building). Mr. Noel pointed out that Senator Jimmy Harris should be informed about the proposed sale of the Lesan property.

The following Orleans Levee District projects were completed:

- Outfall Canal Tree Trimming
- Orleans Canal Erosion Mitigation (nearing completion).
- Seawall Erosion Paving and Pilot Repairs
- Floodgate W-33 and E-09 Repairs
- Repair, Blasting and Painting GIWW, MRGO and OFC Floodgates
- PCCP SCADA Sensor Calibration Survey

The following East Jefferson Levee District projects were completed:

- Landside Runoff Control Improvements – Reaches 2-5
- Orpheum Avenue Slope Paving and Survey (nearing completion)
- Lesan Facility Underground Storage Tank Removal
- EJ Sheet Pile Wall Rehabilitation Project (75% complete)

The following Lake Borgne Basin Levee District projects were completed:

- 40 Arpent Levee Certification – Completion Report (nearing completion)
- Jib Crane Slab Project (Complex Structures)
- Pump Station 1 and 4 Trash Screen Cleaner Replacement (project coordinated between the FPA, St. Bernard Parish Government and CPRA)
- Pump Station 5 Bridge and Station Repairs

The FPA's Hurricane Ida Debris Removal Project was completed and the cost will be reimbursed by FEMA.

Ms. Businelle explained that under Operations and Maintenance (O&M), Personnel costs across the levee districts are less than budgeted due to vacancies and turnover. Mr. Noel asked how did this effect FPA operations. Ms. Chandler advised that the number of personnel is adequate at this time; however, when needed the FPA contracts for grass maintenance. She added that it has been difficult to recruit personnel.

Ms. Businelle explained that rising gasoline prices have resulted in fuel costs being over budget for the quarter. The fuel is used for generators, vehicles and equipment. Some of the fuel costs for the generators due to Hurricane Ida will be reimbursed by FEMA.

There was no further business; therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.