

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

PRESENT: Richard G. Duplantier, Jr., Acting Chair
Herbert I. Miller, Committee Member
Herbert T. Weysham, III, Committee Member

The Operations Committee of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East (Authority or FPA) met on May 19, 2022, in the Joseph Yenni Building, Second Floor Council Chambers, 1221 Elmwood Park Blvd., Jefferson, LA. In Mr. Latiolais absence, Mr. Duplantier called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. and chaired the meeting.

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 April 20, 2022.

Public Comments: None.

New Business:

A. Discussion of the proposed adoption of the 2022 Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

Chris Humphreys, Director of Engineering, advised that revisions were made to the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), which primarily consisted of updates to contact information and resolving formatting issues. The draft plan was submitted to the Board and several comments were received. The CEMP is ready for publication upon approval by the Committee and the Board.

Mr. Duplantier commented that he reviewed the CEMP and that he was aware that Commissioner Gene Joanen spent a lot of time going through the plan and had made several comments. There were no significant substantive changes to the plan.

The Committee will recommend that the Board adopt the CEMP as proposed.

B. Discussion of the proposed advertisement and issuance of Requests for Qualifications for Geotechnical Engineering Services, Civil Engineering Services and Surveying Services for the purpose of entering into Indefinite Deliver-Indefinite Quantity Contracts for services on an as needed basis.

Mr. Humphreys explained that the current Indefinite Delivery-Indefinite Quantity (ID-IQ) Contracts for professional Geotechnical Engineering Services, Civil Engineering

Services and Surveying Services will expire at the end of October; therefore, approval was requested to advertise and issue Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) at this time in order to afford time for the selection process and have new contracts in place by November 1st. The FPA advertises for these services every three years. Multiple firms will be selected for each discipline. The contracts will have a one-year term with two one-year extension options. He noted that he would put together the selection teams and request that the newly elected President place a Board member on each team.

The Committee will recommend that the Board approve the advertisement and issuance of RFQs for the aforementioned services.

D. Discussion of the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and impacts to our region/state.

Kelli Chandler, Regional Director, advised that the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) came up in several different meetings due to the impacts of FEMA's Risk Rating 2.0 and that it was a topic of discussion at the recent Association of Levee Boards of Louisiana Conference. Changes went into effect on April 1st for new policies and will be effective as policies are renewed. There is a significant cost increase for most Louisiana citizens. The FPA-East would like to partner with the FPA-West and examine the impact that FEMA Risk Rating 2.0 has on citizens living within the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS).

Ms. Chandler explained that a major concern is whether citizens living within the HSDRRS are receiving adequate credit for the system relative to insurance costs, and if not, the reason. The Federal government spent billions of dollars to provide protection, in part to keep insurance costs reasonable. If citizens are required to pay more for flood insurance, it will be difficult for them to pay higher taxes for flood protection. Board members are being informed about this issue because of the discussions that are anticipated. Louisiana's Congressional delegation is aware of this issue and the FPA would like to make the public aware of it. FEMA caps insurance increases at 18 percent per year; however, increases due to FEMA's Risk Rating 2.0 can continue each year for ten years, potentially quadrupling insurance premiums by the end of the ten-year period. The public may not be aware of this fact since the increases take place over a ten-year period.

Ms. Chandler advised that the FEMA rating was previously based on elevation; however, it is now based on an actuarial calculation that takes into account the proximity of a house to a body of water, potential for flooding and various other factors. The Flood Protection Authorities have not yet determined whether FEMA has taken the HSDRRS into account in their calculations; therefore, a more in-depth analysis is needed on how much credit, if any, is being received for the HSDRRS.

President Mark Morgan commented that the Southeast Louisiana Urban Flood Damage Reduction Project (SELA), which only provides flood risk reduction up to a level associated with a ten-year rainfall event, could have some impact; however, it should be offset by the fact that the primary flood risk is from storm surge.

Commissioner Randy Noel advised that he read the charge for the Milliman actuarial report, which stated that they needed to project what the actuarial risks should be within levee structures. Since they had no history with levee structures, they used Hurricane Katrina damages for the actuarial studies. He commented that everyone in New Orleans knows that Katrina was not simply a flood event; it was a man-made disaster due to the failure of floodwalls. This may be driving some of the high increases for citizens living behind levee structures. He pointed out that approximately \$35 million of premiums are generated from citizens who live in X-zones in Jefferson Parish. Under FEMA Risk Rating 2.0, insurance is still required for residents with a mortgage in an A-zone, but not in an X-zone. Therefore, because the risk rating is now based on the location of a house and its proximity to water, how the foundation is built, and what it costs to build the house, FEMA is ignoring the map and elevation. If a house is elevated, it is not receiving the credit it formerly received. Therefore, people living in Jefferson Parish X-zones could drop flood insurance because of significantly increased premiums, potentially eliminating \$35 million of premiums from the NFIP.

Ms. Chandler explained that the Flood Protection Authorities have ideas on how to obtain data to analyze the exact impact. In addition, other levee districts throughout Louisiana are very interested because the FPAs are the flagship having the first comprehensive flood protection system; therefore, it is important to understand the impacts. Mr. Morgan noted that ensuring that the flood defense system has a positive impact on flood insurance rates is a part of the FPA's fiduciary responsibility. Mr. Duplantier added that the FPAs can set the precedent for other parts of the country where flood protection systems are being constructed.

Mr. Noel advised that an actuarial report is needed that is based on what has taken place after the Katrina damages were fixed. Mr. Duplantier suggested that Hurricane Ida could be used as an example for the report. Mr. Noel suggested that the FPA may need to seek out an actuary to gather the data and submit a report to FEMA that shows the success of the HSDRRS. The FPA-West could join in this effort.

There was no further business; therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.