

**MINUTES OF THE
SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY–EAST
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
THURSDAY, August 14, 2025**

The Special Board Meeting of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East (Authority or FPA) was held on August 14, 2025, in the Franklin Avenue Administrative Complex, Meeting Room 201, New Orleans, Louisiana, after due legal notice of the meeting was sent to each Board member and the news media and posted.

Mr. Vicari called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and led in the pledge of allegiance:

Swearing-In of new Commissioners:

Mr. Kerwyn King and Mr. David Martin

Ms. Settoon called the roll and a quorum was present:

PRESENT:

Peter G. Vicari, President
Michael D. Schnell, Vice President
K. Randall Noel, Treasurer
Deborah M. Settoon
Kerwyn King
David A. Martin

ABSENT:

Gregory S. Marsiglia
Roy M. Carubba

OPENING COMMENTS BY PRESIDENT AND COMMISSIONERS:

Mr. Vicari began his comments by stating that he intends on moving the Authority forward regardless of past perceptions. He further stated that he has toured the properties and he has observed a lot of devoted employees who are ready and willing to serve the community in the event there is a storm. He commended all the employees for their readiness.

There were no comments from the Commissioners.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Miss Sandy Rosenthal thanked everyone for their public service. She stated that she understands that the meetings are fairly expensive and wondered why there was a need to call a special meeting.

Mr. Vicari answered that he scheduled the on-boarding process in a special meeting so we could move forward as a group. He stated that the on-boarding process was very important to him as well as the other newly appointed members to help them all to become familiar with the business and to all move forward together as a board. He asked Ms. Rosenthal to please stay at the meeting to hear from the Directors as well.

Ms. Settoon stated that she supported Mr. Vicari in his decision to call the Special meeting because we have a complex operation which requires everyone understanding how the agency operates.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

The motion was offered by Mr. Noel and seconded by Mr. Schnell to adopt the agenda and it was adopted with the following votes:

YEAS: Mr. Vicari, Mr. Schnell, Mr. Noel, Ms. Settoon, Mr. King and Mr. Martin.

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Mr. Marsiglia, Mr. Carubba

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Board Member On-Boarding Presentation

Kenyetta Sewell, HR Director began her presentation by thanking her team members for their assistance in preparing the board member binders;

The Order of Business was as follows:

Welcome to new Board members from Board President, Peter Vicari;

Board Members Introductions, Interim Regional Director and Director of Engineering.

Kerwyn King, Electrical Engineer, New Orleans Resident;

Randall Noel, Treasurer, resident of Laplace been on the board for six years;

Peter Vicari, General Contractor and Businessman;

Michael Schnell, Vice-President, Representative from St. Bernard Parish;

Deborah Settoon, 40 years in Engineering mostly with Oil and Gas with some public works, 3rd year in first term;

David Martin, Licensed professional Engineer, mostly in public works, resident of Orleans;

Jeff Williams, Interim Regional Director, 27 years as a Civil Engineer, worked with the Corp of Engineers;

Ryan Foster, professional Civil Engineer with 20 years experience and 10 with the Authority;

Kenyetta Sewell FPA-E Mission: to ensure the physical and operational integrity of the regional flood risk management system in southeastern Louisiana as a defense against floods and storm surge from hurricanes.

SLFPA-E Core Values – We strive to ensure: Mission focus, value and appreciate Employees, accountability, open and transparent communication, teamwork, professionalism, set clear work expectations;

Board Governance Binder Review:

Endya Hash, Compliance Attorney, HR Department: Reviewed items included in binders:

- Resolution – Election of Officers
- Board Commissioner By-Laws
- LA Revised Statutes
- ACT #395 – Redefines Makeup of the Board
- Board's Role & Responsibilities
- Board vs. Staff responsibilities:
 - Board – supports Regional Director; Approves General Policy; Approves budget; approves programs/projects; sets the course
 - Staff – Regional Director supports board; implement policy; manage budget, implements programs/projects; sails the ship.
- Fiduciary duties:
 - Duty of Care – Provide oversight to ensure prudent use of assets
 - Duty of Loyalty – put the needs of the agency ahead of your personal benefit or gain.
 - Duty of Obedience – Keep the mission first in mind and maintain legal and ethical standards.
- Liability for Decision-Making – Commissioners are held liable for their own criminal conduct, gross negligence, malfeasance, or intentional torts.
- Open Meetings Law – any communication related to your public position is a potential violation of open meetings law – Only discuss agency business at a Board Meeting
- Public Records Law – Duty to preserve public records.
- Memo on prohibited political activity; sexual harassment policy,
- Additional Items -Email policy; overview of Robert's Rules of Order

Commissioner Settoon questioned new material that was contained in the binder. Ms. Sewell explained that she did not have the previous binder and she put together information that she felt would be useful for the Board. Ms. Sewell advised that some of the information contained in the binder would be discussed in more detail at the Board training session scheduled next week.

Board Training Requirements: LA Ethics Administration Training – Annual; Preventing Sexual Harassment Training – Annual; CPRA Training – Twice During each term in office: Board Governance Training – As determined by President.

Mr. Vicari questioned the difference between the Tier reporting. Mr. Noel advised that there is a penalty if not filed timely which is May 15th yearly.

Ryan Foster, Director of Engineering gave a report on the history of SLFPA-E:

Entity created in 2007 by Legislature as a result of Katrina; We are a political subdivision of the state; 250 full time staff including, 2 Police Departments, professional Engineers, Inspectors, Pump Station Operations; Mowers and Heavy equipment operators, tradesmen, Finance Department, HR, Procurement Department and other professionals .

Our mission is to ensure the physical and operational integrity of the regional flood risk management system and to work with local, regional, state and federal partners to plan, design and construct projects that will reduce the probability and risk of flooding for the residents within our jurisdiction.

Agency Roles – US Army Corps of Engineers – Long term plans, designs and Builds CPRA – Non-Federal Sponsor; Assists with Communications, Responsible for Coastal Projects and Oversees State Levee Districts;
SLFPA-E – Daily Operations and Maintenance; performance feedback, staffing, local funding and emergency response.

Mr. Martin asked how did our Agency work with the Corp during flood events/flood-fight. Ryan advised that there are weekly calls and daily inspections, two sets of eyes look at the levee system on a weekly basis.

Flood Protection Levee Systems: HSDRRS Perimeter; HSDRRS Interior; MRL; Non Federal Levees.

We exercise the pumps on a weekly basis. It is a year-round process.

FPA-E Perimeter Ring System – There are 192 miles of levees and floodwalls and 244 land-based floodgates.

The sea elevation is the number noted on the gates as you arrive at the gates.

The ultimate call to close the gates is dictated by the CEMP and that person is the Incident Commander which for this season is Ryan Foster.

It takes 700 tractor hours worth of time to get the tractors out to cut the levees. This does not include travel time.

Pete commended Ryan and Mr. Metoyer for pointing out the problems associated with this time frame.

Mr. Martin asked Ryan to give the process for mutual aid and emergency assistance. Ryan advised that we are a part of Go-Sep which allows an agency to put in a request

at the state level and they will reach out to the various agencies to determine which agency can be of assistance.

Pete asked Mr. Metoyer to get an assessment of the sand bags located in our facilities.

Motion to approve board member communications with Agency Staff Policy.

Ms. Settoon stated she wanted to discuss the policy before voting on it because it had not been previously provided to the board. She suggested that the legal committee should review the item.

Mr. Vicari stated that he met with Kirk, Jeff and Joshua Rondeno to discuss the policy. He stated that he is trying to be proactive but Ms. Settoon stated that she felt that the item should be vetted in committee before voting.

Ms. Settoon asked that it be tabled.

Kirk Ordoyne stated that he and Endya had reviewed the policy.

Ms. Settoon stated that this should be a board decision.

Mr. Vicari advised that he also spoke with Commissioner Marsiglia and he stated that he supported the policy and in the future if there was a problem it could always be amended.

Mr. Noel stated that he felt portions of the policy could be onerous.

Mr. Vicari stated that Baton Rouge asked him to put this policy before the Board. This was in response to and in an effort to limit instances whereby Board members were allegedly meeting with various Departments.

Ms. Williams, Finance Director, asked that it be noted that for the record, she nor her department has had side conversations with any of the board member. Ms. Williams further stated that she copies the Finance Committee when there are recommendations.

Ms. Settoon stated she feels the policy is inhibiting and asked that a motion to defer until the September 18th Board meeting be put forth. Mr. Noel seconded the motion. It was put to a vote and the vote was as follows: Settoon, Noel, King, Martin, Schnell, yes to defer and Mr. Vicari was a no to defer. The measure passed and the item was deferred until the September 18th meeting.

Director Presentations;

Ryan Foster, Director of Engineering: Primary Focus is the operation and maintenance of the Authority's flood defense assets. This is accomplished through regular inspections, strategic planning and the administration of construction and maintenance projects:

Department includes 8 Engineers, 3 GIS Specialists, 2 Permit Specialists, 3 Field Inspection Personnel;

Key Functions; Permit Coordination, System-Wide Inspections, Emergency Operations, High Tide Events.

Hosts the FPA-E's annual Hurricane Tabletop Mock-Drill Exercise.

Mr. Vicari asked Mr. Foster to explain for the benefit of everyone to describe the table top process.

Mr. Foster explained that it is a process that involves simulating a hurricane event over a 12-hour period and involves the GIS Department creating a hypothetical situation to help everyone sharpen their skills in preparation for an actual event. during hurricane events;

Darren Austin, Director of Operations, registered mechanical Engineer, with 27 years of experience in the public sector. He has been with the agency for 7 years.

His department is comprised of 30 positions, grouped into 3 functional units:

Engineering/Admin, 4 people; PCCP, 14 people and Complex Structures, 12 people.

His department's main focus is the daily operations and maintenance of the 3 PCCP stations and the 8 Marine Complex Structures. Not project-centric. They maintain the structures and focus on staffing, training and education, year-round.

Mr. Austin engaged the Board members in a question and answer session on the components of the pumps and the RTA's which is defined as the way we continue to speak with the CPRA and the Corps. It is a mechanism to go over issues by receiving technical assistance from the agencies should a problem or need arise.

Denise Williams, Regional Finance Director, 33 years of Finance and Accounting, 25 years being in state government, has been with the Agency for 3 years and recently added on the role of Risk manager.

Finance Department primary functions are as follows: planning and budget for the regional districts; accounting, cash in/cash out; payroll, procurement; risk management and Insurance; audits; storms – storm training, meal and supply teams, and FEMA reimbursements.

Joshua Rondeno, Superintendent of Police: Department functions as follows: the department is comprised of 60 officers; Police Officers serve a dual purpose as certified

levee inspectors while patrolling the system, structures and public thoroughfares; Escort and ensure the safety of gate crews in advance of the activation of the system.

Jamal Dortch, Safety and Emergency Coordinator; Department responsibilities: Develop, implement and maintain safety program and to support enhancement of emergency preparedness programs; Compliance, training and exercises, Emergency Notification System, evacuation planning, pre/post-incident planning, hazard assessment/monitoring, emergency response, AED management, Community engagement, safety accident/incident investigation; Hurricane preparedness; Oversight for High-risk operations, training and drills support prep; ensuring adequate emergency supplies, enhancing mass notification system, EOC operations support, future EOC training & planning endeavors.

Stacy Gilmore, Public Information Director; Department Responsibilities, Strategic Communication, Media Relations, Stakeholder Relations, Public Engagement, Internal Communications and Digital and Social Media Management. The Public Information Director is the primary agency point of contact.

In line with Stacy's presentation, Mr. Vicari informed the Board that the Joint Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has asked the Agency to give an update on the Agency on August 19th. He and the Interim Regional Director will be in attendance.

Kenyetta Sewell, HR Director; Staff of 8, mission is to support the goals and initiatives of the FPA-E by providing services that promote a work environment that is characterized by fair treatment of employees, open communications, personal accountability, trust and mutual respect. In addition, they manage the employment life cycle of each employee by the following: recruitment, onboarding, compensation, retention, training and professional development, performance management and on-boarding.

Mr. Vicari asked Ms. Sewell if we have improved in the areas designated on the 2022 audit. Ms. Sewell stated that she has to provide an update to the auditors and they are actively working on this item.

Carlos Metoyer, Regional Maintenance Director, He has 26 years of maintenance experience. He is a certified welder and master plumber. He reported that the maintenance team inspects, maintains and repairs levee systems, floodwalls, floodgates, valves, floodwall joints, relief wells and related flood control features. They are on call during tropical storms, river flooding or other high-water events. They ensure on-going functionality and readiness of the regions flood protection infrastructure through preventive maintenance, operational readiness in emergencies and post storm recovery efforts.

Roman Dody, IT Director; Department is comprised of 5 IT professionals with over 20 years of combined experience; User support numbers range between 25-35,000 users;

(small, medium and enterprise) installations; Industry experience public, private, state government & university sectors; Information Technology provides secure access to technical resources via online and(or) on-premise; Provide secure, integrated, reliable solutions that enable and empower staff to meet their goals and deliver results before, during and after hurricane season.

Kirk Ordoyne, Executive Counsel; Department is currently comprised of two legal professionals. We provide Board Services and report to the Board. We have one additional position which has not been filled and it is the Director of Governmental Affairs.

There was no further business; therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.