

**MINUTES OF
SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY-EAST
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON MARCH 5, 2009**

PRESENT: Louis Wittie, Chair
Dave Barnes, Committee Member
Timothy Doody, Committee Member (left meeting 1:45 p.m.)
Stephen Estopinal, Committee Member
Tom Jackson, Commissioner

The Operations Committee met on March 5, 2009 in the Second Floor Hall of the Lake Vista Community Center, 6500 Spanish Fort Blvd., New Orleans, LA. Mr. Wittie called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Opening Comments: None

Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was adopted.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the February 12, 2009 Operations Committee meeting were approved.

Public Comments: None.

New Business:

A. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers -- Presentation on overview of plans for tree removal along LPV-109 (South Point to CSX railroad tracks), IHNC (west side vicinity of France Road), and 17th St. Canal (west bank--Jefferson Parish side).

Michael Stout and Steve Finnegan with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Project Management Team for Tree Removal provided a presentation on the Tree Removal Plans for IHNC (west side), 17th Street Canal (west side) and LPV-109.

Mr. Stout explained that the USACE plans to request right of entry (ROE) for tree and fence removal on the three project segments at the next Board meeting.

Steve Spencer, O.L.D. Executive Director, advised that the Orleans Levee District (O.L.D.) mailed notices with color photographs attached indicating encroachments within 6-ft. of the levee toe to approximately 38 residents in the vicinity of France Road. Mr. Spencer advised that he received a call from one individual with questions and Mr. Finnegan advised that he received calls from two individuals with questions.

Mr. Stout advised that the tree removal program, which has been on-going for several years, is nearly completed. Three reaches remain with trees that violate USACE's standards. The USACE's goal is to complete this mission before the start of the next hurricane season.

Mr. Stout reviewed the status of IHNC and 17th Street Canal reaches:

- Notices were sent to property owners in January that surveys were to be performed based on the ROE granted in December.
- The surveys were completed in February and involved survey stakes marking the levee toe and the right-of-way (ROW) or toe plus 6-ft. at each property. The levee toe plus 6-ft. is the area under State law which is to be free of obstructions.
- Detailed inventory sheets have been mailed to property owners along the IHNC reach in February. The 17th Street Canal property notices have been provided to the East Jefferson Levee District (EJLD) and have not yet been mailed.
- The USACE will request ROE from the Board in two weeks.
- The USACE will award contracts and be ready to commence work in April in order to complete the work before June 1.

Mr. Stout then reviewed the status of the LPV-109 reach (South Point to the CSX Railroad):

- The USACE has coordinated with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The work is within the existing ROW. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has communicated to the USACE that it has no issues with the work as long as it is within the existing ROW.
- A separate contractor will be used for the LVP 109 work; however, the schedule will be the same for all three reaches.

Mr. Stout explained that the problem in the area on the west side of the IHNC was identified when the USACE Hurricane Protection Office was dealing with the wall stability issue. At the time that inventories of the reach were initially done, the focus was on trees that were actually located in the levee section. As a result of photos and reports by engineers, the USACE recognized that the area violated the guidance and had trees within a few feet of the toe.

Mr. Finnegan stated that he has advised callers that the contractor will carefully roll chain link fencing and place it in the yard for the property owners to reuse, if possible. Since polls with a concrete base are difficult to reuse, they will be pulled up and discarded. Property owners may remove fences themselves. Mr. Stout added that the contractor will work with property owners on salvageable fences; however, most of the fences are not salvageable.

Relative to the IHNC reach, Mr. Stout explained that the toe plus 6-ft. extends into residential yards approximately 2-3 feet. There is a tree line within this 2-3 foot strip. He stated that the USACE did not have adequate ROW information to survey this reach and was going by old drawings from the last levee enlargement that identified the ROW and fence line as basically the same.

Mr. Finnegan advised that a USACE contractor resurveyed the 17th Street Canal west side reach based on the baseline. Mr. Estopinal discussed the method used for the survey and requested that the USACE provide information on the survey and surveyor. Mr. Stout explained that the USACE knew there were concerns about the ROW and has been in communication with the EJLD since last summer.

Mr. Jackson pointed out that the USACE is performing this mission at Federal cost for the local sponsors, who would otherwise have to do the work at their cost.

Mr. Stout clarified that the USACE's scope of work for this one time mission is to clear trees within the guidance required by the USACE, which is 15-feet from the levee toe or to the extent of the available ROW. The toe plus 6-feet has been used to remove problem trees where documented ROW was not sufficient to go even that far. In the case of the 17th Street Canal west side reach, the USACE has information that there is additional ROW beyond the levee toe plus 6-feet. There are trees of concern within the 6 to 15 ft. zone, which is within the USACE's scope. The USACE is relying on the EJLD to advise whether the ROW information is right or wrong. The USACE will only remove trees and fences within the ROE granted by the Board. He reiterated that the EJLD must tell the USACE what the ROW is, since the determination of the ROW is not within the USACE's mission. He reiterated that the toe plus 6-ft. is the fall back position if the ROW is questionable or cannot be confirmed. If at a later date additional ROW is clarified, the levee district will be cited under the Inspection of Completed Works Program for trees of concern, which will have to be removed at the levee district's expense.

Mr. Stout explained that two categories of properties are affected within the 17th Street Canal reach; i.e., several commercial properties (mostly condo and apartment complexes) between Veterans Boulevard and Rosebud Street and approximately 17 residential properties between Pump Station 6 and I-10.

Mr. Stout advised that LPV 109 is on the edge of the wildlife refuge. He explained that since the levee enlargement was delayed a year, the USACE decided to address this reach by cutting trees at 4 feet above ground to remove the risk of the trees blowing over during a storm. The debris will be removed. The stumps and roots will be removed as part of the levee enlargement work scheduled in FY 2010.

B. Presentation on Orleans Levee District safe house.

Michael Tabb with Murray Architects distributed a copy of the preliminary plans for the O.L.D. Safehouse/IT/EOC build out. He explained that work is still being done on structural, mechanical and electrical components. The safehouse/IT office will be placed on the second floor approximately 13-ft. 6 inches above the existing flooring inside the Franklin Facility Warehouse. The exterior warehouse metal panels will be strengthened in order to withstand 180 mph winds. A second wall consisting of an 8-inch cinder block wall filled with rebar and concrete will be placed behind the existing metal skin and a minimum 4-inch concrete deck placed on top as a secondary roof structure inside the existing facility. Therefore, should the primary skeleton fail, there is a secondary skeleton. Additional reinforcements will be used to tie the existing slab to the existing foundation. The middle section roof of the warehouse is being replaced at this time, which will be rated for 180 mph winds. The existing warehouse floor elevation is +7-ft. above sea level. The safe house will accommodate up to 50 people.

The Committee discussed the number of restroom and shower facilities included in the preliminary plan (two restrooms and two showers) and the proposed use of the

restrooms and shower facilities on the first floor. The Committee determined that additional restroom and shower facilities should be located in the second floor build-out. The plans will be revised and brought back to the Committee.

C. North Shore Update by Dave Barnes.

Dave Barnes, SLFPA-E St. Tammany Parish representative, explained that in the past he has had a number of contacts with the President of St. Tammany Parish and his engineers. He reported that he recently talked with the new Chief Engineer for St. Tammany Parish, Elizabeth deEtte Smythe, PhD, and discussed briefing her and her staff about the Authority. Mr. Barnes advised that he subsequently met with Dr. Smythe's assistant, the Director of St. Tammany Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, and the Parish President's Director of Departments. These individuals seemed anxious to work with the Authority and presented a list of 18 projects, most of which related to flood protection. Mr. Barnes told them that the Authority could be a voice to assist with obtaining funding and presented background information on the Authority. He stated that he will encourage their attendance at SLFPA-E meetings and meeting with the Authority to further the goal of flood protection.

The Committee briefly discussed the steps that need to be taken by St. Tammany Parish to activate its levee district. A memo of clarification of the law relative to the creation of levee districts (i.e., St. Tammany and Tangipahoa) under the recent levee district reform legislation will be requested from the Louisiana Attorney General's Office.

Old Business:

A. Discussion of results of Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for design of Lake Borgne Basin Levee District safe house.

The selection team consisted of Mr. Jackson, Robert Turner and Gerry Gillen. Eleven firms submitted Statements of Qualifications in response to the RFQ. Mr. Jackson reported that the selection team interviewed the four shortlisted firms. Digital Engineering and Imaging, Inc., received the highest ranking and ECM received the second highest ranking. Mr. Jackson discussed developing a concept and schematic plan for a safehouse and seeking funding for construction.

A resolution will be placed on the agenda for the next Board meeting with the selection team's recommendation.

B. Establishing procedure for initiating task orders for ID-IQ (Indefinite Delivery-Indefinite Quantity) contracts.

The draft resolution concerning task orders procedures which was presented at the last Board meeting was remanded back to the Operations Committee for further discussion and modification. The Committee discussed the different types of information that could be contained in task orders under the various ID-IQ contracts. Mr. Turner was advised that he would be responsible for determining what information would be needed in task orders based on project assignments. The Committee concurred that the four bullets

contained in the draft resolution were unnecessary and that the phrase “appropriate items will be included as exhibits and attached to the task order” would be included in the resolution.

LEVEE DISTRICT REPORTS:

East Jefferson Levee District:

Jonell Blowers reviewed the EJLD Highlights and EJLD Monthly Status Report (copy appended).

The Committee discussed granting rights of entry (ROE), which must be coordinated with the State, under the new Lake Pontchartrain & Vicinity Partnering Agreement.

It was noted that the Reach 1 and West Return Wall plans and specs were reviewed by Geneva Grille. Mr. Jackson asked whether the EJDL had a formal contract with Ms. Grille. Ms. Blowers replied, no, and that her consulting services are in the budget with the EJLD being billed on a project by project basis. Mr. Turner stated that the USACE should be requested to provide as-built information on West Return Floodwall Joint Repairs.

Orleans Levee District:

Steven Spencer reviewed the Monthly Status of Activities and O.L.D. Monthly Status Report (copy appended). He distributed a copy of the handout from the recent USACE public meeting on Individual Environmental Report (IER) 4 (New Orleans Lakefront Levees and Floodwalls) and a copy of the Mississippi River Commission’s Notice of Meetings.

Mr. Spencer noted that the t-wall tie-ins were awarded on the north and south end of the IHNC barrier structure. The tie-ins are estimated at \$63,000 per linear foot. The USACE will be looking at ways to reduce costs. Mr. Turner expressed concern that the USACE may attempt to eliminate some of the project features that were included to reduce operations and maintenance costs over the life of the structure.

Lake Borgne Basin Levee District:

Robert Turner reviewed the LBBLD Monthly Status Report (copy appended). He noted that the levee at Caernarvon will be realigned to the far side of the Caernarvon Canal. Activities are underway to put in place a proposed Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Plaquemines Parish which will be necessary for the LBBLD to maintain the approximately 1,000 feet of levee that will be located in Plaquemines Parish.

There was no further business, therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.