

**MINUTES OF
SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY-EAST
SPECIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON AUGUST 6, 2009**

PRESENT: Thomas Jackson, Chair
Stradford Goins, Committee Member
George Losonsky, Commissioner

The Special Issues Committee met on August 6, 2009, in the in the Second Floor Hall, Lake Vista Community Center, 6500 Spanish Fort Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana. Chairman Jackson called the meeting to order at 11:25 a.m.

Opening Comments: Mr. Jackson stated that it was his intention to make the Special Issues Committee an active committee. The Committee will be taking on a number of issues, such as oversight of the safehouses for the levee districts. He advised that Mr. Losonsky has expressed an interest in serving on the Committee.

Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was adopted as presented.

New Business:

A. Discussion of Orleans Land Bridge and use of rubble material from the demolition of the I-10 Twin Spans.

Leo Richardson, Executive Director and member of the Board of the Lake Catherine Civic Association (Association), explained that the Association had approached the Authority in April of last year to request that the SLFPA-E partner with the Association to sponsor a project to dedicate some of the twin span rubble material to protect a narrowing area of the East Orleans Land Bridge. One area of concern is the eastern end of the nine mile stretch towards Fort Pike between the Chef Pass and the Rigolets on the north side of Highway 90. Mr. Richardson pointed out that the roadway would probably not be there had the private property owners not taken action over the past fifty years to stabilize the shoreline along their property lines. He discussed the ponding of the marshland that is taking place in the area towards the Rigolets. The objective for obtaining the twin span rubble is to protect the diminishing marshland in such a way that it can be restored by placing a jetty offshore to create an even shoreline and extending the shoreline along the narrow portion of Highway 90 to protect the area from northwestern storms. The Association's position is that the area between the Chef Pass and the Rigolets and Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Borgne is an integral part of the SLFPA-E's strategy for all of the Lake Pontchartrain shoreline communities.

Mr. Richardson further explained that the Association views the development of a barrier system along the north shore of this land bridge as a complement to two other shoreline protection projects on the south side of the land bridge; i.e., the CWPPRA P34

Project from Unknown Pass to Alligator Point and the CIAP Project from Alligator Point west to Bayou Bienvenue.

Peter Hopkins with the Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration (OCPR) advised that an area along the Bayou Sauvage Wildlife Refuge on Lake Borgne will receive some of the rubble material in compensation for allowing OCPR to use about five acres of land as a marshalling area for the bridge construction. Other areas under consideration for the placement of rubble material are the Orleans Land Bridge CIAP project between Bayou Bienvenue and Alligator Point (Lake Borgne side), the Biloxi Marsh on the eastern shore of Lake Borgne, and the north side of Bayou Dupre on the Lake Borgne western shore line.

Mr. Jackson asked that Mr. Hopkins recommend actions that should be taken by the SLFPA-E. Mr. Hopkins explained that the establishment of a funding source and the development of a proposal for use of the material were previously discussed. At this time the OCPR is finalizing the agreement with DOTD and the Federal government. OCPR is preparing proposals to DOTD that will prove its ability to use and allocate the material without disrupting the construction schedule.

Mr. Jackson commented that legal concurrence would be needed concerning the right of the Orleans Levee District to spend money for engineering on this project. He stated that the SLFPA-E must be able to show what it intends to do with the material and that it has the wherewithal to place the material without holding up the construction contract.

George Winningham, a resident in the area, commented that several Boh Brothers barges had broken loose and damaged marshland in the area; however, the contractor did not repair the damage. Therefore, some of the material should be placed where the damage took place.

Mr. Jackson commented on the importance of the coastal restoration of this peninsula being addressed in a meaningful manner by the OCPR, CPRA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Mr. Goins stated that this project is a high priority for the SLFPA-E; however, there was a delay due to the engineering that was needed. He stated that it was his understanding that the rubble material had already been committed. However, if there is an opportunity to obtain some of the material, the SLFPA-E could re-focus its efforts and have the engineering work done by one of the engineers now under ID-IQ contract.

Mr. Hopkins stated that it would be worthwhile for the SLFPA-E to meet with the OCPR design team in Baton Rouge and discuss the specific issues that have come up concerning the use of this bridge material. In addition, there is the issue of a funding source. He commented that there have been previous discussions about the CWPPRA (Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act) process.

Mr. Jackson indicated that the members of the Committee would be pleased to meet with the OCPR. He pointed out that engineering plans need to be developed to make the application viable and to establish an estimate to search for a funding source.

Mr. Hopkins explained that the OCPR is developing a central plan for use of the bridge material. A major issue in developing a cost estimate involves the number of times the material will be handled. If a project is not ready at the time the spans are being pulled off the bridge, then the material must be stored, which increases handling costs. Projects were chosen and placed in priority order partly because they were well into the works and had established funding sources.

Mr. Jackson asked for help to move this important project forward. He advised that SLFPAE would meet with OCPR to discuss what needs to be done in order to be competitive.

Mr. Hopkins explained that the CWPPRA process has been used for the past several years for spending Federal money. Five projects are chosen each year through a competitive process in which anyone can propose a project.

Mr. Jackson stated that he will request the Regional Director and levee district Executive Directors to present a status report on the safe houses at the next Special Issues Committee meeting. He added that the Executive Directors may bring their project architects/engineers to the Committee meeting.

There was no further business; therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.