

**MINUTES OF
SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY-EAST
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON MAY 4, 2011**

PRESENT: Louis Wittie, Chair
Timothy Doody, Committee Member
David Barnes, Committee Member
Stephen Estopinal, Committee Member

The Operations Committee of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East (SLFPA-E or Authority) met on May 4, 2011 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 9:30 a.m.

Opening Comments: None.

Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the April 7, 2011 Operations Committee meeting were approved.

Public Comments: None.

Old Business:

A. Discussion of Franklin Administration Building Refurbishment Scope of Work - RC Lambert (Orleans Levee District)

Gerry Gillen, Orleans Levee District (O.L.D.) Executive Director, advised that the architect was requested after the last Committee meeting presentation to revise some of the cost estimates and scope of the proposed work for the refurbishment project.

Alton Davis with Richard C. Lambert Architecture, LLC (RCL) provided copies of a narrative of the scope of work, revised budget and proposed plan. He explained that the current air conditioning system is antiquated and does not work properly and that the lighting in the building is very old. The bulk of the costs are for mechanical and electrical upgrades. ADA upgrades are also needed. An enclosed walkway will be built to resolve the circulation problem between the office building and the Safehouse and to connect the two spaces. Sprinkler heads will be replaced with more efficient sprinkler heads. The upgrades will substantially decrease the building's energy consumption. The building was constructed in the 1980's and does not meet current energy codes.

Mr. Gillen advised that funding for the project was included in the approved fiscal year budget. Should the scope of work and proposed estimate be approved, the next steps would be to use the State Facilities and Planning Control curve for new construction to set up the architect's fee and the execution of a contract.

New Business:

A. Report on the Mississippi River elevation and opening the Bonnet Carre Spillway (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers).

Jerry Colletti with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) distributed copies of a schematic showing of the Project Design Flood. He explained that most of the Mississippi River and Tributaries (MRT) System problems originate in the upper Mississippi Valley and particularly in the Ohio Valley. The levee was blown at New Madrid-Birds Point for the first time since 1937. He pointed out that this particular levee was originally designed to be blown in order to relieve some of the pressure. The crevassing of this levee does not relieve water from the Mississippi River, but allows the floodwaters to spread into the 130,000 acre floodway. The floodwaters are reintroduced into the system farther down river. This action dropped the crest about three feet and relieved pressures farther up north. The river level was near the top of the levee at Cairo, Illinois, and the town of Cairo was evacuated. The USACE and National Weather Service are running numbers. The USACE uses river flows in its recommendations. The projected estimate at the time of the Committee meeting was well above 1-1/2 million cubic feet per second (cfs). Mr. Colletti added that he had heard that the numbers could reach as high as 1.9 million cfs.

Mr. Colletti explained that the Old River Control Structure is opened on a daily basis and about 620,000 cfs can be diverted through this structure. Only 1-1/2 million cfs would be allowed to proceed past Morganza through the Baton Rouge area and towards New Orleans where about 250,000 cfs can be diverted through the Bonnet Carre Spillway. The Bonnet Carre Spillway is the next structure that would be opened and the Morganza Control Structure would be opened last.

Mr. Colletti commented that through monitoring in 1997 and 2008 it was learned that the damages when the Bonnet Carre Spillway is opened are temporary. Three independent studies were done on the monitoring and the impacts to the eco-system and the fishing industry when the Bonnet Carre Spillway was opened. Impacts are experienced during the first year; however, the eco-system comes back strong in the following years.

Mr. Colletti advised that the USACE expects to have a complete opening of the Bonnet Carre Spillway (350 bays) as early as Monday of next week. One crane is located on each side of the structure so that the USACE can open the spillway from both sides. It is estimated to take from two to three days to remove all of the needles from the 350 bays and completely open the spillway. Each of the 350 bays has 20 timber needles that are individually lifted and placed on the structure so that they are not lost.

Mr. Colletti commented on the potential for opening the Morganza Control Structure with a projected river flow of 1.9 million cfs. The Morganza Control Structure was only opened partially one time in 1973 to alleviate pressure on the Old River Control Structure because of a huge scour hole. The land and property owners are being notified of the possible opening the structure. The USACE has the right to open the Morganza Floodway; however, the damages are much more severe than when opening the Bonnet

Carre Spillway. The USACE's actions will be based on real time flows and not on predictions.

Mr. Colletti commented that the expected crest at Red River Landing on May 23rd is 65.5 ft. The river stage is expected to be 54 ft. tomorrow, which will institute Phase Two Floodfighting for the upper river. The river stage at New Orleans is at 14-ft. today and the expected crest on May 24th is 17-ft. based on the opening of the Bonnet Carre Spillway. The river stage will be held at 17-ft. below Baton Rouge. The USACE expects to reach Phase Two Floodfighting, which is 15-ft. at the Carrollton gage, for the Metropolitan New Orleans area on Friday or Saturday.

Mr. Colletti addressed areas of concern. The USACE will be working with the State and providing technical assistance for a pre-existing slide at Angola. The USACE placed about 12,000 sand bags to hold down the Visqueen placed at Duncan Point, which is located below LSU on the Mississippi River East Bank, to alleviate a seepage problem. The Baton Rouge front levee near downtown Baton Rouge is a great concern at this time. There is movement that may have been caused by the railroad running on top of the levee. Soil nailing has taken place at this location over the years and the USACE is monitoring this levee. The levee elevation is about 43 to 43.5 ft.; however, the projected forecast is about 47 ft. In its Floodfighting the USACE would have to build up the levee about four to four-and-a-half feet, which will be a huge undertaking. Mr. Colletti pointed out that this would be the steering point for the potential opening of the Morganza Control Structure. He expected that this situation would take place in about two weeks. A USACE crew is expected cut a potato ridge levee in the Morganza Forebay area in order to move some of the water into the forebay as early as this weekend. The current stage at Morgan City is expected to be 9.5 ft. without the opening of the Morganza Control Structure, which will present problems in that region. Communities in the Morgan City area could experience backflow flooding from the MRT levee system.

Mr. Colletti pointed out that the decision to open the Bonnet Carre Spillway and the Morganza Control Structure is made by Maj. Gen. Michael J. Wash and the Mississippi River Commission. The USACE can only provide recommendations and can only open the structures upon the approval of the Mississippi River Commission. He stated that the USACE did not have the approval as yet to open the Bonnet Carre Spillway.

Mr. Colletti explained that daily meetings have been taking place over the past few weeks. The USACE holds a local conference call daily at 7:00 a.m. A MVD (Mississippi Valley Division) regional conference call is held daily at 8:00 a.m. Meetings and conference calls are being held between the USACE, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Louisiana Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration and the levee districts. Colonel Fleming's staff met with Governor Jindal yesterday to provide a briefing on the existing conditions. He anticipated that the high river level will be a topic of discussion at the Louisiana Association of Levee Boards' Workshop being held this week. Levees will be inspected on a daily basis when Phase Two Floodfighting commences. The USACE EOC (Emergency Operations Center) is fielding calls and is operating 24 hours/day.

B. Discussion of exercise of one-year option to extend ID-IQ Contracts for Coastal, Geotechnical and Hydraulic Engineering Services and Surveying Services.

Robert Turner, SLFPA-E Regional Director, explained that the Authority issued Requests for Qualifications (RFQ), used a competitive selection process to select consultants and entered into Indefinite Delivery-Indefinite Quantity (ID-IQ) contracts for certain engineering and surveying services for a term of two years with a one-year renewal option. He explained that several options were open to the Authority, which included exercising the one-year renewal option and/or issuing new RFQs.

The Committee determined that the one-year renewal option on the current ID-IQ contracts should be exercised and that the RFQ's should be re-advertised for the engineering and surveying services. The re-advertisement would allow the qualification, selection and execution of contracts with additional consultants and the execution of new contracts with the current consultants should they be re-selected. Consultants with current ID-IQ contracts would need to respond to the re-advertised RFQ.

C. Discussion of Grant from the Dutch government for LIMS Modules for Storm Forecasting, Levee Strength and Decision Support.

Stevan Spencer, SLFPA-E Regional Chief Engineer, explained that the Committee was informed at a prior meeting about a potential grant from the Dutch government for the development of Storm Forecasting, Levee Strength and Decision Support modules for the Levee Information Management System (LIMS). The \$300,000 cost to develop the modules would be equally split with \$150,000 to be provided by the Grant and \$150,000 to be provided by the local sponsor. The grant has been approved by the Dutch government for this important addition to the LIMS. A 10-mile test section located in Orleans Parish stretching from South Point south to the GIWW and west to the IHNC surge barrier has been discussed. He further advised that a workshop is being planned on the LIMS for May 20th.

Mr. Doody offered a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Estopinal and unanimously adopted, to recommend to the Board the approval of the expenditure of \$150,000 of matching funds for the grant from the Dutch government.

D. Discussion of the AECOM Maintenance Cost Studies for the levee districts.

Mr. Turner advised that AECOM provided a rough draft of the maintenance studies for review of format, form and approach. AECOM was directed to stop work on the project until the Authority and levee districts have reviewed the drafts and are assured that studies are going in the right direction. The levee district Executive Directors are reviewing the drafts and staff will meet early next week to discuss the studies. A meeting will be held with AECOM next week after the staff has met.

E. Discussion of EOP Manual updates for SLFPA-E and levee districts.

Mr. Turner advised that the levee districts have revised their Emergency Operations Procedures (EOP) Manuals for the upcoming hurricane season. Errata sheets or

highlighting have been used to note revisions. The approval of the EOP manuals will be placed on the agenda for the next Board meeting.

LEEVE DISTRICT REPORTS:

East Jefferson Levee District (EJLD): Fran Campbell, EJLD Executive Director, reviewed highlights of the monthly status report (copy appended to minutes).

Orleans Levee District (O.L.D.): Gerry Gillen, O.L.D. Executive Director, reviewed highlights of the monthly status report (copy appended to minutes).

Lake Borgne Basin Levee District (LBBLD): Stuart Williamson, LBBLD Executive Director, reviewed highlights of the monthly status report (copy appended to minutes). He advised that the contingency plans should Hyla (High Year Level Achieved) not be achieved for certain projects were reviewed at a meeting with USACE project managers. He reviewed the contingency plans that will be made a part of the Emergency Procedures Manuals as an appendix. He reported that some of the discharge pipes at Pump Stations Nos. 6 and 7 may need repair or replacement due to corrosion. He added that the pump used to prime the Violet Siphon has been placed on loan for about 90 days to one of the West Bank pumping stations that was having difficulty obtaining a vacuum pump in time for the upcoming hurricane season.

There was no further business; therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.