

**MINUTES OF  
SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY-EAST  
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON MAY 14, 2015**

PRESENT: Louis Wittie, Chair  
Stephen Estopinal, Committee Member  
Paul Tilly, Committee Member

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The Operations Committee of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East (SLFPA-E or Authority) met on May 14, 2015, in Meeting Room 201, Orleans Levee District Franklin Administrative Complex, 6920 Franklin Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana. Mr. Wittie called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

**Opening Comments:** None.

**Adoption of Agenda:** The Committee adopted the agenda as presented.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the April 2, 2015 Operations Committee meeting were approved.

**Public Comments:** None

**New Business:**

**A. Presentation of recommendations for Levee Inspection Improvements – AIMS Group.**

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Jarrold Ferran with the AIMS Group (AIMS) explained that a study was conducted to improve the levee districts' levee inspection process and bring efficiency through the use of existing software. Deficiencies identified in the field included the following: no station or location identification, no easy method for attaching photos to observations, no point numbers, and everything is hand written and manually input in Excel. He noted that the field inspectors were resistant to utilizing some types of software because of difficulties with some of the software applications tested in the past. The levee districts do not have a master database and currently use Excel workbooks that include hundreds of spreadsheets. All reports must be done manually and reports must be signed numerous times.

Mr. Ferran advised that he spent a day with each levee district and reviewed some of the comments from each district with the Committee. Two of the levee districts that tried the HNTB software had strong negative opinions; however, the districts were open to an App/Website with customized drop down menus. The recommended process improvements included automatic point numbering and stations, an easy method for attaching photos to observations, an easy to use device for inputting data in the field (e.g., cellphone or tablet), custom drop down menus, a master sortable database and an automatic reporting process.

Mr. Ferran reviewed the three existing inspection methods analyzed by AIMS:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Levee Inspection System Software (ArcMap Based)
- HNTB Inspector Set Software
- SLFPA-W Web Based Custom Forms

Mr. Ferran explained that over the past two years the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-West (SLFPA-W) developed customized software (Flood Control Information Management System) with JBM to address its levee inspection needs that it is willing to share with the SLFPA-E. The software at this point is about 90 percent complete and would solve most of the SLFPA-E's issues. It is web based and inspectors in the field can input data through a cellphone, I-pad or tablet. The drop down menus are customizable. Various features were reviewed that included an "add photo" feature so that photos are automatically attached to the inspection record and a "get location" feature. It is anticipated that the capability of providing actual station numbers will be available by the time the software is released. Data is input in the field and transmitted to the SLFPA-W Director for review and action. The software includes monitoring and search capabilities. The monthly cost for use of the software is \$200. The total initial cost for the purchase of I-pads for the three levee districts is approximately \$10,000 (five I-pads and accessories for each levee district). The total annual on-going cost (data and software) for the three levee districts is approximately \$12,600.

Mr. Ferran explained that the USACE ArcMap Based Levee Inspection Software System was proved cumbersome in the field because of the troubleshooting that is required and that the HNTB Inspection Set Software proved to be awkward; therefore, these two tools were eliminated. AIMS recommended the SLFPA-W Web Based Customs Forms software solution. The data can be pulled into the USACE format. The \$200 cost per month includes the retention of data on a cloud based server.

Robert Turner, SLFPA-E Regional Director, advised that the SLFPA-E contacted the company that is developing the software for the SLFPA-W. The software seems flexible and fairly easy to use. The software is owned by the developer. He recommended using the SLFPA-W software if the developer can provide a useable deliverable. He suggested that the software be tested in the field. If the SLFPA-W software does not prove to be usable, then the SLFPA-E will probably to go the USACE program.

The Committee noted that this issue can be handled administratively.

**B. Presentation and discussion on the proposed leasing of Pontchartrain Beach by the O.L.D. to the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation.**

Dwight Williams, Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation (LPBF) Acting Executive Director, explained that the LPBF would like to pursue a lease of the Pontchartrain Beach site. The LPBF would like to utilize the site as a natural beach and keep the site off the electrical grid as much as possible by using solar and wind generated power. The LPBF does not intent to build any structures. Port-a-lets will be placed on the site.

Licensed food vendors will service the site by truck. Tenting will be put in place and cargo containers would be utilized for permanent storage. The LPBF anticipates that it would take about a year to mitigate any potential dangers to the public, such as anomalies in the water. The site would be divided into three sections: one end section for sailboats, the middle section as a public beach and the other end section for motorized boats. The swimming area would be marked with pilings and buoys. The LPBF will try to ensure that there are no drop offs in the swimming area. Funding from an Urban Waters Grant will be utilized for signage in both English and Spanish. A preliminary study has been done relative to the amount of sand that will be needed for the beach area and to mitigate any hazards. The LPBF would like to work with the Orleans Levee District, FEMA and other funding resources to repair the first section of the dock and rebuild the remaining section as a fishing pier. He pointed out that the metal retaining wall that juts into the lake is a major concern that must be dealt with prior to opening the beach to the public. He anticipated that there would only be limited controlled openings during the upcoming summer for fund raisers and hoped that next summer the beach can be opened to the public. The LPBF will conduct various public outreach programs. The existing parking area can accommodate approximately 70 vehicles. Discussions have ensued concerning use of the old tennis courts, which can no longer be used for tennis due to their condition, for additional parking. The LPBF will also pursue discussions with the UNO Foundation about use of its parking facilities and obtaining a right-of-way across its property to allow individuals who take public transportation to walk past the old Milneberg Light and enter the site through the floodgate. Mr. Williams advised that a nominal admissions charge to facilitate crowd control, not for funding for the project, is being discussed. He pointed out that no life guards will be provided at the site.

Wilma Heaton, SLFPA-E Director of Governmental Affairs, noted that the fair market value of the property would be weighed against the public purpose. Mr. Estopinal commented that the rent consideration would be nominal, considering the investment that will be made by the LPBF for improvements and mitigation of hazards in order to make the site available to the public. Nyka Scott, SLFPA-E Executive Counsel, advised that the SLFPA-E would be named as an additional insured on the coverage that will be obtained by the LPBF.

John Lopez with the LPBF commented on the public interest in Pontchartrain Beach and that the improvements and continued leasing of the site would be contingent upon raising the required funds.

A motion was offered by Mr. Estopinal, seconded by Mr. Tilly and unanimously adopted, to recommend that the Board approve the leasing of Pontchartrain Beach to the LPBF.

**C. Review of EJLD, LBLD and O.L.D. 2015 Emergency Operations Procedures Manuals and Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.**

Mr. Turner advised that copies of the levee districts' Emergency Operations Procedures (EOP) manuals were provided for review. The manuals have been revised by the levee districts. The EOP manuals must be approved by the Board.

**D. Discussion of extension of Agreement for Professional Services with Tetra Tech, Inc. for Certification of the Non-Federal Levees for one additional year.**

Mr. Turner explained that the Tetra Tech, Inc. agreement expires on June 30, 2015. A one-year extension of the agreement is requested in order to complete the certification process. The not-to-exceed value of the agreement would remain the same.

A motion was offered by Mr. Estopinal, seconded by Mr. Tilly and unanimously adopted, to recommend that the Board approve the one-year extension of the Tetra Tech agreement.

**E. Discussion of approval to increase the project budget for the Mississippi River Levee/IHNC Vegetation Removal Project being performed by Holliday Construction, LLC from \$220,000 to \$295,000. (O.L.D.)**

Gerry Gillen, Orleans Levee District (O.L.D.) Executive Director, explained that the final number of acres of vegetation that was removed exceeded the initial estimate; therefore, an increase of the project construction budget from \$220,000 to \$290,000 is required. The removal of the vegetation is being done at the direction of the USACE.

A motion was offered by Mr. Estopinal, seconded by Mr. Tilly and unanimously adopted, to recommend that the Board approve the increase to the project construction budget.

**F. Discussion of award of a construction contract for the installation of slope paving on the Citrus Lakefront Levee at Read Blvd., Crowder Blvd. and Bullard Ave. (O.L.D.)**

Mr. Gillen advised that bids for the installation of the slope paving are scheduled to be opened later today. The construction estimate for the project is \$1.8 million. A resolution will be presented to the Board for the award of the contract.

**G. Discussion of approval of the issuance of a task order to Fenstermaker/Kleinpeter for construction administration and inspection services for the Citrus Lakefront Levee Slope Paving Project at Read Blvd., Crowder Blvd. and Bullard Ave. (O.L.D.)**

Mr. Gillen advised that this item is being deferred.

**H. Discussion of award of a construction contract for the Mississippi River Levee Floodwall Stop Log Replacement Project. (O.L.D)**

Mr. Gillen advised that nine bids were received for the Mississippi River Levee Floodwall Stop Log Replacement Project. The current concrete stop logs will be replaced with aluminum stop logs. The aluminum stop logs will be as effective as the concrete stop logs, but will not require heavy equipment to put in place. The lowest responsible bidder is K-Belle Consultants, LLC, in the amount of \$184,506.00.

**I. Discussion of approval of the issuance of a task order to Linfield, Hunter and Junius for construction administration and inspection services for the Lakefront Levee Grading Project between Franklin Ave and Camp Leroy Johnson. (O.L.D.)**

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Mr. Gillen advised that this item is no longer required.

**J. Discussion of proposed leasing and build out of office space for the SLFPA-E in the Lakefront Airport Terminal.**

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Ms. Heaton explained that the SLFPA-E will soon need to lease additional office space in the CERM Building for several additional staff members. She realized that the SLFPA-E could accommodate more offices, including the offices for additional staff, for less money by building out and leasing office space for the SLFPA-E staff in the Lakefront Airport Terminal. The fair market value rental rate must be paid at the Airport Terminal under FAA regulations. However, the Non-Flood Protection Asset Management Authority owes the Orleans Levee District Flood Protection Division money and part of the rental can be applied to the money owed. The SLFPA-E must provide notice of its intent to exercise the next one-year renewal option of its current lease with the UNO Foundation by July 31. The current one-year renewal option expires on September 30, 2015. Over 2,000 square feet of conference area in the Airport Terminal would be part of the build out and could be made available to the SLFPA-E. The build out would include walls, flooring and ceiling.

Mr. Estopinal inquired about the effect that the Airport Terminal build out would have on the proposed construction of the new O.L.D. Police Station at the Elysian Fields site. Ms. Heaton responded that the Board would have several options. The building could be constructed at the Elysian Fields location for the police station alone or the building could include space for future administrative needs. Capital Outlay funding will still be pursued. Robert Garner, SLFPA-E Police Superintendent, advised that his preference would be to construct the police station on the north end of the O.L.D. Franklin Avenue campus.

Ms. Heaton explained that the request is to present the concept of the build out and lease to the Board for approval and that the negotiated lease would be presented to the Board at a later date for approval.

A motion was offered by Mr. Tilly, seconded by Mr. Estopinal and adopted, to recommend that the Board approve the build out of office space for SLFPA-E staff in the Airport Terminal.

**K. Discussion of the execution of an Agreement with Tetra Tech, Inc. to provide Risk Assessment Engineering Services to perform a Probabilistic Performance Analysis for the major complex structures.**

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Mr. Turner advised that a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) was received for a risk assessment of the major complex structures. The CDBG funding in the amount of approximately \$500,000 would be split between two phases. A selection

process was conducted and Tetra Tech, Inc., was selected for the proposed work. The negotiated agreement would not exceed the grant amount.

A motion was offered by Mr. Tilly, seconded by Mr. Estopinal and adopted, to recommend that the Board approve the execution of an agreement with Tetra Tech.

**Levee District Reports:**

- A. Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) Status Report:** Mr. Turner reviewed the highlights of the HSDRRS status report. He also reported that the USACE will conduct a tabletop hurricane exercise on May 27<sup>th</sup>. A press conference will be held on June 1<sup>st</sup> for various public officials and representatives from different entities to address the upcoming hurricane season. Mr. Turner advised that he will provide written and oral testimony to a subcommittee of the Senate Environmental and Public Works Committee on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The testimony will cover three issues: levee lifts, the operation and maintenance of the IHNC navigation gates, and outstanding design issues that will be dealt with through a monitoring program.
- B. Police Activities:** Mr. Garner reported that the following activities took place during the past month: approximately 7,000 hours worked by officers, 178 tickets issued, several felony and six misdemeanor arrests, 198 dispatched calls, 344 officer generated calls, 529 hours contributed by reserve officers, 127 pedestrian checks and 135 vehicle checks.
- C. Lake Borgne Basin Levee District (LBBLD):** Nick Cali, LBBLD Executive Director, reviewed the highlights of the LBBLD status report.
- D. Orleans Levee District (O.L.D.):** Gerry Gillen, O.L.D. Executive Director, reviewed the highlights of the O.L.D. status report.
- E. East Jefferson Levee District (EJLD):** Derek Boese, EJLD Interim Executive Director, reviewed the highlights of the EJLD status report.

There was no further business; therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.