

January 19, 2012

To SLFPA-E Commissioners:

An opinion on the editorial page about the West Bank levee debris reported that the corps stood by and did nothing as a contractor scooped clay **back into** the same trench where inspectors were trying to **dig out** evidence of levee debris.

We had the same problem with this board. **When we tried to show you evidence that we dug up about the tree and property rights issues, you also threw "dirt" on it to cover it up.** You threw fake laws, servitudes, shills, lies, excuses that didn't apply and also manipulated the vote, the legal system, media, public, and some board members. However, **just like some of the mud used to build new levees, your cover-up did not stick and has slowly been eroded away to reveal the truth.**

I can't imagine how anyone could stoop as low as you did by taking advantage of those residents who had already lost everything. Many had not even been able to return and others were struggling financially and working in unimaginable conditions to try to rebuild their homes, while at the same time having to fight to keep you from stealing their property. Mr. Doody, I wish your wife, friends, and Citizens for One New Orleans, knew the truth about how you have abused the power of this board against us.

Whenever someone criticizes any of you, a board member often comes to their defense. **But not one board member has ever come to your defense, Mr. Doody,** in all the many times I have accused you of being the person responsible for pushing this board to vote against us illegally and without any proof.

Judge Reese said to the plaintiffs: **"I strongly urge you... to make your voices be heard loud and long about this situation."** That is what we have been trying to do for five very long years, but you would never listen.

We are asking that our fence be moved back to its legal property line without any servitudes or permits, since there were **never** any servitudes or permits in the first place and **never** any justification for taking **any** property in Lakewood South. Your insistence that the corps take our fences to force us to sign your outrageous 2008 permit, has only weakened that levee along with your credibility. Please include this request in your minutes.

These comments do not apply to Mr. Wittie, Mr. Estopinal, Dr. Kemp or Mr. Goins. I have added Mr. Lozonsky because I noticed that he reads our handouts and has never voted or spoken out against us in public. Thank you.

Carol and George Byram

OUR OPINIONS

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2011 THE TIMES-PICAYUNE

Eye on levee debris

West Bank levees will be reviewed by an independent third party, and that's a necessary precaution given the legitimate concerns that have been raised about debris in the levees and clay quality.

Sen. David Vitter said that Army Corps of Engineers officials agreed to arrange for the outside review, and the senator was right to push for that step.

Huge logs, chunks of concrete and junk — a shopping cart, a hot water tank and a construction crane hook — were discovered in test trenches that were dug in the 3.5-mile levee that is being constructed south of Marrero.

That's troubling, all the more so since the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-West had been pushing the corps for months to pay attention to the debris issue.

The corps put together what it calls a Tiger Team — engineers from outside the New Orleans district office — to conduct additional inspections. But the levee authority questioned the Tiger Team's independence and argued that outside eyes were needed.

The levee authority pointed to a situation last month when its inspectors tried to collect samples from a test trench, and authority officials said the contractor scooped excavated clay back in as they were scrambling to get material. The corps officials on the scene did nothing to stop the contractor, levee authority officials complained.

It's a relief that the corps has agreed to a third-party review in light of the problems and the corps' history of down-playing them.

Sen. Vitter also has asked that the West Bank levees be made part of the corps' Peer Review Program to make sure that they have been properly planned, designed and constructed. That's an appropriate step.

"West Bank residents were obviously very worried about the extensive debris — literally piles of junk — found in the levees; and it's concerning that there could be much more still to be found," Sen. Vitter said.

"We can't tolerate any more negligence when it comes to our levees," he said.

That's for sure, and the corps needs to be ready to address whatever issues the third-party review turns up.

It's a relief that the corps has agreed to a third-party review in light of the problems and the corps' history of down-playing them.

(This was my 2 minutes from the last meeting and I meant to give this board a written copy which I have included this month)

SLFPA-E, December 15, 2011

My name is Carol Byram,

I look at my neighbors across the street and think how secure and peaceful they must feel in their homes and I wonder **how** this feeling could have been taken from us so easily and unjustly. I wonder how someone like you, Mr. Doody, who is **not** an engineer, hydrologist, lawyer or any kind of vegetation or levee expert; could have been allowed to make decisions affecting our families without any legitimate proof, while at the same time, ignoring all evidence to the contrary.

In the beginning, Tom Jackson assured us of his support for our area in Lakewood South, but then you took over as president while he was in California and a few months later, when this board was only around 9 months old, I believe you agreed to a plan behind our backs, where not only the corps, but **this board** could **also** get something out of this tree and land grab. The residents **had** to fight back, because we knew that if your scheme against us worked that time, you would be back for more in the future.

Mr. Doody, you mislead this board and your constant references about seeking "guidance" from your lawyer has been the root of this disaster. Your soft, very controlled manner when speaking of litigation and other excuses that you have used to deflect and conceal these issues, has never fooled us and is a disgrace. Perhaps this board should ask Mr. Doody in executive session if there is anything he isn't telling you about this issue.

I believe most of you now understand there were never any servitudes or laws giving you the right to take this property without compensation, nor was there any reason to take anything at all in Lakewood South. Please honestly ask yourselves if my property had belonged to you, would you have still voted to allow the corps to take that property without a legitimate reason or proof? I don't think so. And how would you feel now about losing **even more** with this new plus 15 law?

Abuse of power and trust is never worth it as we see in the media every day. I hope each of you will please start using your **own** conscience as Mr. Wittie and Mr. Goins did in 2008, when making decisions about this issue in the future.

These comments do not apply to Mr. Wittie, Mr. Estopinal, Dr. Kemp or Mr. Goins.

Thank you.