

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
NATCHITOCHEs LEVEE AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT
January 13, 2015
6:00 p.m.**

BE IT KNOWN that a Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Natchitoches Levee and Drainage District was called in the Police Jury Meeting Room, Natchitoches Parish Courthouse, Natchitoches, Louisiana, on January 13, 2015, with a quorum being present, and roll was called as follows, to-wit:

Board Members present were:

Janet Jones, Secretary
Doris Rogé, Member
Billy Giddens, Member
Charles Brazzel, Jr., Member
Mark Swafford, Member
Rayburn Smith, Member

Absent were:

Karlton Methvin, President/Administrator
Terry Sklar, Member

Also present were:

Brad Sticker, DOTD Engineer
Alan Shephard, Edko, Inc.
Billy Dunn, Foreman

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Natchitoches Levee & Drainage District was called to order at 6:00 p.m by the Assistant Secretary, Ronald E. Corkern, Jr.

The minutes of the December, 2014 meeting were read and discussed. A Motion was made by Doris Rogé, and seconded by Janet Jones, to approve the December, 2014 minutes. The Motion passed unanimously.

The December, 2014 financial statement was reviewed and discussed. Following discussion, a Motion was made by C. D. Brazzel, Jr. and seconded by Billy Giddens to approve the

December, 2014 financial statement. This Motion passed unanimously.

A Motion was made by Rayburn Smith and seconded by C. D. Brazzel, Jr. to amend the agenda to discuss a pay raise for Superintendent Billy Dunn. The Motion passed unanimously.

The maintenance report was given by the Maintenance Superintendent Billy Dunn. Mr. Dunn advised that the one of the drainage pipes at the Hampton gates had floated up and would have to be repaired. Mr. Dunn explained that during the high water the pipe began clogged on the inlet side and as the water continued to rise the pressure forced the pipe to float up. The pipe needs to be repaired as soon as it is dry enough to do so. Brad Sticker, DOTD Engineer, is working on plans for the necessary repairs. Mr. Sticker advised that the work could be done by employees, but there would be material costs and we would have to rent equipment to perform the necessary work.

Mr. Dunn advised that he had talked with Swepco about removing the power poles and lines north of Highway 421. He received permission from Swepco to remove these poles on the wildlife refuge and had actually begun removing some of the poles, but the rain made it too wet to complete this activity. They will remove the remainder of the poles as soon as it is dry enough to do so.

Mr. Dunn discussed with the Board the damage to the levees in the south end of the parish from hunters. Apparently, there is no place for hunters to park even though they are permitted to hunt on the property owned by the U.S. Wildlife & Fisheries. A meeting was held between Mr. Pat Stinson, Manager of the Wildlife Refuge, Karlton Methvin and Brad Sticker. Mr. Stinson agreed to have the U.S. Wildlife & Fisheries build a rock parking lot which would allow the hunters to park, as opposed to driving their trucks down the slope of the levee and then tearing the levees up when they try to get back on top. Mr. Dunn also advised that he had talked with Karlton Methvin regarding the L-13 ditch that was cleaned during this past year. Mr. Dunn suggested to the Board that when we contract for spraying this spring that we include the L-13 ditch. Spraying this ditch would keep the weeds out and prolong the need for cleaning it again. The Board requested Mr. Corkern to put all spraying activity, including thistles, on next month's agenda.

Mr. Brad Sticker, DOTD Engineer, addressed the Board and provided further discussion with regards to the Larry Hampton floodgates and the repairs necessary from the high water.

Mr. Sticker also advised that during the meeting with Pat Stinson he learned that there is a Federal grant that provides money for cost sharing that might be used to improve the access road from Highway 495 to the wildlife refuge. The grant provides for an 80/20 cost sharing. We would probably have to partnership with the Red River Waterway Commission and the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury to submit this grant application. The property is actually owned by the Red River Waterway Commission, but the road is in the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury's inventory. Sticker also advised that Pat Stinson would be submitting an After-the-Fact Permit request for the irrigation pipeline that runs through the wildlife refuge. The State will approve permitting this line since it meets the required specifications. We will then have to obtain approval from the Corps of Engineers.

Mr. Sticker informed the Board that he is prepared to meet with the property owners adjacent to L-20 and Mr. Methvin will be asked to coordinate that meeting.

Mr. Sticker inquired as to whether Corkern had heard from the Corps of Engineers regarding the permit application on the two places north of Marco and Corkern advised that we had not received any communication from the Corps. Mr. Sticker further discussed with the Board the GAP Closure Plans which were previously provided to the Board for their review. Following discussion, the Board requested Corkern to provide Mr. Sticker with answers to the questions highlighted in the draft of the GAP Closure Plans so that a final plan can be developed.

In other business, the Board discussed hiring a new permanent employee to begin work this spring. It is anticipated that Keith Antee will retire in the summer of 2016. The Board felt it important to have someone hired this spring so that individual would have a year to be trained to take over Keith's duties and responsibilities. A Motion was made by Doris Rogé and seconded by Mark Swafford to authorize the hiring of a new permanent employee this spring, 2015. The Motion passed unanimously.

Ronald Corkern discussed with the Board the request by the Association of Levee Boards of Louisiana that we join the Flood

Insurance Reform Coalition. It is a one-time contribution of \$5,000.00, which will be used to hire a part time director and to assist with lobby efforts. The purpose of this group is to convince Congress that flood insurance should still be made available to landowners at an affordable rate. A Motion was made by Rayburn Smith and seconded by C. D. Brazzel, Jr. to approve membership in the Flood Insurance Reform Coalition and to pay the requested contribution of \$5,000.00. The Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Corkern further advised the Board that the Red River Valley Association was holding its annual convention in Shreveport February 18-19, 2015. The Corps of Engineers will be present for that convention. Doris Rogé indicated a willingness to attend the convention and represent our Board. Corkern was asked to make the necessary reservations for Mrs. Rogé.

Corkern further advised the Board that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would conduct its 2015 inspections on July 17, 2015 and August 10, 2015.

Corkern also discussed with the Board the damage to the levees caused by hunters in the southern part of the parish. Corkern informed the Board that he had talked with Chief of Detectives, Greg Dunn, and had provided Detective Dunn with photographs taken by Billy Dunn on December 28, 2014. Detective Dunn has begun an investigation into this matter.

Mr. Corkern also advised the Board that our annual dues for the Association of Levee Boards of Louisiana were now due. The dues are \$1,000.00. A Motion was made by Janet Jones and seconded by Doris Rogé to approve the payment of \$1,000.00 for dues owed to the Association of Levee Boards of Louisiana. The Motion passed unanimously.

Corkern advised the Board that a meeting would be held on Thursday, January 21, 2015 at the Offices of the Red River Waterway Commission with representatives of the Corps of Engineers. Karlton Methvin and Ronald Corkern, along with Brad Sticker, will attend this meeting.

A Motion was made by Rayburn Smith and seconded by C. D. Brazzel, Jr. to raise the salary of Billy Dunn to the sum of \$4,500.00 per month effective as soon as the raise is approved by Civil Service. Corkern was requested to make the necessary application for the raise due to the fact that Mr. Dunn had

received another job offer at an increased salary and because of the difference in pay between Mr. Dunn, who is the Maintenance Superintendent, and other employees. A raise would help to compress the gap between Mr. Dunn and other employees. The Motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Board, a Motion was made by Janet Jones and seconded by Doris Rogé to adjourn. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the Motion.

Approved on the 10th day of February, 2015, at Natchitoches, Louisiana, at a regularly held meeting.

RONALD E. CORKERN, JR.,
Attorney/Assistant Secretary