

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
AMITE RIVER BASIN DRAINAGE & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

3535 S. Sherwood Forest Boulevard, Suite 135, Baton Rouge, LA

**January 15, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT DURING ROLL CALL: Ben Babin, Jerry Thibeau, David Hoover, Lionel Bailey, Larry Thomas, Edwin Parker, Don Thompson, Kenneth "Wade" Welborn

MEMBERS ABSENT: Willie George Lee, James Little, Matt Milazzo, Tamiara Wade

*Vacancy: East Feliciana Parish*

ALSO, PRESENT: ARBC Executive Director Dietmar Rietschier, ARBC Executive Secretary Toni Guitrau, ARBC Legal Counsel Larry Bankston

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Babin.
2. Prayer/Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Public Comments on Agenda Items:
4. 2017-18 Audit Report: John McKowen, CPA: The audit reflected no violations of state rules or deficiencies in the financial statements. In the opinion of the auditor the ARBC is in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and the Legislative Auditors Office, as well as internal controls of financial matters within the district. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Thompson, second by Parker to accept the audit report as presented.
5. Minutes  
The Board unanimously approved a motion by Thibeau, second by Thomas to approve the November regular meeting minutes, as amended. Note: There was no regular meeting held in December 2018. A quarterly public meeting was held at the Denham Springs Library on December 4, 2018, for informational purposes regarding the status of the CRDC Project. Babin said that the December 4, 2018 public meeting was a success.
6. Financial Statement Report
  - Hoover presented to the Board the November and December 2018 General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Thomas, second by Thompson to approve the November and December 2018 General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements.
7. Executive Director Report
  - CRDC
    - US Army Corps of Engineers "USACE", Travis Creel, regional planner for the New Orleans district, reported at the meeting that the USACE is beginning an expanded study of flood control along the Amite River to hopefully be completed in 2021. They are once again looking at the flood risk impacts in the Amite River Basin. This study will take approximately two years and is in addition to the Comite and EBR diversion projects. Since the original study, following the Flood of 1983, development has boomed with many being along tributaries and waterways. Many state and local leaders have pushed to expand the study. The study will include the lower Amite River, New River, Blind River and the lower basin of the Tickfaw River. Creel said that it will also consider the impact in adjacent basins where Amite River backwater has been a problem. The Amite River and its tributaries have caused flood damage. The upper basin floods are from rainfall events and the lower basin flooding is a combination of drainage and headwaters and backwater flooding from tides and wind patterns. "If we do the improvements upstream, what are the downstream impacts?" Creel asked. "That's why we are focusing on restraints." The USACE will hold public meetings on the plan later this year.
    - PCA Amendment #2 – On the motion of Larry Thomas, seconded by Donald E. Thompson, the following resolution was unanimously adopted: Resolution 1145 - A Resolution authorizing Ben Babin, in his capacity as President of the Board of Commissioners for the Amite River Basin Drainage and Water Conservation District ("ARBC"), to execute Amendment Number 2 of the Project Cooperation Agreement, so long as there are no substantial deviations to the October 4, 2018, Revised December 18, 2018, draft and subject to approval by the Executive Director of ARBC and legal counsel, Certificate of Authority, Certification regarding Lobbying, and Non-Federal Sponsor's Self Certification of Financial Capability in connection with the Comite River Diversion Project, State Project No. H.007811, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana.
    - Dietmar Rietschier, ARBC Executive Director, said that he received a phone call from Senator Barrow requesting that ARBC hold public meetings in the Baton Rouge and/or Zachary area. Larry Thomas suggested the Zachary library.

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- DOTD Report – No LaDOTD representative was present.
- Rietschier reported that the contractor will begin demolitions soon.

8. ARBC Legal Counsel:

- At the Homeland Security meeting, there was a presentation by DOTD regarding modeling. It is based upon data and information received on highwater marks from Amite River Basin Commission, and USGS. They are developing a model that can be used by engineers, and governmental bodies. Before a large project is developed, it will enable them to see how improvements can be made regarding drainage and flooding. The Amite River Basin is the first to be completed.
- ARBC has been able to get an extension to the Kansas City Railroad Agreement. Resolution 1144: On the motion of Thibeau, seconded by Hoover, the following resolution was unanimously adopted: A Resolution authorizing Dietmar Rietschier, in his capacity as Executive Director and acting on behalf of the Amite River Basin Drainage and Water Conservation District (“ARBC”), and authorizing Ben Babin, in his capacity as President of the Board of Commissioners for the Amite River Drainage and Water Conservation District, to execute the Supplemental Agreement No. 2 to Private Road Crossing Agreement with the Kansas City Southern Railway Company.
- CEA between ARBC and EBR Parish concerning the dirt at Lilly Bayou – Waste Management is making improvements to the servitude on Irene Road. ARBC is waiting on them to provide an excavation protocol. In the next 60 days, they may start receiving dirt.
- ARBC has had comments and calls specifically asked if federal funds are in jeopardy for the CRDC Project due to the government shut down. At this point the funds seem secure, but the President can repurpose the funds for a national emergency. However, that would be best answered by our congressional delegation.

9. Old Business – None

10. New Business – None

11. The Board adjourned the meeting.

APPROVED:

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/s/ Ben Babin, ARBC President

Date: February 19, 2019

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/s/ Toni B. Guitrau, Executive Secretary