

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE
AMITE RIVER BASIN DRAINAGE & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Location: Ascension Parish Council Chambers, 607 E. Worthey Street, Gonzales, LA 70737

August 8, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT DURING ROLL CALL: John Clark, Jack Harris, Clint Cointment, Brin Ferlito, LeeAnn Fitch, Mark Harrell, Gary O’Neal, Edwin Parker, Fred Raiford, Rick Webre

MEMBERS ABSENT DURING ROLL CALL: Lionel Bailey, Robert Carter
One Vacant “At-Large” position

ALSO PRESENT: Bren Haase, CPRA; Ed Knight, LADOTD; Monica Gorman and Blaine Sheets, Pontchartrain Levee District; ARBC Executive Secretary Toni Guitrau, ARBC Legal Counsel Larry Bankston; Lawrence E. Marino, Oats & Marino

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by ARBC President Clark.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call: See above.

4. OCD Director, Pat Forbes – LWI funding. Region 9

- \$100 million-Region 9 Allocation: LWI Region 9 will be allocated \$100 million for development of large, transformative projects in MID areas within Region 9. LMI benefit is not required. Pat Forbes explained that it will be 3-4 months before Action Plan Amendment #3 is approved so no CEA can be signed until then. He said that if LWI receives an application from Region 9 for a project, it has to demonstrate that it meets the national objective at the end of that expenditure. It does not have to be a Covered Project with this \$100 million. ARBC can begin deciding which transformative project(s) they want to spend the \$100 million on. Transformative projects are those that are large in the benefits of reducing flood risks.
- \$800 thousand-Region 9. No Action Plan amendment is needed for LWI to supply \$800 thousand to Region 9. LWI does require an application from Region 9 so it can be processed.
- All projects funded in the Round 2 allocation of \$225 million must benefit LMI persons and households to meet the 50% minimum requirement.
- Regional project rating due to the state by August 31, 2023.

5. Minutes – There were no public comments.

The Board unanimously approved a motion by Cointment, seconded by Harris to approve the July 11, 2023, Regular Meeting minutes, as presented.

6. Financial Statements – There were no public comments.

The Board unanimously approved a motion by Harris, seconded by Raiford to approve the July 2023 General Fund and CRDC Fund financial statements, as presented.

7. Report by ARBC President – There were no public comments.

- President Clark said that it is exciting and challenging to be working together. The ARBC Commission serves as a multi-parish authority to accomplish flood control measures. He encouraged the Board to continue working together as a team.

8. Report by Legal Counsel – None.

9. Old Business - There were no public comments on Old Business agenda items.

- LWI – Region 9, Round 2 deadline/ranking. The Board discussed the list of priority projects ranked by low, medium, and high in Region 9. Clark reported that there were an additional 2 projects sent from LWI on Friday to be ranked. The Board discussed the St. James Parish project, which may need an amendment to its

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application. Rankings must be submitted by August 31, 2023. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Cointment, seconded by Harrell to call a Special Meeting of the Board on August 29, 2023 at 10 am, with location to be determined, to reassess and approve Region 9 priority projects for Round 2, and to handle issues with the Executive Director position.

- LWI Region 9 Coordinator update/discussion: \$800,000. Clark reminded the Board that LWI requires an application from Region 9 so requests can be processed.
- Stokka Brown, CSRS Proposal – After discussion, the Board approved a motion by Cointment, seconded by Harrell not to approve the proposal with CSRS, and to pull the 2016 Interactive map off the web for a full analysis of its impact and accuracy. ARBC Commissioner Brin Ferlito abstained from the vote. Cointment said that this is a very important tool that can be brought in-house. Eventually, the Executive Director or a company can keep up with this tool and enhance it. The main concern discussed was liability risk. Stokka Brown said the intent of the 2016 Interactive Map is to represent what happened in the August 2016 flood and to provide the community with more real information and risks.
- ARBC Annual Plan. ARBC President Clark presented to the Board a draft Scope of Services that he prepared. Since he has not heard from any Board member, he welcomed them to expand upon his proposed draft Scope of Services to meet the goals and objectives as required by law for the ARBC Annual Plan. Clark advised that this can't be done in-house and that the Board can consider turning this over to a contractor through CPRA. Bren Haase, CPRA, said the draft of Scope of Services looks good. He requested that Larry Bankston and David Peterson review things to make certain they are complying with contractual requirements to get a Task Order issued. He said CPRA can take Clark's draft Scope of Services and fine-tune it to get a Task Order proposal back to the Commission for final approval. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Cointment, seconded by Raiford to allow the Executive Committee to work with CPRA in adopting and approving the task of obtaining an Annual Plan. Raiford said that the new Executive Director will need to be involved with this, so the Board needs to move quickly on hiring an Executive Director. Haase said the CPRA legal team will review and make any needed changes. The amended document will then be submitted to the ARBC Executive Committee for approval so a task order can be issued.
- Update on Drone Video – CRDC Project – The USACE recently released a drone video to the public of the CRDC Project, so the Board agreed to hold off on producing a drone video at this time.
- Project Committee Status/Discussion – With more important priorities that need the Board's attention, the Project Inventory Map is on hold for the time being.
- Status of the ARBC Executive Director Search – By roll call vote, the Board unanimously approved a motion by O'Neal, seconded by Parker to add Executive Session to the agenda to discuss the Executive Director position – personnel. The Board will hold the remaining agenda items prior to entering Executive Session.
- Set ARBC Meeting Locations: The Board agreed to hold September-December meetings at the State Capitol.
- **CRDC Project Status.** Updates can be found on the ARBC website at www.amitebasin.org as provided by the USACE. The ARBC does not have a role in construction.

10. New Business - There were no public comments on New Business agenda items.

- Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Raiford, seconded by O'Neal to approve the Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire, as presented.
- ARBC Commissioner O'Neal reported to the Board a presentation on Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Opportunities.
- The Board unanimously approved a motion by Parker, seconded by Harrell to enter Executive Session to discuss the Executive Director position – personnel.
- The Board unanimously approved a motion by O'Neal, seconded by Cointment to return to Regular Session.
- The Board unanimously approved a motion by O'Neal, seconded by Cointment, to call a Special Meeting on August 29, 2023, 10 am, location to be determined, and to authorize the ARBC to contact selected applicants for the Executive Director's position to engage them on potential interviews.
- By roll call vote, the Board unanimously approved a motion by Cointment, seconded by Parker to enter into Executive Session to discuss the ranking of projects, Round 2 information for 15 minutes.

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- The Board unanimously approved a motion by O'Neal, seconded by Harris to return to Regular Session.

11. General Public Comments: There were no public comments.

12. The Board unanimously approved a motion by Cointment, seconded by Harrell to adjourn the meeting.

APPROVED:

/s/John Clark/ARBC President
Date: September 12, 2023

/s/ Toni B. Guitrau, Executive Secretary