**MINUTES OF OCTOBER 18, 2016**

**Board of Commissioners of**

**Bayou D’Arbonne Lake Watershed District Regular Meeting**

Union Parish Courthouse Annex

303 East Water Street

Farmerville, LA 71241

1. Roll Call – President Bruce Hampton called the meeting to order. Commission members present were Bruce Hampton, David Hopkins, Cary Brown, Trotter Hunt and Terri Towns. Steve Cagle was absent. Also present were Bill Carter, Ron Riley, Robert Lemoine and Tracy Ambrose.
2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance – Cary Brown led the invocation, and Trotter Hunt led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Public Comment Registration – No one signed up to make a public comment.
4. Agenda Approval – A request was made to add Item G8 to the Agenda to request that Bruce Hampton is authorized to obtain a key to the facility for future meetings, and a request was made to add Item G9 to the Agenda to discuss the Mega Ramp. Cary Brown made a motion to amend the Agenda to add these two items, and David Hopkins seconded the motion. There was no objection by the public, and the motion passed unanimously.
5. Approval of Minutes – Motion was made by Cary Brown and seconded by Terri Towns to approve the minutes of the September 2016 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.
6. Treasurer's Reports – The September 2016 treasurer’s report was presented. David Hopkins stated that we are trying to obtain reimbursement for audit money. We were reimbursed for 2015, but we still have not been reimbursed for 2014. This has been ongoing since 2014. We should get about $8,000. There is $12,000 left in the fund to pay for it, and we may have to pay for it out of our General Fund if this ends. Motion was made by David Hopkins and seconded by Cary Brown to approve the September 2016 report. The motion passed unanimously.
7. Old and New Business:

1. Channel Markers – (a) FEMA Claims, and (b) Repair Status – Ron Riley said we were planning on using the value of the volunteer labor ($20/hr. for the boat and $15/hr. per volunteer) as part of our 25% match for the FEMA claim but that will not be allowed. According to the rules, this will not apply because they were not emergency repairs but are permanent repairs. FEMA is also requesting maintenance records on the poles. Steve Cagle has been GPSing every pole and will get that information to them. He doesn’t know where this is headed. For instance, they want the poles to be straightened rather than replaced. They said they will pay 3% maximum on the direct administrative costs at the spillway. Mr. Hampton asked if there is an appeal process. Mr. Carter said we may need to contact our congressmen, John Fleming and Ralph Abraham. Mr. Riley stated that the man from FEMA whom they met in May is a retired Corps of Engineers hydraulics engineer. He agreed to pay X dollars per pole, X dollars per sign and X dollars for the boat. This new FEMA guy negated everything and said they did not have the previous man’s records. The man they previously met with took numerous pictures, wrote the GPS figures down, and no one knows where it is, so we are starting over. Mr. Hunt asked if the man who previously met with is still with FEMA. Mr. Riley did not know. Mr. Carter said this will likely be an administrative battle and there are so many FEMA claims we may need to speak with one of the congressmen’s staff just to see if they can offer any advice. Mr. Riley forwarded this to a man at Homeland Security who has previously been very helpful in the past, but he has not heard back from him.

2. 2016 Drawdown – Mr. Riley spoke with Jeff Shapiro with DOTD, who said DOTD stayed with the five-foot drawdown and it will end on November 15 unless he hears from someone. We had previously talked about extending the drawdown to kill the hydrilla but they will not budge without written authority. Mr. Hampton spoke with Ryan Daniels with Wildlife & Fisheries and he is okay with December 15 but he wants the five foot drawdown and is insistent that we need that for vegetation issues. Mr. Hampton asked if we really want to get into a battle with them over that. Mr. Riley asked Mr. Shapiro for the specific procedure. He was told to write a letter to the head of Wildlife & Fisheries in Lafayette and, if he agrees to it, then he will send it to the Chief Engineer at DOTD in Baton Rouge. If the Chief Engineer agrees to it, he will tell his secretary to call Marshall Hill and tell him to go to it. That is the chain of command. Mr. Hampton said Ryan Daniels indicated that the date is not a problem but he wouldn’t recommend 76 feet to his people, and he wants to stay at 75 feet, which is where we have been. Mr. Hopkins suggested we request December 15. Mr. Hampton stated that he already has authorization to do that but he wants make sure there is no problem with the 76 feet. He does not believe we have a chance of getting it to 76 feet. Mr. Carter stated that Steve Cagle said 76 feet is his preference because of issues with ramps and launching boats, and the Commission authorization is 76 feet. Bruce Hampton said it was 75 feet in the past. Bill Carter said eight years ago it was 76 feet and at 75 feet, there were problems at the boat ramps. Mr. Carter stated that the Commission is on record for preferring 76 feet, but there is no problem with 75 feet, and that is where DOTD is. Mr. Carter stated that Ryan Daniels is good with 75 feet and will request an extension. Mr. Carter asked Ryan Daniels if he could attend this meeting but he was out of town. Mr. Hampton stated that he will attend a later meeting.

3. Commission Website – Update – Mr. Hampton said they have not met as a committee yet. Mr. Lemoine passed out a printout of some topics for the website. Mr. Hampton said he spoke with Mr. Lemoine and suggested that they meet after he has a draft prepared. Mr. Lemoine stated that he will put together the website tomorrow. Mr. Hopkins asked about the monthly fee to see if it can be billed quarterly, and Mr. Lemoine agreed that would be no problem.

4. Lake Information Pamphlet – Update – Mr. Townsend said they are following up with the website.

5. Annual Dam Inspection – Report – Mr. Riley said he has not seen the report which is unusual because they typically would have received it two months ago. Mr. Hampton said they may be overwhelmed.

6. City of Farmerville Old Highway 15 Request – Mr. Hampton stated that he has not had any other discussion and there was not a lot of support for that. The Mayor asked to meet out there to show what they want to do. Mr. Hampton asked if there is any objection to Mr. Riley meeting with the Mayor out there to see what their thoughts are. Since Mr. Riley is an engineer, he would like his thoughts on the matter. There was some concern about liability. They wanted to put some old concrete on the side of Old Highway 15 to shore up the road. However, Mr. Hampton stated that there are some liability issues. Mr. Riley stated that Mr. Cagle has concern because previously they used concrete with rebar in it. The danger is that there is steel sticking up from the old concrete could be a danger to children if they fall while walking on it. Mr. Hampton conveyed that to the Mayor. Mr. Hampton asked Mr. Riley would meet with the Mayor and Mike Allen. There was no objection to this from the members.

7. Lincoln Parish Police Jury Funding – Mr. Hampton has to get back with them on that. It is about $2000.

8. Request that President of Lake Commission has Access to Annex – In view of the problems in obtaining access to the facility for this meeting, Cary Brown made motion that there be a request made to the Union Parish Police Jury to provide the President and the Secretary/Treasurer of this Commission with a key to this facility. The motion was seconded by Trotter Hunt, and the motion passed unanimously.

9. Mega Ramp – Mr. Riley stated that he was in Baton Rouge last Thursday on another project and tried to find out what is going on with the capital outlay program. The legislature has changed the rules. Once you were in a program previously, you did not have to reapply. However, now you have to apply every year by the end of October. October 31 is the absolute deadline. Under the new legislative act, in February you have to certify that you have your match. We were trying to get the match from Wallop Breaux, the match from State Parks and from our land values, but as long as this is the case, this is not encouraging for us to even try. We are running out of time. If this were declared an economic development project, which is what he thinks it is, you do not need a match. To do that, it is what Jay Dardenne decides. You have to write a letter and specifically list how many people come, the values, etc. There is a boon to the economy when they have the Bass Masters tournament, but he does not know how to get numbers. Ms. Townsend said we can get numbers from the Chamber or the tournament leaders. Mr. Riley said we have 10 days to get it done. He said we also have to get letters from both our representatives and senators, and they must have the hard copies with the letters of support in Baton Rouge by October 31. (They can be emailed.) Mr. Riley asked whether the Board wanted to pursue the economic development side. He felt certain we would have to have it by a month or six weeks. Mr. Hampton asked if that was strictly in Jay Dardenne’s discretion, and Mr. Riley heard that it was his call. Mr. Carter said capital outlay has gotten so tight, it is the Governor’s prerogative. Mr. Riley stated that they have cut the capital outlay program to $600 or $700 million. They had $1.2 billion in requests, so he believes our project is over. We have several choice, we can do nothing or we can cut the project back and come up with 25%, if we can use the value of the land, then we can get 25% credit to allow us to fill in but not put rock on the parking lot and not build the boat ramp. Just the excavation and embankment is almost $800,000. Mr. Riley said another issue is that he will be out almost two days for medical reasons next week, and he is running out of time to do this. He activated E-Corts and he can start modifying it and put an E-Corts application together this week if he knows which one the Board wants him to push. Mr. Hampton said we should pursue the economic development. He does not believe the capital outlay will be any better economically next year than it has been this past year. Mr. Carter said he can send Mike Walsworth and Rob Shadoin letters. Mr. Riley reminded the Board that you have to write a letter to Mr. Dardenne and attach documentation as to why it is an economic development project. Mr. Hunt felt this would require more work than we can do in this short time frame. Mr. Carter said the political reality is we have to have clout with the Governor’s office. Mr. Hampton said Rob Shadoin has a relationship with the governor. Mr. Carter said we can get it down there and use the land as a match in capital outlay. Mr. Hampton said we probably will not get a good package for an economic project in this short time period. Mr. Brown asked how much 25% would be. Mr. Riley said the appraisal for land was $318K, and it cost $2.5 million for the whole project. Mr. Riley said there are other issues, though, not just construction. He said you have to go back to mitigation, the Corps of Engineers permit, etc. Mr. Hampton said we are talking about getting the money to fill it in but nothing else. Mr. Riley agreed and said it would not even include putting a gravel surface on it. Mr. Brown stated that he does not see any of this succeeding. Mr. Riley asked if Mr. Hampton would talk with Rob Shadoin to see what he thinks. Mr. Riley said he has never put together a package for economic development. Mr. Brown suggested we back off and do it next year and do it right. Unless something changes, Mr. Hampton said we need to go the economic development route. Mr. Hampton agreed to check with Rob Shadoin to see whether it is worth pursuing or how to do it.

H. Public Comment – None.

I. Adjourn – A motion to adjourn was made by Trotter Hunt and seconded by David Hopkins. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned.