

PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREATER NEW ORLEANS EXPRESSWAY COMMISSION, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2017, 10:00 A.M., VOA BUILDING, 3939 NORTH CAUSEWAY BLVD, SUITE 400, METAIRIE, LA 70002

PRESENT: Anthony V. Ligi, Jr., Chairman; Shelby P. LaSalle, Jr., Vice Chairman; Stephen G. Romig, Secretary; P. Lindsey Williams, Member; Patrick W. Fitzmorris, Member

OTHERS: Carlton Dufrechou; Chief Nick Congemi; Melissa M. Phillpott; Stacie Heffker; Robert Graham; Red Thompson; Eileen Barthe; Craig Watson, Blue Williams; Cary Bourgeois and Phil Meyers, GEC, Inc.; Rene Chopin, Burk Kleinpeter; Kathy Gambino, Arthur J. Gallagher; Chris Coulon, Adams and Reese

The Chairman called the meeting to order.

**On the motion by Mr. Romig, seconded by Mr. Fitzmorris, the minutes of the regular meeting held on December 7, 2016 were accepted as written. Mr. Ligi, Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Romig, Mr. Williams and Mr. Fitzmorris voted in favor of the motion.**

Mr. Ligi addressed the audience to see if anyone had any comments or questions for the Commission. There were no comments or questions.

Mr. Ligi stated that he wished to make some comments regarding a letter from Mr. Charles Goodwin, a self-appointed representative from St. Tammany Concerned Citizens. Mr. Goodwin's letter was sent to all members of the St. Tammany and Jefferson Parish Councils. Mr. Ligi read the following excerpt from that letter:

*Louisiana DOT stats show the Causeway is already 2.1 times safer than I-10 and I-12. Federal Highway Safety Administration shows that it is three times safer. It is already safe enough.*

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Mr. Ligi responded that Mr. Goodwin had obviously not spoken to the seven people who drowned horrible deaths on the Causeway Bridge since he has been on the Commission. He added that Mr. Goodwin has attended several meetings where experts explained in great detail why these improvements are needed but he has chosen to ignore them. Mr. Ligi stated he takes issue with Mr. Goodwin's letter and read the following which he said inflamed him.

*So why do they have to spend money they don't have to solve a problem that is not there?*

Mr. Ligi stated that since 2013 there have been eight overboards and that is a definite problem.

Mr. Ligi read the close of Mr. Goodwin's letter.

*This is fiscal, folly and managerial malfeasance and both Councils are complacent in their malfeasance and pride.*

Mr. Ligi thanked both Councils for approving the GNOEC's bonding for safety improvements.

Mr. Ligi stated the one fact that Mr. Goodwin continually ignores is that the Causeway Bridge would not be built today as it is currently stands. He stated that older design standards would not even get a minute of consideration. Mr. Ligi stated the Commission is trying to get the bridge as close as they can to today's standards while being fiscally good stewards to everyone paying a toll. Mr. Ligi also wanted to thank the Causeway Police and MAP for risking their lives every day. He also thanked the employees of the GNOEC. Mr. Ligi stated it was a privilege to serve as Chairman. He stated that the Commission takes on a lot of heat no matter what they decide but the past and present Commission has courage to do what needs to be done.

On the Drawbridge operations, Mr. Dufrechou reported there were 4 vessel openings,

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2 test openings and 0 incidents.

Mr. Dufrechou reported that Police and MAP responded to 108 breakdowns on the Causeway Bridge and 27 breakdowns on the Huey P. Long Bridge for a total of 135. He reported 17 accidents on the Causeway Bridge. Mr. Dufrechou stated 4 occurred Northbound, and 13 Southbound. Mr. Dufrechou also stated 17 accidents occurred on the Huey P. Long Bridge. He reported 3 were Eastbound and 7 Westbound.

Mr. Dufrechou showed three pictures of a motorcycle crash that occurred on Saturday, December 10, 2016 at the 8.1 mile marker on the Northbound span. He stated that at approximately 11:00 pm, a motorcycle ran into the rear of a small SUV. Mr. Dufrechou reported the motorcycle driver was thrown overboard between the two bridges. He stated the GNOEC Police, GNOEC Motorist Assistance Patrol, GNOEC Maintenance, U.S. Coast Guard and the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office Marine division searched tirelessly but they could not find the motorcycle driver. Mr. Dufrechou reported the female driver of the SUV was shaken but not hurt. The Northbound span was closed from 11:00 pm to 3:30 am.

Mr. Dufrechou showed two pictures from a vehicle fire that occurred on Monday, December 19, 2016 at the 4 mile marker on the Southbound span at approximately 1:45 pm. He stated that a blowout punctured a van's gas tank and caused the fire. Mr. Dufrechou reported the driver was able to stop quickly and exit. He stated the fire was extinguished rapidly and the vehicle was removed. Mr. Dufrechou stated the bridge was closed from 1:45 pm until 2:40 pm.

Mr. Dufrechou showed two pictures from a hydraulic line on a large truck that ruptured on Thursday, December 29, 2016 on the Huey P. Long Bridge. He stated the GNOEC Police and

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Jefferson Parish Fire Department helped with the cleanup. Mr. Dufrechou reported the spill was contained by a HZMAT cleanup crew.

Mr. Dufrechou showed two pictures of a sailboat that was disabled at the 20 mile marker by the Northbound span on the east side of the Causeway Bridge on Saturday, December 31, 2017. Mr. Dufrechou stated the sailboat was rubbing against the bridge. The U.S. Coast Guard was able to rescue the passengers of the sailboat. Mr. Dufrechou reported that no one was harmed.

Mr. Dufrechou showed four pictures of the GNOEC fog operations. One picture was taken in the middle of the Causeway Bridge facing North and another is facing South. He also showed two pictures that were taken at the South Toll Plaza. One picture shows the entrance of the Causeway Bridge in Metairie and one picture shows the GNOEC Maintenance trucks lined up to pick up cones. All four of the pictures show heavy fog. Mr. Dufrechou stated the GNOEC staff handles the fog operations efficiently and he is very proud of the staff's efforts during the grueling fog season.

On Thursday, January 5, 2017 at approximately 5:00 pm, Mr. Dufrechou stated a guide collar for one of the locking pins on the Northbound Drawbridge failed. Mr. Dufrechou explained that the steel collar was on the inboard side of the north leaf of the Northbound Bridge. He stated that when in the down position, the locking pins extend through collars connecting the two leaves of the Drawbridge. Mr. Dufrechou explained the collars not only guide the locking pins but also add to the rigidity of the Drawbridge particularly for heavy loads. He said that in an abundance of caution, 18 wheelers, dump trucks, buses, RVs, and other very heavy vehicles were prohibited on the Northbound Bridge until the repairs were made. He stated that notices

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were distributed via the GNOEC commuter alert system, website, media, and the message boards as well as DOTD's message boards on I-10. Mr. Dufrechou said the GNOEC Police were stationed on the South shore and turned around any tractors/trailers or other heavy vehicles that may try to transit the Northbound span.

Mr. Dufrechou showed two pictures of the Bascule Lockbar Collar that was repaired on Sunday, January 8, 2017. He stated due to this repair, detours at the drawbridge were done by GNOEC Police convoy from 8:00 am until 5:30 pm. Mr. Dufrechou reported the repair was proceeding well until problems developed realigning the drawbridge locking pins shortly after noon. He stated Boh Brothers and GNOEC Maintenance personnel did well addressing the alignment problem but the work was not completed until 5:20 PM. He reported that compounding the repair challenges, there were three separate crashes during the detour which induced major backups and delays for motorists in both directions. He stated the crashes resulted in multiple temporary closures of the Causeway Bridge and the delays of over an hour or more for some commuters. Mr. Dufrechou reported that even while operating the detour, the GNOEC Police handled all the crashes timely but once traffic builds up it is like trying to stop flood waters coming through a breach in a levee. He stated that both spans were reopened at 5:30 pm and traffic returned to normal shortly thereafter. Mr. Dufrechou stated that detours for repairs like this typically would have been done at night. He reported that Saturday night was the preference but high winds increased risk to workers and would not allow them to station a rescue boat. Mr. Dufrechou said they then considered doing the repair Sunday night but decided to begin Sunday morning in case the crew ran into problems requiring additional time to complete. He said that could have impacted Monday morning commuters. Mr. Dufrechou stated that an after action meeting was held on the following Monday to identify

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problems and solutions. He stated that with all of the problems, the decision to begin work on Sunday morning was the right one. Mr. Dufrechou reported that while detours have worked in the past, the mistake he made was not closing the Northbound Bridge totally for the day during the duration of the work. He said in the future if a daytime repair is necessary, the Bridge be closed. If the repairs can be accomplished at night, the GNOEC staff will continue with the procedures that have worked in the past. Mr. Dufrechou stated that he takes complete responsibility and apologizes for any complaints Commissioners may have received.

Mr. Dufrechou then showed two pictures from two separate accidents that occurred on Sunday, January 8, 2017 on the Northbound span. He explained that one of the accidents took place at the 13.7 mile marker and the other occurred at the 11.8 mile marker. He reported that both accidents consisted of four vehicles.

Mr. Dufrechou then showed a diagram of crashes that occurred in 2016. He stated that there were 193 total crashes in that year. He explained the dots represent the location of crashes and are color coded by month. He pointed out the locations of the proposed safety bays and explained that if the safety bays existed, they would have helped in those crashes. Mr. Dufrechou also observed that this diagram confirms Chief Congemi's observation that crashes are not confined to one area.

On the broken Lockbar Socket on the Bascule, Mr. Dufrechou recommended approval for emergency repairs. **On motion by Mr. Fitzmorris, seconded by Mr. Williams, On January 5, 2017, the lockbar guide socket on the left lane of the Northbound Bascule broke necessitating the emergency procurement of repairs due to the imminent threat to the public health, welfare, safety, or public property. The GNOEC attempted to obtain four**

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— **written quotations for the repair work from contractors who have expertise in repair of movable bridges and the Causeway specifically. Three responses were received. Two contractors were unable to perform the work immediately. The third response from Boh Brothers Construction Co., L.L.C. was determined, after review and discussion, to be reasonable and the contractor was selected to perform the work. Accordingly, the selection of Boh Brothers Construction Co., L.L.C. to perform the repairs of the lockbar guide socket in the amount of \$62,500.00 is hereby ratified. Additionally, the General Manager is hereby authorized to execute a contract with Boh Brothers for the repairs of the lockbar guide socket in the amount of \$62,500.00 under the terms set forth in their January 6, 2017 quotation. Mr. Ligi, Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Romig, Mr. Williams and Mr. Fitzmorris voted in favor of the motion.**

— **On the North and South Marine Crossing, Mr. Dufrechou recommended approval to execute a contract with Boh Brothers Construction Company. On motion by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. LaSalle, two bids were received on December 20, 2016 for Project No. 422 – Resurface Pavement at North and South Marine Crossings. Based upon recommendations of the Consulting Engineer and Legal Counsel, the GNOEC authorizes the General Manager to follow the procedures outlined in Title 38 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes and execute a contract with the lowest responsible and responsive bidder, Boh Brothers Construction, L.L.C. in the amount of \$491,895.30. Mr. Ligi, Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Romig, Mr. Williams and Mr. Fitzmorris voted in favor of the motion.**

— **On the Relocation of Generator and Fuel Station, Mr. Dufrechou recommended approval to execute a contract with ARC Mechanical Contractors. On motion by Mr. Romig, seconded**

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by Mr. Fitzmorris, Three bids were received on January 17, 2017 for Project No. 822 – Relocation of Generator and Fuel Station. Based upon recommendations of the Consulting Engineer and Legal Counsel, the GNOEC authorizes the General Manager to follow the procedures outlined in Title 38 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes and execute a contract with the lowest responsible and responsive bidder, ARC Mechanical Contractors in the amount of \$415,000.00. Mr. Ligi, Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Romig, Mr. Williams and Mr. Fitzmorris voted in favor of the motion.

Mr. Ligi stated it was time for the election of officers. On a motion by Mr. Romig, seconded by Mr. Ligi, Mr. Shelby LaSalle was nominated as Chairman. Mr. Ligi confirmed that no one opposed the Chairman nomination. Mr. Ligi, Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Romig, Mr. Williams and Mr. Fitzmorris voted in favor of the motion.

On a motion by Mr. Romig, seconded by Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Anthony Ligi was nominated as Vice Chairman. Mr. Ligi confirmed that no one opposed the nomination. Mr. Ligi, Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Romig, Mr. Williams and Mr. Fitzmorris voted in favor of the motion.

On a motion by Mr. LaSalle, seconded by Mr. Ligi, Mr. Stephen Romig was nominated as Treasurer. Mr. Ligi confirmed that no one opposed the nomination. Mr. Ligi, Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Romig, Mr. Williams and Mr. Fitzmorris voted in favor of the motion.

On a motion by Mr. Romig, seconded by Mr. Ligi, Mr. Patrick Fitzmorris was nominated as Secretary. Mr. Ligi confirmed that no one opposed the nomination. Mr. Ligi, Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Romig, Mr. Williams and Mr. Fitzmorris voted in favor of the motion.

On a motion by Mr. Romig, seconded by Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Lindsey Williams was nominated as Assistant Secretary / Treasurer. Mr. Ligi confirmed that no one opposed

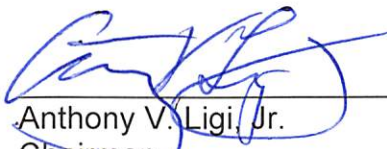


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the nomination. Mr. Ligi, Mr. LaSalle, Mr. Romig, Mr. Williams and Mr. Fitzmorris voted in favor of the motion.

Mr. Ligi reminded everyone the next meeting is tentatively scheduled March 8, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. at the VOA building on the South Shore.

There being no further business, the meeting was be adjourned.

  
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Anthony V. Ligi, Jr.  
Chairman

  
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Stephen G. Romig  
Secretary