

PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREATER NEW ORLEANS EXPRESSWAY COMMISSION HELD ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2011, AT 10:00 A.M., IN THE GNOEC CONFERENCE ROOM, VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA BUILDING, 3939 NORTH CAUSEWAY BOULEVARD, SUITE 400, METAIRIE, LA

PRESENT: Lawrence K. Katz, Chairman; Lawrence M. Rase, Vice Chairman; Stephen G. Romig, Treasurer; Peter F. Egan, Secretary; Michael R. Lorino, Jr., Assistant Secretary Treasurer

OTHERS: Carlton Dufrechou; Debbie Lopreore; Cheryl H. Lambert; Chief Nick Congemi; Melissa M. Phillpott; Perry Daigrepoint; Stacie Heffker; Cpl. Billy Jones; Cary Bourgeois, Stephen Spohrer & Shelby LaSalle, Jr., GEC, Inc.; Bill Becknell, The Becknell Law Firm; Burgess McCranie, McCranie, Campbell, Sistrunk, Anzelmo, Hardy, McDaniel & Welch; Patrice McNeal, Chase Bank; James Lynch, Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management; Andrea Calvin, Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation; Steve Bowes, Sisung Investment Services; Franklin Kyle, Kyle Associates; Fred Robertson; Polly Greene, St. Tammany Farmer

Mr. Katz, as Vice Chairman, called the meeting to order. Election of Officers was moved to the end of the meeting.

On motion by Lorino, seconded by Romig, the minutes of the regular meeting held on November 8, 2011 were accepted as written. Mr. Katz, Mr. Rase, Mr. Romig, Mr. Lorino and Mr. Egan voted in favor of the motion.

On behalf of the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation, Dr. Calvin reported that during November, of the fifty water quality samples taken, forty-eight samples (96%) met primary recreation criteria. She stated there was one exceeding on the South Shore at Bayou St. John and one on the North Shore at Bogue Falaya Park.

On behalf of the Causeway Police Charitable Foundation, Chief Congemi stated the Foundation provided toys and gifts for the Southeast Hospital last week, which was a moving and rewarding experience for everyone.

Mr. Dufrechou reported during November there were seventeen vessel openings, one pin motor incident, one drive fault incident and three test openings at the drawbridge. With respect to fog

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operations, he reported the bridge was closed because of poor visibility for about an hour and one-half on the morning of Sunday, November 20, and again that evening. He stated on the afternoon of Monday, November 21, the bridge was closed about twenty minutes around 4:00 p.m. Mr. Dufrechou reported Police and MAP personnel responded to 346 breakdowns on the Causeway Bridge and 32 breakdowns on the Huey P. Long Bridge.

Mr. Dufrechou stated on December 5, the Corps of Engineers made the lane change reducing the at-grade level roadway from three lanes to two lanes exiting the southbound bridge to 6th Street. He stated there have been delays daily, with the worst backup being seven miles onto the bridge causing a twenty-five minute delay. He stated the average delay is about fifteen to twenty minutes, except for today because of fog conditions. Mr. Dufrechou stated Jefferson Parish has agreed to allow the 6th Street signal light to be manually operated during morning rush hour traffic. Mr. Rase asked if they start at 6:00 a.m. Mr. Dufrechou replied yes, adding that Jefferson was starting at 8:00 a.m., yesterday Causeway police started at 7:00 a.m. and today it was delayed because of the fog. He stated they intend to start at 6:00 a.m. before the Lakeway traffic builds up, which is around 7:30 - 8:15 a.m. He added Jefferson Parish is also trying to adjust the timing of the 6th Street light that goes into the Lakeway buildings because traffic is stacking up to Causeway Boulevard. Mr. Katz asked about having officers direct traffic at the light going into Lakeway. Chief Congemi stated the light is being analyzed by Jefferson Parish because of the backup, adding he will look into it to see if a solution has been reached. Chief Congemi mentioned there was a malfunction of the light yesterday. Mr. Rase stated he has received calls on the North Shore saying the typical backup is five miles and fifteen minute delay. Mr. Rase stated with the Causeway Police now controlling the light there should be an improvement. Mr. Dufrechou agreed but added Jefferson Parish did not want to

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manually operate the light until the Lakeway traffic got in. He stated he, Mrs. Lopreore and Chief Congemi talked about it and it is the right thing to do. Mr. Dufrechou stated the bottom line is there were three lanes, but one has been lost, so basically a third of the traffic capacity has been lost. He added the traffic model from a year ago is right on target. Mr. Lorino pointed out everyone from the North Shore knows the construction is going on and there are lots of ways to get the information out. Mr. Lorino stated he thinks it would be better if the Causeway could get the information out so the people driving will know they have a specific time delay and adjust their schedules accordingly instead of leaving home at the usual time but arriving at work late. Mr. Dufrechou stated press releases were done before this lane change took place and e-mails were sent to more than 8,500 commuters on two occasions providing information about potential delays; traffic alerts and advisories are also sent. Mr. Lorino stated he has seen the television news stations mention the situation, adding he knows these are the types of things the media will be happy to do for the Causeway at no cost. Mr. Dufrechou stated the television media and WWL radio have given the advisories. Mr. Dufrechou stated during the first few days there were a few complaints but since then they have decreased. Mr. Lorino asked Chief Congemi what the criteria are for closing the bridge during fog. Chief Congemi replied when visibility is approximately less than 100 feet. Mr. Lorino asked if it is the police officer who makes that call and for rolling convoys. Chief Congemi replied yes, adding the officers are very diligent and concerned about conditions on the bridge. He mentioned calls received about the weather being clear on one end of the bridge but there is fog in the middle. Chief Congemi stated there will be people who will drive into a fog bank and slam on their brakes causing someone to run into them. Chief Congemi stated the whole objective and goal of the convoys is actually to slow traffic down and minimize damage. Mr. Lorino

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asked if the Causeway police take into consideration the time of day, morning or afternoon, for the 100 feet or is it steadfast that at 100 feet the bridge is shut down. Chief Congemi replied at 100 feet they have to shut down, adding it all depends on the distance of the fog - if it is something like 50 feet or so - then they could be a little more cautious, but if there are fog banks out there it has to be shut down. In response to Mr. Katz's inquiry as to how long there will be only two lanes, Mr. Dufrechou stated it should be until the end of February or early March. Mr. Bourgeois stated ninety days.

On the North Channel Emergency Span Motors project, Mr. Dufrechou reported the wiring was completed for both backup generators last week; the job is completed and there should be a final closeout next month.

On the Bridge Modifications Hurricane Protection Work project, Mr. Dufrechou stated to date the Causeway has advanced more than \$2 million for the work associated with the project. He stated a letter was received from the State of Louisiana, Corps of Engineers, approving \$64,000 of reimbursement for Causeway expenditures.

With regard to the North Channel Bascule Trunnion Bearing Maintenance project, Mr. Dufrechou stated the trunnion fabricated should be replaced in January. Mr. Dufrechou stated a plan change for emergency repairs at Skipper Drive was estimated at \$35,000 but the job came in much lower at \$14,801.15.

Mr. Dufrechou stated the VMS/Call Box/HIL System Migration project was completed yesterday and should close out next month.

Mr. Dufrechou stated the Resurface Pavement South Marine Crossing project is on hold and will reconsider rebidding in the spring.

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On the Florida Triangle Turning Lanes West Causeway project, Mr. Dufrechou stated six bids were received but all exceeded the estimated construction cost. He stated if the Commission agrees, the bids will be rejected and the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Mandeville and St. Tammany will be terminated.

On the Fiber Optic/Cable Tray Lease RFP project, Mr. Dufrechou stated they are considering going out with an RFP again in the spring.

Mr. Dufrechou reported on the Hurricanes Katrina/Rita Emergency Relief the emergency repairs are approximately \$5.4 million in projects. Mr. Dufrechou stated the Causeway is doing all the engineering and asked about the schedule by the State or Feds. Mr. Bourgeois stated the Causeway is first trying to use the TEA-21 and discretionary funds. Mr. Bourgeois stated the engineers are working on the environmental portion. Mr. Dufrechou stated it would be 100% federal on the hurricane emergency repair projects.

Mr. Dufrechou stated, with respect to the TEA-21 funds mentioned by Mr. Bourgeois, they include the addition of a fifth lane at the North Toll Plaza. He added they anticipate bidding by LA DOTD in February 2012.

Mr. Dufrechou stated the Discretionary Bridge Program includes the South Channel Fender Repair, Bascule Control System and Piling Encapsulation. He stated bidding is anticipated by LA DOTD in the second quarter of 2012.

Mr. Dufrechou presented Change Order No. 3 for the North Channel Bascule Trunnion Bearing Maintenance, which authorizes revising the total project to \$348,801.15, and recommended consideration by the Commission. **On motion by Egan, seconded by Rase, based upon the recommendation of the Staff and its Consulting Engineers, the Commission accepted Plan**

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Change No. 3 for the North Channel Bascule Trunnion Bearing Maintenance project. Plan Change No. 3 provides for emergency repairs to the culvert on West Causeway Approach at Skipper Drive in the amount of \$14,801.15. The General Manager is hereby authorized to complete the execution of Plan Change No. 3 with Boh Brothers Construction Co., LLC. Mr. Katz, Mr. Rase, Mr. Romig, Mr. Lorino and Mr. Egan voted in favor of the motion.

In regard to the Turning Lanes at the Triangle on West Causeway Approach, Project No. 630, the following resolution was made on motion by Romig, seconded by Lorino:

WHEREAS, the Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission ("GNOEC"), the City of Mandeville and the Parish of St. Tammany entered into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (the "Agreement") for proposed construction of the Turning Lanes at the Triangle on West Causeway Approach, GNOEC Project No. 630 (the "Project") limiting their total participation to \$130,000.00;

WHEREAS, the Project was put out to bid, the lowest bid being \$217,000.00;

WHEREAS, the GNOEC, the City of Mandeville and the Parish of St. Tammany have declared they will not participate in the Project as the bids exceeded their agreed to contributions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission that all bids submitted for the Project are hereby rejected and the General Manager should notify all bid participants of this action.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the participation by the GNOEC in the Agreement is hereby terminated and the GNOEC shall have no further responsibility under the Agreement.

Mr. Katz, Mr. Rase, Mr. Romig, Mr. Lorino and Mr. Egan voted in favor of the motion.

Mr. Dufrechou stated Chief Congemi has Corporal Billy Jones, who is the Evidence Officer of the department, in the meeting today. Chief Congemi stated he thinks routinely police officers are seen on the road and people do not really get a good perspective of who they are and what they are involved in, adding he wants to introduce everyone to Cpl. Billy Jones. Chief Congemi stated Cpl.

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Jones has really stood out in the police department and has taken on a lot of responsibility. He stated sometimes people see things operating in the police department and think these things are routine but there is a lot of work that is done in the background to make those things possible. Chief Congemi stated Cpl. Jones has always stepped up and volunteered to do these things and did not have to be forced; that is the kind of dedication, drive and commitment to law enforcement where Cpl. Jones wants to make things a little better for everyone. He stated Cpl. Jones is a registered firearms instructor and is the one who is responsible for ensuring that the officers are qualified every year, which is required by State law. Chief Congemi stated in addition to that, Cpl. Jones is the training coordinator for all training that comes through the department; he ensures that everyone is there in a timely fashion and records all of that for law purposes should the officers get involved in any type of litigation - that they are all certified. Chief Congemi stated Cpl. Jones is also responsible for all of the evidence; he is the evidence custodian. Chief Congemi stated this police department for some reason takes in a lot of evidence and with that evidence Cpl. Jones is required by law to keep it in tact and make sure it is protected for the Court's purpose; he also files the evidence with the various courts on the North and South Shores. He stated Cpl. Jones has to present all of the department's criminal charges, traffic citations and things like that to the various courts. Chief Congemi stated he just wanted to take this opportunity to introduce Cpl. Jones because he is an outstanding young man and a great family man. Chief Congemi stated, in addition, Cpl. Jones has another heavy equipment business on the side so he stays quite busy. Mr. Dufrechou pointed out Cpl. Jones' utility belt weighs about thirty pounds. He added they are proud of him and glad he is helping out.

Mr. Rase stated he has one question that they talked about yesterday to get with Mr. LaSalle, adding

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he had a call just last week giving him the dates that he had given them that it would be completed. Mr. Rase asked when will that job actually be done. Mr. LaSalle stated the plans will be complete some time next week but it has kind of been put back on LA DOTD. Mr. LaSalle stated as they recall this is a project that is going to be designed and bid by St. Tammany Parish; they have prepared those documents in that format. He stated subsequently to that the Parish funds were depleted and will be done under Federal Urban Assistance Fund through RPC. Mr. LaSalle stated they are reformatting those documents so that DOTD can bid it and utilize those funds instead of the Parish. Mr. Rase asked when do they think it might get started. Mr. LaSalle stated he would have to discuss that with DOTD. Mr. Rase asked that at the next meeting they should talk about it. Mr. Rase asked Mr. Dufrechou if the Causeway has done its part - paid for the design, environment and all that. Mr. Dufrechou replied that is his understanding. Mr. Dufrechou asked Mr. LaSalle if this is going to be let by DOTD. Mr. LaSalle replied, yes, not by the Parish. Mr. Dufrechou asked Mr. LaSalle to let him and Mr. Rase know when he finds out. Mr. Rase asked Mr. LaSalle to let them all know.

Mr. Dufrechou showed a video of the seven-mile traffic backup on the bridge last Thursday.

Mr. Dufrechou showed a photo of those attending the Southeast Hospital Christmas party.

Mr. Katz stated some of the Commissioners have conflicts with meeting on Tuesdays so they would like to have the regular monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of each month instead. **Because of the New Year holiday, the January meeting will be rescheduled to Wednesday, January 11, 2012, at 10:00 a.m. Thereafter, the regular monthly meetings will be on the first Wednesday of each month.** The appropriate notices will be distributed and published.

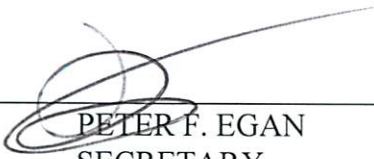
Mr. Katz called for Election of Officers. **On motion by Rase, seconded by Lorino, the following**

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nominations were made: Mr. Katz, Chairman; Mr. Rase, Vice Chairman; Mr. Egan, Secretary; Mr. Romig, Treasurer; Mr. Lorino, Assistant Secretary Treasurer. There being no further nominations, the election of officers carried as presented. Mr. Katz, Mr. Rase, Mr. Romig, Mr. Lorino and Mr. Egan voted in favor of the motion.

Mr. Katz wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday Season. Mr. Katz thanked Mr. Dufrechou, Mrs. Lopreore, Mrs. Lambert, Chief Congemi and staff for making the Commission's job easy, adding on behalf of the other Commissioners, they are proud to be associated with them and all employees of the GNOEC. Mr. Dufrechou stated on behalf of the staff he will say they are delighted to be working with the Commission and the public.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



PETER F. EGAN
SECRETARY



LAWRENCE K. KATZ
CHAIRMAN