

**RESTORE LOUISIANA TASK FORCE**

**January 12, 2018**

**Louisiana State Capitol  
House Committee Room 1  
900 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802**

*Approved*

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**Ms. Durbin** called the meeting to order at 9:33 AM.

**Mr. Durbin:** It's a good, cold welcome that I give to all of you today. I had forgotten how cold it is around this State Capitol building. The winds are coming from the northwest, and the degrees in my truck was 38, and it's a wind chill of 30. How are you, Governor? My welcome statement is going to be brief because I know this gentleman's time is tight. So I will ask the clerk to call roll, please.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Jimmy Durbin  
Mr. Michael Faulk  
Mr. Adam Knapp  
Mayor Dave Norris  
Mr. Michael Olivier  
Mr. Sean Reilly  
Dr. James Richardson  
Mayor-President Joel Robideaux  
Commissioner Mike Strain

**TASK FORCE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Mr. Johnny Bradberry  
Mr. Randy Cloutre (non-voting, ex-officio)  
Mr. Roland Dartez  
Mr. John Gallagher  
Senator Dan "Blade" Morrish  
Mr. Don Pierson  
Representative Rob Shadoin  
Mayor Ollie Tyler  
Dr. Shawn Wilson  
Ms. Jacqui Vines Wyatt

**Ms. Dupont:** Sir Chair, 9 members are present. We do not have a quorum.

**LET THE RECORD SHOW THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS ARRIVED AFTER THE ROLL CALL:**

Mr. Darryl Gissel  
Representative Edward "Ted" James  
Representative J. Rogers Pope

**SUPPORTING STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Pat Forbes, Executive Director, Office of Community Development  
Stacy Bonnaffons, Office of Community Development  
Nick Speyrer, Emergent  
Nicole Sweazy, Louisiana Housing Corporation  
Marvin McGraw, Office of Community Development  
Skip Smart, Louisiana Economic Development  
Robert Bizot, Louisiana Housing Corporation  
Pat Santos, Office of Community Development  
Shauna Sanford, Office of the Governor  
Jeff Haley, Office of Community Development  
Casey Tingle, Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management  
Madhu Beriwal, IEM  
Jon Mabry, IEM  
LaSonta Davenport, Office of Community Development  
Lori Dupont, Office of Community Development  
DeJa Smith, Office of Community Development

### III. CHAIRPERSON OPENING REMARKS

~ Jimmy Durbin, Restore Louisiana Task Force Co-Chair

**Mr. Durbin:** Thank you, and item three is approval of the minutes. And since there's no quorum, we will not have an action item there. My opening remarks as Chairperson is next, and I have this to say. We welcome to this meeting today one of the hardest working, if not the hardest working, Governor in the United States of America. We are certainly pleased and happy that he is here, and it is my great honor, speaking on behalf of myself and the committee, to introduce to take the witness stand or the presentation stand. The Governor of the state of Louisiana, the honorable John Bell Edwards. Thank you, Governor.

### IV. GOVERNOR JOHN BEL EDWARDS ADDRESS

**Governor Edwards:** It's a pleasure to be with all of you this morning and talk about how cold it is. My next meeting, I'm afraid, is outdoors. It's over at the Water Institute. I'm trying to see if we can move that indoors or I have to go and do a wardrobe change, I think. Thank you very much for your work and for being here today. And Happy New Year to all of you, and I appreciate the invitation to speak today. And just to remind you of something I know that you're aware of, but the work that you're doing is incredibly important for our state and for thousands of families across the state. Whose lives were upended by the floods in March and in August of 2016 and many of whom have not fully up righted themselves. And so, we have a lot of work to do. But I want to thank you for your service and assure you that what you're doing really is making a positive difference. And while we're making real progress, I think we can agree that it isn't enough. It isn't fast enough and that people are still suffering. And having said that though, it is also true that by just about every relevant metric, we are moving faster than any other home building recovery effort in our nation's history. That's true, and it's recognized by the folks at HUD, it's recognized by folks across the country. And as a result, when these disasters hit, as they do too often around the country, folks reach out to us in Louisiana. Because unfortunately, we have too much experience in dealing with this, but when you need to drop on that experiences, it's a good thing to have. But we're still very much in the middle of the recovery. And we've got a lot of work to do because homeowners, many of them have been able to return to their homes, too many have not. And that's what motivates all of us to keep fighting, to improve the process, to get it done faster, and to make sure that we get the additional federal recovery dollars and other assistance that we need to move this program to completion. And you're aware of the numbers, but sometimes it's helpful as time goes by to take a look at them again, just to see how large scale this disaster or these disasters were. More than 112,000 homeowners were impacted by the March and August 16th floods. 51 of our 64 parishes received federal disaster declarations. You know that we requested a little more than \$3.7 billion from Congress to fund our long term recovery efforts. And to date, we have received about \$1.7 billion. Of that number, 1.3 is dedicated to help homeowners rebuild and reimburse them for the work that they've already done and paid for out of their own pockets. The program launched in the spring of 2017, when the first allocation of funds became available to the state. In fact, we issued checks and started working on homes less than two months after that. A truly remarkable feat, given all of the hoops and hurdles that you have to go through and over to access and spend federal recovery dollars. It's important to understand also that the disaster recovery funding we received from Congress was appropriated through Housing and Urban Development. And as you know, they have very specific requirements. We didn't have the option of just paying people for their loss and tell them to go figure it out for themselves. We have to rebuild or repair flood damaged homes. And so that takes more time. You have to set up a very specific process that meets all of their requirements. And as you know, low to moderate income homeowners with disabled or elderly members were invited to participate in the initial phases. Because we were required to, and by the way, we should have prioritized those particular homeowners. But that list was progressively expanded to help a wider range of homeowners. And as of last month, all eligible families have been invited to apply. Today more than 47,000 homeowners have completed the program survey and more than 39,000 of those qualify for assistance. Nearly all of those who qualify have now been invited. More than 22,000 homeowners have completed the formal application, and to date, the Homeowner Assistance Program has awarded more than \$144 million to 5,000 homeowners, and awards are being made to homeowners under solutions 1, 2, and 3. Despite this significant progress, we're working to speed up the process to assist homeowners. We cannot rest, we can't be satisfied. We have in fact hired additional damage assessors, who are continuing to work with HUD and other federal agencies to further streamline the processes. So that we can move more quickly and get these precious dollars into the hands of our citizens who need it and who deserve it. We have some good news on the duplication of benefits issue regarding small business administration loans. I, along with the Office of Community Development, and as you know, we've been working with this task force. But also with HUD and the Small Business Administration, and certainly our congressional delegation, to address this issue for over a year. It is the single largest barrier to the help and relief that many homeowners need. And it seems to be the single largest source of frustration for these homeowners. We all know that a loan is different from a grant.

And we would like to see this duplication of benefits issue addressed. So that homeowners are not penalized, in terms of the assistance they may receive, from the Restore program. Especially for approval for loans that they never accessed. That is not a benefit received. And in fact, that we have some positive news. The US House of Representatives recently passed an \$81 billion disaster recovery bill, that includes a proposed change to the existing guidelines regarding how Small Business Administration loans are considered a duplication of benefits for grant programs. And I want to thank our congressional delegation, all of them, but especially Congressman Grace, Congressman Grisham, Congressman Scalise, for their work on this. Because they've advanced this legislation. Now, we need to understand, it's not all the way through the process. It's critically important that this language be preserved. And that the Senate actually move it to completion and that it gets to the President's desk. And even then, it's not an automatic waiver of the duplication to benefits prohibition. It allows the President to waive that language in a specific instance as it relates to particular disasters. But it is a positive step in the right direction. If this is finalized, some homeowners who have not yet been able to receive assistance because they don't qualify, will, in fact, be able to receive assistance. Others who have received assistance may be eligible for more assistance. And so we will go back and very quickly run the numbers again. And make sure that they can fully benefit from this change in the law. But we should also be mindful that if that current language remains intact and the President issues the waiver that we want him to issue, it will visit additional costs upon the program because we then have thousands of homeowners who qualify who didn't qualify before. We estimate now that it's about \$400 million more to take care of the homeowners who will qualify. And so we would be working with our congressional delegation to make sure that we receive that funding. Also included in that same bill, that \$81 billion instrument that I spoke of a while ago, is additional money for disaster mitigation money that would be earmarked for flood prevention and US Army Corps of Engineers projects. For Louisiana, we would gain an additional up to \$600 million for resiliency for infrastructure enhancements. And if you will remember, at the very earliest request that we made to the administration and to Congress after the disaster, we asked for \$600 million for that. So this is a very positive move as well. And even though the language in the bill talks about hazard mitigation, it's not hazard mitigation grant program dollars that would come through FEMA. It is, in fact, additional community development block grant funding for hazard mitigation that would come through HUD. And so we are excited about that. And it would, obviously, give us more resources and more flexibility to look at watershed management and reduce flood risk projects. Including, potentially, the Comite River diversion project here in East Baton Rouge Parish. We continue to work with our congressional delegation to ensure that Louisiana receives additional funds as they look at appropriations for the Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, and other states that have experienced disasters more recently than we have. And we're going to look at obtaining funding to protect the investments that we've already made and/or going to continue to make in this recovery, Investments of infrastructure that will reduce the likelihood of these floods impacting our citizens again. As you know, this month Restore will resume and enhance outreach activities by holding events in flood impacted communities across the state to help homeowners complete their applications. What's not always mentioned is how many rental homes were affected by the floods. The issue there, of course, is that the resident doesn't own the home. Another part of the Restore program, therefore, is designed to help rental property owners, both large and small, to replenish the supply of available, affordable rental homes. And they were in short supply before the disaster ever hit. Last year, you approved a resolution to redirect \$22.5 million in unallocated funds from the Multifamily Restoration Loan Program. Of that amount, 4.8 million went to the neighborhood landlord program and \$17.7 million into a new piggyback program. Both the piggyback and the neighborhood landlord programs aim to provide affordable housing units to low and moderate income families. Restore also offers assistance to small business owners who are integral to our recovery, and to our local and state economies. When the small business loan program is done, we expect that more than \$28 million will have been awarded to help approximately 450 flood impacted small businesses across the state. And there's still time for small businesses to apply. And we encourage them to do so with the help of lenders statewide. We have a strong outreach program to reach as many of them as possible. The program is even more attractive than it was before because the forgiveness portion of the loans has been increased to 40%. And so small business owners need to be aware of that. And if they would benefit, they need to apply. And those loans amounts can arrange from as little as \$10,000 to as much as \$150,000. And largely because of the efforts of Commissioner Mike Strain, Restore is also providing \$10 million to over a thousand farmers across the state who lost crops as a result of the flooding in 2016. Because farmers, too, are business people. Those are businesses out there. And as you know, farmers produce some of life's most essential needs. And Louisiana's agriculture industry is pivotal to the success of our state. So in closing, I just want to tell you again how much I appreciate your service to the people of Louisiana in guiding this recovery effort. I know that it has not been easy, it is not easy, it will not be easy. I know that there is still a lot of work to do. But we're making real progress. And I'm committed to making the work faster and better. And so I want to thank you and I want to thank all folks at the Office of Community Development led by Pat Forbes. All of the folks at IEM and the other contractors and employees who are out there working so hard. It really is a team effort. And we are committed to making this process work better and faster. And bringing all the resources to bear that are necessary to effect a full of recovery for all of the affected homeowners who are eligible, or who may become eligible because of changes. So with that, Mr.

Chairman, I want to thank you, again, for the opportunity to meet with you all today. And wish you a very happy and prosperous new year, both for yourselves and your families, but also for the state of Louisiana.

**Mr. Durbin:** Thank you very much, Governor Edwards, we appreciate everything you do and we know you have a tight schedule. But we want to assure you as a committee that when additional moneys come forward from Congress we will act with haste to approve the spending plan. And when any modifications are necessary we will quickly act to make those modifications.

**Governor Edwards:** Well, and that would be a continuation of what you've already done because, many people don't know this, but the state action plans were submitted in record time after this disaster. It's never been done faster, it's never been done better, but it's a result of this task force. And so I want to thank all of you for your work on that.

**Mr. Durbin:** Thank you, happy new year, Governor.

**Governor Edwards:** Thank you.

## **V. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 27, 2017 MEETING MINUTES**

**Mr. Reilly:** Motion.

**Commissioner Strain:** Second.

**Mr. Durbin:** Motion has been made to approve the minutes, we have a second. All in favor say aye.

**All Members:** Aye.

**Mr. Durbin:** Any opposition? There being none, the minutes have been approved.

## **VI. LOUISIANA OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE ~ Patrick Forbes, Executive Director, LA Office of Community Development**

**Mr. Durbin:** Moving forward we ask the Executive Director of Community Development Pat Forbes to come and give us, an update. Thank you, Mr. Forbes. Thank you for all your hard work.

**Mr. Forbes:** Thank you, first I want to thank the members of the task force and the audience for braving the weather to get here today. I know just walking from my office was fairly miserable and some of you came a long way, thank you. It is tough following the Governor, but I'm going to do the best that I can.

**Mr. Forbes immediately began his PowerPoint presentation.**

**Mr. Durbin allowed questions during the presentation, therefore the floor was never officially opened for questions.**

**Mr. Faulk:** I have a question. When you do the outreach events and all, I think it would be helpful not only for the members of the task force, but for people to know the attendance at your outreach events. And I'm talking about a cumulative attendance, because you've been to many of these communities before, so I'd like to kind of have the perspective of the response in individual communities from people to the outreach efforts.

**Mr. Forbes:** Mr. Nick Spreyer runs the outreach for the Restore homeowner program, and I'm going to have him talk a little about that.

**Mr. Spreyer:** Yeah, I'll pull the exact data for you. The last I looked, we had participated in over 160 outreach events since we got started in early May. I'd say about 50 of those were events we hosted. The rest were events other community organizations, non-profits, churches hosted, and asked us to attend. Anecdotally, I will say the three events we had this week we had right at 100 folks show up at Eden Park Library on Tuesday. We were a little south of that, around 90, in Denham Springs on Wednesday. And then we're probably closer to 70 yesterday in the southern end of Livingston Parish. And certainly we see bigger numbers where there's higher populations of individuals that were impacted, so we don't go exclusively there. So I can pull up a cumulative number, but we're talking tens of thousands of homeowners we've had the opportunity to connect with at these series of outreach events we've either hosted ourselves or participated in.

**Mr. Faulk:** Well, I think next time we have a report-

**Mr. Spreyer:** I'll do that.

**Mr. Faulk:** That as a result of these, how many people have shown up, we made contact with. I

think it helps put a perspective on it.

**Mr. Forbes:** Thank you. We'll do that. In fact, we can send that to you before the next meeting. We'll send that information out. Thank you.

**Mr. Olivier:** Additional inspection firms were hired. How's that going? How many were hired? And how's that going?

**Mr. Forbes:** We put the RFP out with the number that we could choose at our discretion. We chose two, The Workforce Group and Hunt, Guillot & Associates. The Workforce Group had already been working through another contract, so they were already ramped up. Hunt, Guillot & Associates is in the process of ramping up. We expected to have an additional hundred inspectors in the field through that process. And it's going well. Quality has been improving since we started, which we would always expect, but we gotta drive it faster and faster. But the ramp up is going well. We're not at a 100% production with all of those new groups yet.

**Mr. Olivier:** So the ones that, so Hunt, Guillot is one of them?

**Mr. Forbes:** Yes, sir.

**Mr. Olivier:** They've not started?

**Mr. Forbes:** They have started, they're just not fully staffed at this point.

**Mr. Olivier:** And the other one's, Work Place has already started, right?

**Mr. Forbes:** Yes, sir.

**Mr. Olivier:** How are they doing in terms of their, the numbers that they do? How many re-dos do we have?

**Mr. Forbes:** Quite well. Their quality is good, the quality from our other inspections has improved up to the point where they're all about the same. And so that's huge in terms of not having to send people back to people's houses, as you might well guess.

**Mr. Olivier:** Okay, so this is not one of the choke spots in the process?

**Mr. Forbes:** It is certainly in the critical path. Getting all the inspections done quickly is certainly in the critical path.

I would not call it a choke point at this point because synchronizing each of the different pieces of this that are happening concurrently is also critical. At the same time that we assign and have those inspections done, we are also doing verification of benefits and all the other pieces that are necessary. And then those pieces all have to come together. So that synchronization is equally important to getting damage assessments done and verification of benefits. I would not call it a choke point, but it's absolutely on the critical path.

**Mr. Olivier:** So if you have two that are engaged as a potential hire, three or four to make it even more efficient?

**Mr. Forbes:** Yes, sir. We felt like we picked the firms who responded that were the most qualified. And I think that we've got the right numbers with the three firms. IEM, HGA, and the Workforce Group. I think that we've got the right numbers in the field to do this. And it appears that we are getting the quality that we need out of them. And so at this point, I would say we're not considering adding more. But it's certainly not, we left the RFP open so that we could go add somebody else who proposed before without going through the whole process again.

**Mr. Olivier:** Thank you.

**Mr. Durbin:** Proceed.

**Mr. Forbes continues his PowerPoint presentation.**

**Mayor Norris:** Before you started in what you're talking about right now, you kind of gave some timelines. And it got past me before I could realize what you were saying as far completing this and completing that and all. Would you do that again?

**Mr. Forbes:** Yes, sir, I'm sorry. It's probably the most important thing I'll say today and I gave it short shrift. I apologize for that. What I said was, with our current and ramping up damage assessment rates, we expect to be done with those damage assessments sometime in May. And with the 200 awards per day, 1,000 per week that we're shooting for in January and forward, we would expect sometime August to be through with all awards. Of course, on solution two where people are using their own contractor, it's between them and their contractor as to how fast that work occurs. But we would expect the vast majority of construction to be done before the end of the year.

**Mayor Norris:** That's kind of amazing, or maybe I'm just underestimating how fast we were going.

**Mr. Forbes:** Compared to some other home rebuilding programs, it is amazing. It's not amazing if you're out of your house obviously and you're waiting until this coming December to get back into your home. And so that's what we wake up and think about every day. But it will be extremely fast compared to other home rebuilding programs around the country including those in New York and New Jersey from Sandy.

**Mayor Norris:** I think that's worthy of more consideration or more publicity or more something on your behalf and for your organization's behalf to highlight that. I think some of the rebuilding in New Jersey and New York's still going on and may go on forever.

**Mr. Forbes:** But I don't know about forever because HUD's going to quit letting them spend. But they are indeed in New York, I think, just starting a program to rebuild the last 5,000 of their 12,000 total homes that they were charged with rebuilding. And we expect to do our 25, 30, 40 by the end of the year.

**Mayor Norris:** I think you ought to publicize that. Not that you're patting yourself on the back, but that gives a lot of hope to people, or it certainly reduces the amount of criticism that some people have made at the slow pace.

**Mr. Forbes:** I'll hope for that with you, sir.

**Dr. Richardson:** Pat, when you said completed by December, you mean construction will be completed, too, or just your process?

**Mr. Forbes:** No, sir, our process in terms of awards, we expect to be done sometime in August or close to that. And so with that, of course, we can control the solution one contractors and how fast they get out there. They have 120 day max limit to get that job done. So we're looking for most of the construction to be done by the end of the year. Again, when we talk about solution two and folks are using their own contractors, I know I talked to a friend of mine who has been waiting because she wanted her contractor to do the work and he's been busy. So she's not accessing the program, but nonetheless, she wanted that particular contractor. So some folks will be behind that, certainly.

**Dr. Richardson:** Okay, and how many people are using the solution one versus solution two?

**Mr. Forbes:** Right now it's about 10 to 12% are taking solution one. It was higher than that, and I think I'm right on that number. Is that accurate? Yeah, 10 to 12% are in solution one right now.

**Dr. Richardson:** So most of them are in solution two.

**Mr. Forbes:** Yes, sir.

**Dr. Richardson:** Or I think you said there was a third, "do it yourself" type of possibilities.

**Mr. Forbes:** Yes, sir, we have seen the whole gamut. We've seen folks who submitted their survey and said they would like to do solution two and have changed their minds since then. Having trouble finding a contractor and decided they didn't want to go through that trouble and switch to solution one. We've had some folks go the other way. And what we initially guessed at was 15%. The number was looking higher for a while and now it's getting down in that range.

**Dr. Richardson:** Okay, but in terms of your duties and responsibilities, they will be done by August or September. And then if you choose solution two, then obviously it's an issue of the your choices you're making as an individual or as a family.

**Mr. Forbes:** Yes, sir, obviously, we still have work to do in terms of paying the contractors after the work's done, doing those completion inspections and all that. But telling folks here's the amount of your award. We are shooting for having that done by the end of August.

**Dr. Richardson:** Okay, thank you.

**Mr. Knapp:** Pat, can you go back, if you don't mind, and maybe this- I might be able to do it for a future meeting. Calculations that you all did of the forecasting of how much money it'll take to get to completion now comes into sharper attention, given the clarity you've just given us. So can you talk through, if you don't mind doing so, some of the current analysis you all have of forecasting of rate of expenditure, rate of award. And given how many you have who have submitted applications or who have been invited to submit applications, how we're looking on the homeowner program.

**Mr. Forbes:** Okay, I'm not sure this will answer your question and I'm quite certain that I don't have maybe the level of detail analysis that you're asking for, but I'll tell you what I know. That our estimates are based on 40,000 total eligible applicants. If we don't get the SBA fix, it's highly unlikely we would get anywhere near that number. If we get the SBA fix, there are about 6,700 families out there who have not yet applied, presumably because they didn't have any expectation of getting funds from us. If we get the SBA fixed, we would expect some number of them to apply. That guess is kind of the hard art for us at this point, is figuring out how many of those folks. We're guessing probably 25% of them would apply, but we don't know. Our analysis on how much money we need, the \$400 million that the Governor mentioned earlier, is based on several assumptions. One of which is folks who got SBA loans probably are largely rebuilt by the time we get to them. And so consequently most of our grant to them will be a reimbursement which is at 50% instead of 100% for most people. So that's factored into the math. The number that we could serve could range anywhere from 25,000 up to 35 is our guess right now although we are basing our assumptions on 40.

**Mr. Knapp:** Can you come back to just the 22,000 or so in the paper as having submitted applications at the current award level? What is your price tag on the total homeowner program?

**Mr. Forbes:** I'm sorry, I don't have that number. I will tell you that the 1.3 billion we have is more than we need to serve the current population.

**Mr. Knapp:** That's where I was getting to.

**Mr. Forbes:** So the \$400 million estimate is not 400 total to serve the new prospective SBA people. It's 400 on top of what we expect to have and I'm sorry that I don't have that number, but it's substantial. It's a 100 to 200 million that we think we

have more in the 1.3 than we need to serve the current population, have I said that clearly? I'm sorry, it's complicated, does that make sense? In other words, we think we need about around 1.1 billion, something like that to serve the current population. So the 400 is in addition to that buffer to serve the additional SBA folks.

**Mr. Reilly:** What's the average current grant size now?

**Mr. Forbes:** It's around 29,000.

**Dr. Richardson:** Yeah, one question to make sure, that figure on the screen right now, the goal says, positive awards, in December it looks to be about 80 or so. And you had in the blue, zero awards, does that mean they were rejected? Or they didn't have enough materials ready, they might come back in another month, what does that zero mean?

**Mr. Forbes:** The zero award is folks who went through the whole process. And because of duplication of benefits or a low construction cost or some combination of the two, once we ran all the math, our grand award amount is zero. Quite obviously, if the SBA fix occurs, many of the zero awards turn into positive awards.

**Dr. Richardson:** Okay.

**Mr. Forbes:** That, plus the additional people that we expect would sign up because they now have some expectation of getting funds from us.

**Mr. Olivier:** I wanted to amplify that, because that's an important feature, this is the first time I've ever seen that, where the duplication issue has been resolved.

**Mr. Forbes:** Not been resolved.

**Mr. Olivier:** Well, we're hoping it's going to be resolved. If it is resolved, then what are we looking at in terms of those lost? If it is resolved, if the duplication of benefits issue is resolved, what are we looking at in terms of numbers that we're going to regain out of the ones that are currently lost now?

**Mr. Forbes:** The zero awards are combinations of people who had insurance, flood insurance, and SBA loans for the most part. Or somebody who just got a FEMA grant and didn't have much damage, but those are probably not very many. Probably also, the majority of these are the SBA folks, I don't have that number and I'm not sure Jeff, if we have that here. But the vast majority of these folks, if the SBA occurs most of those zero awards would become positive awards. The likelihood is that they would be, that there's no reason for us to expect they'd be any different than the average \$29,000 or so dollars per grant. Does that answer your question?

**Mr. Olivier:** It does, but then I'm expecting you're going to come up with a strategy to reach out to those people as soon as-

**Mr. Forbes:** Absolutely, we've done an outreach for surveys, we're in a middle of an outreach for people to fill out their applications. If we get the SBA fixed that's the next big outreach, absolutely.

**Representative James:** That was my question, Pat I wanted to know, what is it going to look like? Because I get a million calls from my constituents after the news went out about the potential SBA fix, do these folks have to come in and resubmit? I see a lot of heads shaking no. Are they going to receive an email, what is that process going to look like so I can communicate that to the folks I represent?

**Mr. Forbes:** We are working on our computer processes so that we can simply hit a button that eliminates that as duplication. Recalculates the grant award and then we would re-communicate the new grant award amount to the homeowners.

**Representative James:** Okay, thank you.

**Mr. Forbes:** And again, it will be all those and more modes of communication that you've mentioned. We will do the emails; also, when we can't reach people by email, we do hard copy mail, we do call outs and we will do more outreaches too.

**Representative James:** Okay, thank you.

**Mayor Norris:** Let me ask Nick a question. Nick?

**Mr. Spreyer:** Yes, sir?

**Mayor Norris:** The list of meetings that you're talking about having, one was from Monroe on February 1st, what do you anticipate accomplishing at those meetings?

**Mr. Spreyer:** It's really based upon access, so we looked at the data by zip code for those individuals that were invited to apply but had not yet done so. Looked over a four-week stretch, wanted to canvass the state, some people are a little intimidated sometimes about going to our housing assistance centers. So we're just getting out into the communities in familiar locations like churches and libraries, and people are showing up. Right now, about a third of the people that show up are actually looking for assistance with the application, so we have computers set up and scanners. And they're getting,

essentially the same level of assistance they would if they came to one of our housing assistance centers. The other third are just wanting to check on a status, and so it's just a variety of purposes, just

**Mayor Norris:** Is there any way that, say a local official, a mayor or police jurors could assist you in making sure those particular people show up at the meeting. Can you give us a list of people we could contact?

**Mr. Spreyer:** We've done that and we'll do it more and more if you'd like us to do that-

**Mayor Norris:** If you do that for Ouachita Parish, I'd see that we made a direct invitation to the people that would certainly have a vested interest in doing it.

**Mr. Spreyer:** Yep, we'll do that, and for you, what we've also done is the beginning of every week, if we're hosting three outreach events, we know the people we're really targeting, right? Those that have been invited but not yet applied, they're getting emails from us that week saying we're coming to your area, come check us out. And to go back to Pat's point around, we're able to do some pretty innovative ways to target individuals that we think qualify for the program but have not yet submitted a survey. So in the instance if the SBA issue is conceivably fixed, we'll know the population that were approved for an SBA loan that had major or severe damage but have not yet completed the survey. And we have every intention to email those people, send mailers to those people. If we have to knock on their doors, we'll do so, we've done texting, and we've done other targeting ways. So we really try to make sure people are aware of the program and the benefits they can provide.

**Mayor Norris:** I don't really think local officials would be glad to assist you in that, I know that we wouldn't at Parish. If we had a list, and obviously the email doesn't get to everybody but we can do some door-to-door. In anticipation of a meeting on February the 1st.

**Mr. Spreyer:** That'd be great. We'll follow up with you on that, Mayor. And we've done that with several parishes, and mayors, and elected officials that have done just that, so thank you.

**Mr. Reilly:** Thanks, Pat, I forget to congratulate you on getting the SBA issue through the House. Y'all did a great job. So my executive assistant-

**Mr. Forbes:** I just wanted to make clear that it's the Governor and the congressional delegation who had pulled all the work on that, but thank you.

**Mr. Reilly:** So my executive assistant lives in Watson. She was one of the homeowners who applied for an SBA loan but didn't take it, and was deemed a duplication of a benefit she didn't receive. So she's going to ask me when I get back to the office about the math on all this stuff. So I want to go through the math with you real quick just to see if I can come up with a simple answer. So the average award is about 30,000. Do we think that's going to flow through the rest of the universe of applicants?

**Mr. Forbes:** Yeah, we don't have any reason to believe, but that doesn't mean it won't change.

**Mr. Reilly:** And you think that the SBA duplication of benefit issue is around a \$400 million number?

**Mr. Forbes:** \$400 million over what we currently have. And we think that what we currently have has a little bit of buffer in it. So the total for the SBA fix is bigger than 400, and I'm sorry I don't have the exact number.

**Mr. Reilly:** We have 22,000 applicants now. We will probably going to get more now, because my assistant, Susie, is completing the application now right? Because once they got wind that they might qualify- but in round numbers, you can do 30,000, at 30,000 plus 400 million with what we have now, if my arithmetic is correct.

**Mr. Forbes:** Okay.

**Mr. Reilly:** That's 900 million plus 400 million is a billion, 3. And the point of my question is do we need to go with an additional ask of Congress? Or do we think we're going to be able to take care of the universe of applicants and the SBA thing with-

**Mr. Forbes:** No we absolutely need additional money. That's what the governor was talking about, okay? Our estimate right now is that we need another \$400 million-

**Mr. Reilly:** Over and above the billion 3?

**Mr. Forbes:** Right. Okay, if the SBA fix occurs.

**Mr. Reilly:** Okay, all right, I think I have our answer now.

**Dr. Richardson:** The federal legislation, it got past the house. What bill is that? Is that the budget resolution bill that the senate has to take up or is it some other bill that could beset there for ages?

**Mr. Forbes:** I'm sorry, it's neither of those. It is a separate disaster appropriation of \$81 billion. And it covers, at this point, and I'm going to say this because the worst thing that could come out of this meeting, the worse news that could come out of this meeting to people, is that it is a done deal. It has passed the House of Representatives. As I understand it, it's been read twice in the Senate. I don't know that's been heard at a committee yet. But it's got to pass through the Senate, and then it's got to get the President's signature. And, as the Governor alluded to earlier, even if it gets all those things, the President



then has to waive the SBA duplication of benefits, the way that it's written right now. So even passage of the Disaster Appropriation Law, doesn't necessarily create the SBA fix. It's still got to go through the HUD and the President.

**Dr. Richardson:** And what are the requirements for the President to waive that?

**Mr. Forbes:** That he thinks it's in the best interests of the program.

**Dr. Richardson:** But there's no written A, B, C, D thing, it's just a very judgmental issue.

**Mr. Forbes:** Yes, sir. And it would probably depend on whether HUD, as his agency in charge of the funds, would recommend that to him.

**Dr. Richardson:** Did they support the bill in the House?

**Mr. Forbes:** I do not know.

**Dr. Richardson:** Okay.

**Mr. Forbes:** They have been reluctant to voice support for this type of SBA fix in the past. But we are hoping that this bill and the President's support of it would prompt them to support it, because, as the Governor's made it clear from the very beginning, it's the biggest roadblock to a lot of people's recoveries.

**Dr. Richardson:** And I assume other states like Texas have been supportive of this bill?

**Mr. Forbes:** Yes sir, very much so. Once we informed them of this travesty, they were as up in arms as we are. And so all those other states are certainly supporting it.

**Dr. Richardson:** Okay.

**Mr. Forbes:** And the interesting thing, I will go ahead and cover some detail on the bill since we're in the middle of this. One interesting thing about it is that it covers disasters going back to 2011, which means the Sandy appropriation. It even includes some funds for Jefferson, St Tammany, and New Orleans Parishes because they were hit by Isaac and were grantees from Isaac, so it reaches way back. And to your point, it also broadens the number of supportive congressional delegations, if you will, because it covers so many disasters. We have no idea whether that would stay through the Senate version or anything like that. But at this point, the way it's written, it covers back through 2011, so there are a lot of supporters.

**Dr. Richardson:** Is it purely backwards or is also forward, in terms it could be done in the future, too?

**Mr. Forbes:** I think it covers up through 2017, disasters through 2017, I think.

**Mr. Durbin:** Okay, Pat, go ahead. Proceed.

**Mr. Forbes continues his PowerPoint presentation.**

**Mr. Robert Bizot joined Mr. Forbes at the witness table to discuss the Multi-Family Restoration Loan Program.**

**Mr. Forbes:** And what's our, yeah, these projects are mostly completed, and money flowing, you said, into the first quarter?

**Mr. Bizot:** Mm-hm.

**Mr. Forbes:** Great. You can see where those projects are distributed around the state. And this is the most cost effective, it's why we put more money into this program at first. It's about \$23,000 per affordable unit, and we expect many of those to last for a long time. We just didn't quite get the subscription rate that we'd hoped for.

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** Thank you Chairman, Pat just to make sure, where I'm looking at those two programs, and it says, Public Housing Authorities. Do the housing units need to have been effected by the floods, or is it open for the Public Housing Authorities just to add new stock also?

**Mr. Bizot:** So in the Multi-Family Restoration Program, we'll talk about that one since we're on this slide, that was open to any type of Public Housing Authority that received damage due to the flood. Off the top of my head, I think there's four currently in the pipeline right now, Dusong, Erath, Eunice, and the other one slips my mind. So those are going to be affected properties that are currently in their housing stock. As far as the Landlord Program is concerned, you do see a lot of the Public Housing Authorities, mostly up in north Louisiana, applying for new construction to add to their out of their current stock.

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** Okay, so the neighborhood landlord can be new stock, the multi-family is only for effected properties.

**Mr. Bizot:** That's correct.

**Mr. Olivier:** When you say damaged units, that's talking about a unit that has more, on average, how many apartments are within that unit?

**Mr. Bizot:** So the number of damaged units were actually 683, but I think it's 1,500 total units are inside of all those different complexes that have applied.

**Mr. Olivier:** Okay.

**Mr. Reilly:** Following up on the question comparing the Neighborhood Landlord Program to the Multi-Family Program, you're at about 26,000 a unit on the multi-family about 99 on the Landlord Program.

**Mr. Bizot:** That's correct. Apples to apples, it's not apples to apples. So primarily what you're seeing right now in the Landlord Program is some new construction. There is probably about 75% of the applications we've received so far are doing new in-fill, new construction. Although the costs are a little higher for the new construction, I'd like to say that majority of the projects that are being built are in rural areas that don't have any in-fill right now. So if we're going to be spending a little bit more on these projects, it's actually more accomplishable for the areas that are being built. Also notable is that we only allowed non-profits to do new construction in the Neighborhood Landlord Program. And so consequently, while we only require five years of affordability, because of the mission of the non-profits who are doing the building we expect to get infinite. I mean affordability until they quit, so on a per affordable month rent basis, it starts to even out some.

**Mr. Forbes:** Also notable is that we only allowed non-profits to do new construction in the Neighborhood Landlord Program. And so consequently, while we only require five years of affordability, because of the mission of the non-profits who are doing the building we expect to get infinite. I mean affordability until they quit, so on a per affordable month rent basis, it starts to even out some.

**Mr. Reilly:** So for the next time we have to go through this, and you couldn't do both programs, which one would you do?

**Mr. Bizot:** And you couldn't do both programs, I think all these-

**Mr. Reilly:** If you had limited funds, it just appears to me that you're getting a whole lot more people into a livable space at less money with the multi-family restoration one then just- which one's the best disaster recovery?

**Mr. Forbes:** That's why we put more money into that program at first because we knew it would be the most cost effective. And we hoped for more people to apply because it's so cost effective, but in the end this was everybody who applied.

**Mr. Bizot:** Mm-hm, because it was limited to those rehab effected properties.

**Mr. Reilly:** I'm just thinking about the next time we go through this.

**Mr. Bizot:** Well, there's always lessons learned, we're taking note of all these things.

**Mr. Forbes continues his PowerPoint presentation.**

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** Thank you, if you could where we say all developments will benefit low to moderate-income individuals, can we just drill down a little bit on the details? Like what's the requirement, is there any limitation on the number, it is a percentage of the total number of units, is it all the units?

**Mr. Bizot:** So, of course we're still in the open phase of the application, so I can't go into too much detail as far as just talking and speaking what's currently in the notice of funds availability. One of the requirements of these projects. You have to have 5% set aside for permanent supportive housing applicants. And generally those are people that are 20% or below or needed some type of supportive service. Within the they can also elect to get points for increasing that to 10% to be able to actually have more set aside units. But we take a recommendation, I think Adam brought up the structuring in the way that we have mixed income users. We were trying to have a pool set aside where you're mixing and 60% AMI's with 80%. And then there are of course that we would looking at a general pool for 80% or below but, primarily you're looking at 80% all the way down to 20% and below.

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** Okay so, are we anticipating that the application is going the application the amount it's going to exceed what we have and so it's going to be whoever comes up with the best mix of-

**Mr. Bizot:** Yes and it also, any time you do an application phase, there is always some type of leveraging point. We have been trying to stretch the dollars out there. So that's one of the components of the scoring but then you have the PSH point scoring, there is other point that could be a lot of-

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** But unlike the other program, we anticipate that this one will be oversubscribed

**Mr. Bizot:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Forbes:** There are exceptions, but almost every time LAC does one of these QAPs, they're oversubscribed. And based on the interest that's been shown so far, it looks like this will be likely.

**Ms. Nicole Sweazy joined Mr. Forbes at the witness table to discuss Rental Programs.**

**No questions were asked in regards to the Rental Programs.**

**Ms. LaSonta Davenport joined Mr. Forbes at the witness table to discuss the Small Business Program.**

**Mr. Olivier:** Since we have an opportunity now, let's talk about that. Adam served on the Katrina recovery program. So he has that history. I have a little bit of that. Sean has a little bit of that. A lot of us lived a lot of that, so what we're trying to do is apply that. That's probably why some of us were appointed to this thing. And so we need to start thinking about what if we don't place \$51 million and what can we do. Now Sean you've always made us look forward like that on those

issues and that's what I think we need to turn our attention to. They have pretty much beat the bushes we've looked at new CDF files trying to open that up, trying to get more banks involved, with us. All of that because who's going to know best what a small business needs, than the banking, the people that they do business with, the banks? And so, but what if we don't place all the money. Now here we are a year and a half later, those businesses, they're back in business or not. And so, what can we do though, especially since our federal authorities have talked about this resiliency thing? What can we do in that vein that they are more favorable towards us? Some resiliency opportunity. So, that's what we need, that's what we're going to be focusing on, going forward is what can we do next? So those of you that have some ideas, we're looking forward to that.

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** Thank you, and I apologize I don't know the details of the qualifications needed when you fill out the application. But now that we went from the 20% to 40% forgivable, if I needed \$60,000 and I could go get 60, go get the loan. And I know that 40% would be forgiven, and so ultimately, I'm on the hook for 36,000 of that 60. But I could also go borrow 100,000 and stock 40,000 in a shoe box. Spend my 60, the 40 gets forgiven, and I can take the 40, pay down the 60, and it only costs me 20,000 as opposed to 36,000. Maybe I shouldn't have said it because maybe it's going to end up, the 51 million is going to disappear now. The only reason I'm bringing that up going from the 20 to 40 which I support that we did that is to make sure that we're looking at whatever the lending process is and kind of the nuts and bolts of how the program works. And if that's how we want it to work then that's great because you probably will see an uptick if that in fact is the case. If people can spend 20 to get 60 instead of spending 36 to get 60. But I just wanted to point that out because there is a significant difference if it was 20 you'd still be paying in more than the 36. So it's all serving the same purpose, so I'm not pointing it out in a negative way with helping to what accomplish what we want to happen. But if in fact that is the case, then I think we should make that known because more people will apply for it because it's much cheaper money that way.

**Ms. Davenport:** A couple of the things that are done by the lenders like you pointed out that there are some requirements for the program. They do underwrite the businesses making sure they're eligible or able to repay those funds. And the use of funds for those projects, for those businesses, they do receive support documentation or have the ability to go back and review that support documentation for those funds. So the businesses are responsible for having support, especially for the equipment and for the working capital that they use those funds for. So they do have to support that.

**Mr. Reilly:** Pat I don't think you're going to get to 28 million actually. So my recommendation would be, why don't you guys prepare an amendment that we can look at our next meeting to transfer these funds into the homeowner program. And we can all sort of be thinking about it over the interim before our next meeting as to where we might think the funds may be best spent. That would be my preference would be to just put it in the homeowner program for now. But we've been talking about this program on phone calls for many months now and the needle really hasn't moved. And I don't want to slow down something else because we can't make a decision. And I'm happy to listen, seriously.

**Mr. Forbes:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Reilly:** But in lieu of a better idea, we need to be thinking about something we can take action on in the next meeting is my recommendation.

**Mr. Forbes:** We will be communicating with the task force over the period between now and the next meeting to make sure that we have a proposal in front of you the next time. And as y'all have discussed already, a lot of different opportunities for spending that money. So it will be an interesting conversation.

**Mr. Knapp:** Just to add to the what we've been having this conversation, I'll be super brief on this. Our committee in making the recommendation to set the deadline. And thank you for the recommendation of making sure that we finish one program and that gives us the ability to make decisions about the next steps. Sean, one of the things that we've been having as a conversation for this entire period is why hasn't it been a better uptake? 51 million is still a very small drop in the bucket for response to economic recovery. And why the programs and the eligibility limits, and duplication of benefit, and many other things have prevented this from being as well used as other programs. One of the other questions I think we should ask in the intervening period is, with such a small amount eligible for economic recovery in general. Should we be asking our regions and our parish leaders what is the state of their economic recovery in those flood impact areas. And the other things that need to be considered before we say let's put it in the home on the program. So I wanted, the committee is also taking up that question.

**Commissioner Strain:** I want to make sure you don't build the baseball.

**Mr. Reilly:** Yeah we don't want to do that in search of a product.

**Mr. Durbin:** That's right.

**Mr. Forbes:** Next in economic development is the Louisiana Farmer Grant program it has a \$10 million budget and of course the objective is to help farmers who were impacted with crop losses in either the floods of 2016. And that program is well underway, thanks to Commissioner Strain and his folks, to distributing that \$10 million during the month of March. They were oversubscribed. And there is a maximum grant amount of \$100,000, but that amount will likely be a little bit less because the number of people who have applied to the program. They're currently in the application review process and we'll be announcing awards in February. And I don't know if LaSonta or Commissioner Strain wants to-

**Commissioner Strain:** Yes, and again, thank you, we are currently oversubscribed. And the fact is what once we have all of the information, then we've done all of the applications, we will know what that number is. We have more than 1,000 applications for the \$10 million. Our initial ask was \$40 million. And so we may be asking for additional allocations once we have that information. And this is for uninsured losses not covered by anything else. And the losses there are on a number of caps that were put in place. So those losses are significant, so we will be probably and it's a good place for this slide to be after we've had this little discussion. So we will be coming back and presenting our case. Looking at the amount of money that we actually are short but also the foreign services agency of the USDA have people embedded with our people at the Agricultural Finance Authority. Everyone working together to try to expedite those applications. And I want to thank you for all of your work as well.

**Mr. Forbes:** You're welcome.

**Commissioner Strain:** And our farmers, thank you.

**Representative Pope:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Pat, I want to thank you and your team for the report today. I think it's probably been very informative for me, again, to rehash after the last two or three months on some of the things that you sort of forget if you don't keep up with it on a daily basis, but I appreciate that. And for your diligence, I would like to go back to the infrastructure if I may.

**Mr. Forbes:** Yes, sir. The match?

**Representative Pope:** Yeah, yeah, the match. And it's one specific question. I think that you had talked about \$122 million that's probably being requested at this point in time, that number could go down.

**Mr. Forbes:** Right.

**Representative Pope:** I want it said again, and you said that perfectly clear. Not that you weren't clear but I want it clear, there is a commitment to match the 10% for what happened in the August flood with these PAs, is that correct?

**Mr. Forbes:** Yes, sir. We will cover it.

**Representative Pope:** Okay.

**Mr. Forbes:** We anticipate right now that the 105 is enough, but there's also reason to believe that it may not be enough, and if it's not enough we have places to move money there. Which we've talked about today, but that is a top commitment.

**Representative Pope:** Well, that's one of the things that we get asked about repetitively from our local officials and whatever, because that's huge for them, and I appreciate that commitment.

**Mr. Forbes:** Absolutely, we know they're entities around the state that are really stretched from that match. And we're doing everything we can to speed how fast we get that money to them. That is the end of my presentation.

**Mr. Faulk:** On the Comite diversion, they had the local tax passed. Would there be some consideration to use the funds that have been generated by the local tax dollars to help with that project?

**Mr. Forbes:** Absolutely, sir. I mean, I hesitate to weigh too far into this because Dr. Wilson has been the Governor's lead on this project. But there's the money from the Amite River Basin Commission. There is also funding in capital outlay, all of which are committed to the project. It's closing the gap above those that we're looking at now.

**Mr. Reilly:** Sort of following up on that, and this notion of being a little more flexible in the current legislation that's pending before the Senate with corps money, and HM money, CDBG money. Is that a per disaster waiver? Is that a per project waiver, the language as it's drafted? Or is it just sort of a blanket we're going to be more flexible?

**Mr. Durbin:** Casey Tingle, chief of staff, GHOSEP.

**Mr. Tingle:** Yes sir, thank you. Specifically as it relates to HMGP, my read of it is that it starts back to a certain date. And then from that point forward, specifically for projects that are authorized in the word of bill.

**Mr. Reilly:** Which the Comite is?

**Mr. Tingle:** Which the Comite is.

**Mr. Reilly:** So that makes it sort of a blanket application of flexibility, if I'm hearing you correctly, really across the country.

**Mr. Tingle:** Let me check my tabs here.

**Mr. Reilly:** Yeah, like I said, the rest of the country owes us a debt of gratitude if we fix that problem.

**Mr. Tingle:** Yeah, my general take is that it is disaster related in terms of the timeline of where we would start that. And it is early enough to pick up the Comite project in terms of the August 16 flooding timeline. I don't recall it having some sort of an end date in terms of that being term limited or sunsetted or anything like that.

**Mr. Reilly:** And on a project-by-project basis, we don't have to go do a waiver.

**Mr. Tingle:** No, not with this language. So it's any disaster after January 1st of 2016 would qualify, and so that would pick up both March and August for us.

**Mr. Reilly:** That's great, good news, thanks.

**Mr. Forbes:** Any other questions for me? Go ahead. Perfect segue to Mr. Tingle, thank you.

**Mr. Durbin closed the floor for questions.**

## **VII. FEMA DIRECT HOUSING PRESENTATION**

**~ Casey Tingle, Chief of Staff, Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness**

**Mr. Tingle:** All right, good morning. So on a matter that's probably a little bit more old business than new business, I wanted to just brief you this morning and give you a status update on where we stand relative to FEMA direct housing. Which probably more casually, we refer to these as the inmates use, or the mobile home units, or the trailers that FEMA provided certain survivors, both for March and August. Although all of the units that were utilized for March, which were not very many, have all been deactivated and that process is over. So anything that we're talking about from this point forward relative to this is all dealing with the August 2016 flooding. So the first two tables just gives you a sense of what has happened in terms of breaking those numbers down by those that were pre-event owners versus pre-event renters. The first column being how many are currently still remaining housed in those units. The second column, of course, being those that have moved out so that you get some sense of the progress over time. The bottom table showing you the same thing, but in a little bit different way to show you the different types of direct housing units that are in play here. The first category would be those mobile home units or manufactured housing units that are actually installed on someone's personal property. These, in a lot of cases, are those that are installed right next to the house or in front of the house or beside the house. In some cases, it does involve a neighbor providing access or land for someone to use, or a family member or something like that. So there are some other private sites, but the vast majority of these are those that were installed right there next to the house. The second category are those that were utilizing existing commercial pads in mobile home parks. Those for a lot of cases the types of situations those were people that, A, their private property could not feasibly fit the unit in terms of how it could be installed or where it could be installed. The lot wouldn't allow for it. Or they were renters and didn't have a private site to install it on. The third category there is there is one group site, which was vacant land pre-event that FEMA came in and developed for the express purpose of housing these units. And that one group site is over near Victoria around Greenwell Springs and Airline Highway. The last category, and this is something that I put on here just to bring a little bit of attention to, and a lot of this is very difficult and challenging. One of the good things to come out of this is that MLRP, so that stands for Multi-family Lease Repair. It was a program or a segment of this program that had been done in other places, in other disasters over time, but nothing on the scale of what we did here. And in terms of how we might look at things moving forward. This is actually a bright spot because what that does is it allows a landlord that has available units that needs some level of repair or construction to actually contract with FEMA, get that construction done. And on the other hand, they are committing to FEMA to be able to utilize those units for survivors. And so in the midst of a lot of this program that is more complicated, this is actually one that leaves lasting value in terms of something that was not feasible or damaged, that at the end of the day it's actually repaired and back in commerce something like that. So there are a number of those units, the number is certainly smaller relative to the whole but in comparison to how this program has been used in other places, this is significant. This is just geographically showing everybody a little bit of what's remaining, how it lays down across the state. These are actual units, so in some cases the household may have more than one unit because of the household size. And so you can see obviously that east Baton Rouge, Livingston and Ascension, are where the majority of these remain, with some numbers in some of the surrounding parishes. So the real news here today in terms of making you aware is the fact that we are dealing with some program deadlines and timelines that we wanted to make you aware of. So by regulation, the program, once initiated, has an 18-month period for the assistance, starting at the date of declaration. So in our instance, that deadline would run out February the 14th. In a normal scenario, what happens at the end of that deadline is FEMA doesn't just come connect to the trailer and take it off. It's really more of a financial penalty that begins to accrue at that point in time. And that looks that has two components one is a monthly penalty and then the second is a monthly rent requirement. And so if you remain in the unit after the program deadline, those bill start to come. So that's what the standard is. In our case, we had requested, back in November, FEMA to extend the program, knowing that we would not be in a position in February to be out of these units. FEMA partially approved that extension, so we asked for both the monthly and

the rental requirement to be waived. They extended the program through the middle of May, waived the monthly penalty but have not, to this point, waived the rental requirement. So what would happen if nothing changes from this point forward is the first full month following that deadline, so March 1st, those that remain in these units will start to receive bills from FEMA for their rent. In fact, those letters have already started going out, notifying them of that.

**Mr. Forbes:** If I could jump in here about the MHUs specifically. I want to make sure that everybody knows that the Restore program has been working with FEMA since last June in coordinating our list of people in MHUs and who are in our program so that we can make those things work together. We have been since October we invited all MHU residents and we're expediting. We've got a team of folks who works specifically with the MHU population to try to get them back in their homes before the trailers expire. And to shorten, I mean, it's our hope and expectation that FEMA's going to approve this request. But we still want to shorten the time that folks have to be in that trailer to the extent we can. So we have been prioritizing in the program the MHU population already.

**Mr. Tingle:** Thank you, just so that everybody would have this available to them, this is some of the law regulation and policy that governs particularly the rental piece of this. We're providing it, this is because from our perspective, FEMA has some flexibility here that they could exercise if they choose to. And we are continuing and I'll get to that in just a minute in terms of next steps. But we're continuing to dialogue with them about how we might address this. It's our take that there unique circumstances, particularly the August flood and the impact on housing market, would warrant that flexibility FEMA is continuing to dialogue with us but somewhat non-committal. In terms of the two categories, as Ms. Sweazy talked about just a few minutes ago with rapid rehousing, we've been doing lots of coordination with that program to fund vouchers for individuals who are in these units that are renters. They have conducted several leasing fairs the last part of 2017 to be able to connect those survivors with landlords that had units into work that process out. It's our opinion at this point that outreach is happened and those that are interested are in process with that program. And so to the extent that we're going to be asking for some additional extension, we would be asking for extension for those people that are in this process but have not yet received the voucher or haven't been able to put that voucher to use and get a unit. So it's a relatively small amount of renters but we are coordinating with LHC specifically on this population as they utilize their rapid rehousing funds which you heard about earlier. And then to Pat's point on the owners. The vast majority of these households that are in these units are at some level engaged with Restore. And so we've been working very closely in hearing data and understanding the differences between the two programs and trying to minimize the disruption and need for transition there. That dialogue is continuing now to the extent that one of the slides that Pat showed earlier. As people get through that process and become Zero Awards, that means something different in terms of what this looks like, than those that actually get through the process and receive an award. So we're working with them to understand those processes of how people flow through and trying to make FEMA aware as much as we can of the timelines and the phases of the program and how it rolls out. Because the vast majority of these individuals that remain in these units are also in restore to some extent.

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** Thank you, Casey, on the MLRP program, do the deadlines apply to that program also?

**Mr. Tingle:** Yes, sir that is just a subcomponent of direct housing just like MHUs are.

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** Okay, so the requirement though, for the building owner that had the repairs done. They have to commit to the program, but once those deadlines run out they're then free to rent those units that have been repaired, or-

**Mr. Tingle:** Yes, sir. So they actually entered into a contract with FEMA that stipulated the terms of what they were agreeing to in receipt of the repair work and that sort of thing.

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** Okay, and I guess then the question that I have is if the rental piece is a big component this is much going forward as it is. The situation we find ourselves in now. When we talked about the landlord program earlier, and the monies that might be available to somebody to get some units available. Can they couple the landlord program and still be qualified for the FEMA? Or are those two things, if you have one, you're probably not going to qualify for the other?

**Mr. Tingle:** I think that's generally correct. What would likely happen is, because of the timelines, someone who was in that FEMA unit, FEMA would be transitioning them to go pay their own rent. And in those cases, a lot of what happens is the rapid rehousing funds then come into a fund a voucher to that family. They may choose to stay in that unit. Or they may go choose to find another one. There are a small handful of cases where FEMA has already turned over, through the landlord, the lease of that property from a FEMA-paid lease to an individual paid lease. The same survivor resides in the unit. It's just now there's a different source of funding for the rent.

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** Well, but as it relates to the landlord that received the money.

**Mr. Bizot:** I think I know where you're going. So basically you got the MLRP over here where the landlord owned those, and they'd been rehabbed. Those projects are not going to be then re-applied into my program. These are new projects that wouldn't have anything to do with those already-restored projects in the MLRP. And as Casey say, the progress of getting

those rapid re-housing dollars out, will then flow in to these new infill projects, or newly rehab projects that will have in a Landlord Program within the coming year.

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** So if I remember right, on the Landlord Program, it's seven units, is that what the limits were.

**Mr. Bizot:** Yes, you cannot build more than seven units on any parcel of land.

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** So but it is conceivable that for someone that had ten units damage or maybe not ten let's say nine, right, and FEMA restored two of them would they qualify for the landlord program to get to get the other seven?

**Mr. Bizot:** Had they applied to it then yes. If they had no other type of rehab is already done through a different source of funding, then they could have applied to the program.

**Mr. Tingle:** Okay, I guess what I'm saying is going forward if this is going to be a really successful program that's coming out of FEMA, then we probably want to somehow coordinate those two. Because they're really doing very similar things. We're limiting one to the seven. I don't know if the MLRP has any limitations on the number of units that they're willing to repair for a landlord to make them available. But yeah, so FEMA's requirements really were, it needed, in terms of multi-family, it needed to be at least four units, that they would be interested in looking for. I don't believe there was any cap on the number of units. They're gearing everything to what they think the universe is that they need to serve. And then making determinations on a site by site basis of this contract makes sense to execute. Because we need to pickup 20 more units. They may be leaving other interested parties on the table. Because they don't feel like they need those units to serve the population.

**Mayor-President Robideaux:** Okay, I just wanted a more clear picture of the difference between the two. Thank you.

**Mr. Tingle:** No I appreciate the question because its a program that doesn't get a lot of attention. And unlike the MHUs, it leaves some lasting value to the community. And it's something that, we think, is a better way forward. So then to wrap, I just wanted to give everybody a sense of the next step. So FEMA partially approved our request the beginning of December. We followed up with them in mid-December, at a high level, to include headquarters, who has to approve anything with this. To basically lay out what we saw the challenges being. Particularly as it relates to restore, the challenge being, people are in one federal program now making application to another federal program moving forward. And trying to minimize the disruption between those in transitions between those programs. So based upon that meeting, what I took away from that conversation is that FEMA's not, at this point, really open or amenable to anything across the board in terms of a rent waiver for the whole population. But they are willing to entertain those requests for rental waivers on a case by case basis. From our perspective, what probably makes more sense is sort of categories of similar situations. And really, I think from a FEMA perspective, they're looking at people who have a solution on the table, but that solution requires time. And to the extent that that that time is related to a program performance or contractor performance or something that's outside of the survivor's hands. I think FEMA is open to that discussion. What I did not get the sense for is FEMA being open to waiving rent for situations where the problem is really something other than time. Meaning situations where someone is just really out of options. And as we look at those cases, I think, those are situations where we're going to have to take those on a case by case basis. Work with our volunteer communities and churches and those organizations to address those as they come up. Particularly, you get into those cases and there's a just a variety of scenarios that complicate things. And so it's very difficult to talk about them in similar terms. But what we're working with FEMA is to apply the maximum flexibility that we can to work with our communities. So that they understand as these things get extended, they may also have to go back and amend their ordinances, or extend emergency waivers that they provided to allow the units to be placed onsite. I think there's some news about, East Baton Rouge just did that. So anyway, that's kind of where things stand now. And then if there are any other additional questions on that, I'm happy to answer.

**Mr. Durbin:** Question, going back to eventually those occupants will probably receive a notice to pay rent. Is that the time for that particular individual or an individual that requests a waiver, to make that request after they receive the rent notice? And to the entity which they are requested to make payment to? Is there going to be something there for them to make a phone call or write a letter?

**Mr. Tingle:** So, as I understand the letter, the letter I believe takes three things into account. One is, there consistently is a FEMA staff person assigned to cover a number of those cases of which they could communicate with. There's also information in the letter that allows them to reach out to disaster case management to alert them of their situation from the state's side, that's really our capacity to handle intake. There's also information on there, encouraging them to participate in Restore, encouraging them to continue to push forward and do those things, and I think right now, that's the best information that we have to give on that.

**Mr. Durbin:** Okay. Thank you, Mr. Tingle.

**Mr. Tingle:** Thank you.

**Mr. Durbin closed the floor for questions.**

## VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

**Mr. Durbin:** Next agenda item is public comment period. A public comment period is now declared. Anyone wishing to step forward and take the mic, you may come forward at this moment at this time and be brief with your comments. When you sit, please take the mic and introduce yourself.

**Ms. Love:** Okay, how you all doing this afternoon? My name is Rhonda Love. I'm a citizen here in East Baton Rouge Parish. My comment is to the Restore program. I'm kind of confused on some things on the ECR on my report. It's kind of over the local office head so that's why I came here to this meeting because it's really kind of out of their hands. Once I went to closing, I got my ECR in the beginning and it has certain line items on it for my repairs for like my ceiling because when you pull the crown molding down, it rips the ceiling. And then we had exterior doors that were warped that we couldn't close anymore. And then we had like ceiling fans that kind of hung. I mean we got in there relatively quickly and pulled everything out from the mold but the ceiling fan's still kind of warped so we had all these things on our ECR in the beginning. I never received a notice, a letter, anything saying that it was removed so when I went to closing, it was gone. My grant amount was still the same, but those line items were gone. So I did option three, where I found the contractors to come out because it was just easier, it was faster, I didn't have to wait on anybody. I could just, you know, get a licensed plumber to get in, get a licensed, you know, this person to come in, so we did that. So we have now gotten the doors, ceiling fans and then I get to my inspection, and my inspector, he has the same paper that I have, and we're marking off items, but then when I'm calling in to see as far as my reimbursement, why I haven't got it, these items are gone. And I'm just confused like, why wasn't I notified to say, hey, before closing, look, these items are gone, because maybe I wouldn't have bought some more doors or maybe I would have did a different option than what I did, thinking that I had a certain amount of money on these line items. So that's just some things that's my concern for just anybody. I know the program is changing constantly in different things but I just don't know because, once you sign a grant, that's final, so I don't know how that can be fixed. I think it's something that should definitely be taken into consideration to look at fixing, even if it don't benefit my situation but people behind me that's coming in. That's like \$6,000 kind of slap in the face that's gone that we have to figure out, well, we may not do cabinets and we have an MHU we have to hurry up and get out of before the 14th, so that was just like a stop for us.

**Mr. Durbin:** Is that your issue, your total issue that you just brought up?

**Ms. Love:** Yes, sir.

**Mr. Durbin:** Okay, someone in the back will meet with you later after the meeting adjourns and take care of your questions, okay?

**Ms. Love:** All right, thank you.

**Mr. Durbin:** All right. Thanks for coming forward.

**Mr. Durbin:** Next, introduce yourself.

**Ms. Minor:** Charlotte Minor and Happy New Years to you all.

**Mr. Durbin:** And to you Ms. Minor.

**Ms. Minor:** I just wanted to publicly thank you all and the office of Community Development. We were impacted by the flood, was not required to have any flood insurance, and so we had to use all our savings. And then we were above the income limits and so, allowing everybody in phase six to apply, we did that process, and just started and so I just want to publicly thank you all for all of your work.

**Mr. Durbin:** Thank you Thanks for coming up.

**Mr. Durbin:** Next? Introduce yourself.

**Ms. Waddell:** Yes, sir. Good morning, my name is Lorraine Waddell. I'm with the Louisiana United Methodist Conference and my role in this situation is that I coordinate the Methodist Churches across the state in doing disaster response. We're partners with UMCOR which is the United Methodist Committee on Relief which funds us. We have about \$2 million that we are investing in the recovery for the flood projects. Through that we are doing case management. We are not DCMP. However we do partner with Catholic Charities and we also are working with FEMA and we are helping to address the issues with the MHUs. And part of the reason I'm here to speak today is that we are begging for help from the state, from FEMA and however the state can help us make this happen because, as you saw from the report, and they were great reports, is that Restore is addressing, as I said about 12% of the issues related to the MHUs. The rest of that falls on agencies like us. So we are VOAD agencies, national VOAD, I don't know if you're familiar with that, the Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster, so we have to also meet a certain criteria with them and keep high standards in the recovery. With that, when we are sitting here looking at the fact that many MHUs will disappear in February, the rest will disappear in May. Part of what we are facing is that many of these people who are asking for our assistance, they don't qualify for Restore, they're not



in that 12%, and so we are literally looking at hundreds of families who are on a May deadline. We're not going to get hundreds of families completed by then. Which means, come the end of May, well, we're facing two problems. One is, they're going to have to start paying rent, and I did hear Mr. Tingle's report that we can on a case by case make appeals for them not to pay rent, which obviously takes a lot of time for us to deal with for all these cases. But then come May, they will be homeless. There will be no place for them to go. The organizations like ours who are part of VOAD, that money that I have is designated to get their homes constructed. We can't get that many constructed in four months time, at this period. We're going to do our best, and we can't afford to pay their rent. They can't afford to pay the rent. Many of them are paying mortgages. And they can't pay rent on top of mortgages. So we need that assistance because the other side of that, from the restore program, is that we are not allowed to get reimbursement for the work that we do. And so therefore, they've got to wait for us, they've got to wait for the restore program to make sure that they aren't going to qualify. Which then further delays us working on their home. So if they don't know for two more months, that gives us two months to finish the job. So I hope you can hear that we have multiple issues related to our VOAD agencies. They're going to hamper us and I think we will be facing a true crisis come May that many of these people will have nowhere to go. Because the other point with the restore program is, because I went to them and I asked the question can we shelter in place with them, like it was done in the beginning and we were told no. We cannot shelter in place because they're not allowed to live in the house while Restore works on that house, so then where do they go? So please, we ask for your assistance, and I'll be happy to meet with anybody about that.

**Mr. Durbin:** Commissioner.

**Commissioner Strain:** Yes, what type of timetable, additional time, do you think would be necessary to mitigate this situation?

**Ms. Waddell:** No and I think that's a great question and I've actually been sitting back there asking myself that because I had a feeling that question would be answered. At least, yes, sir. My plan is right now because we work under grants. I'm planning on keeping my staff at least through the end of the year. So yes, sir. At least that long.

**Commissioner Strain:** So if we could get FEMA to allow those people to stay six more months.

**Ms. Waddell:** Yes sir.

**Commissioner Strain:** That would mitigate-

**Ms. Waddell:** It would be a tremendous help, yes, sir.

**Commissioner Strain:** Okay, thank you.

**Ms. Waddell:** Yes sir, thank you.

**Mr. Durbin:** Mr. Tingle? A response or comments?

**Mr. Tingle:** Sure, happy to. First of all, I want to recognize their organization for a lot of hard work and real tangible financial assistance that has resulted in some of the progress that you've already seen. So a lot of what we're talking about now was what needs to yet happen. But I think it's appropriate to go back and look and say some of the people that have been able to move out of these units thus far would not have been able to do so without the assistance of the Methodist organization and other volunteer organizations. That have helped meet all of the little pieces and gaps that show up when you try to move back in to your house, or find a new house, or a new apartment or those kind of things. Whether it's furniture, or fees to turn utilities on, and just all of those pieces. Certainly in our conversations with FEMA, we're focused on two pieces of that, one is the rent and the second is the time. So we requested until May because we felt like that would at least give us a window to continue to work on these things. We believe that there's precedent in other disasters. For that to at least be extended until August and we will be making that request. And so that will certainly not be the time that everybody needs to do everything that needs to be done. But we feel like it is at least a better window to do most of the work for most of the people that needs to occur. So we will absolutely be pursuing that and visiting further to figure out how we better coordinate.

**Mr. Durbin:** Commissioner?

**Commissioner Strain:** They see that we may need to go beyond August. Perhaps for another 90 days.

**Mr. Tingle:** That's correct, and I would say that we will be doing that well before May.

**Commissioner Strain:** Okay, so please keep us abreast on that.

**Ms. Waddell:** Yes, sir.

**Commissioner Strain:** Because that'd be terrible to kick people out of their house at the last minute.

**Ms. Waddell:** The other piece that kind of fits into that, just to make sure people connect the dots, rapid rehousing is great. And I understand why there's been deadlines, because for the renters, they need to get out, okay? It's time to move forward, and there's all kinds of issues that go with that. But those rentals are not available for our homeowners. And so that program, that is not a program that's available for our homeowners. In fact, there isn't a program available for our homeowners other than the MHU's, which is why this is so critical.

**Mr. Durbin:** Okay.

**Ms. Waddell:** Thank you.

**Mr. Tingle:** Thank you.

**Mr. Durbin:** Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Tingle. Anybody else? Public comment? I see none coming forward, okay.

**Mr. Durbin closed the floor for public comment.**

**IX. OTHER BUSINESS**

**Mr. Durbin:** Moving to other business, Madam clerk, any other business? All right, the GOHSEP task force update is tab six in your folders. Part of the request of the task force, OCD has provided us with an AMI average median income tiers in glossary of terms tabs seven and eight. Lori will send out the details regarding our next meeting in the coming weeks. Okay, anybody else? Nobody wishing to make a comment, this meeting is now adjourned. Thank you for coming today.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

**Meeting was adjourned at 11:38 AM.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jimmy Durbin  
Co-Chair of the Restore Louisiana Task Force

Date Approved: April 13, 2018

*LD*