

Council on Watershed Management Meeting

Thursday, March 28, 2019, 9:00 AM

I. Called to Order by Pat Forbes at 9:02 AM

Welcome and opening comments

II. Council Member Roll Call:

Pat Forbes (OCD)

James Waskom (GOHSEP)

Jack Montoucet (LDWF)

Chris Knotts (DOTD)

Chip Kline (CPRA)

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Led by James Waskom, GOHSEP

IV. Public Comment

Public comments will be taken at the end of the meeting.

Mr. Forbes: Before we get started, I wanted to mention a few items as part of opening remarks:

- First, we are anticipating the publication of the Federal Register Notice in May 2019.
- Our understanding is that HUD is working closely with FEMA to align the CDBG-DR mitigation funds with FEMA HMGP. We need to ensure that we describe the risks in a way that is consistent with how GOHSEP defines risks to FEMA.
- Because of how the appropriation is written, it is the interpretation of HUD attorneys that we will be limited to assisting the most impacted and distressed parishes (there are 56 presidentially declared parishes that are eligible under the MIDs). It is uncertain at this time whether they will require 80% or 100% of funding to benefit the 10 most impacted and distressed parishes and if they will allow us to benefit the other 46 parishes). HUD is working to define flexibility within the MID requirement. They cited an example where a project was built in a non-MID parish, but the grantee can demonstrate the impacts of that project will benefit an MID parish. Here's the language from the law:

'Provided further, that all such grantees shall receive an allocation of funds under the preceding proviso in the same proportion that the amount of funds each grantee received or will receive under the second proviso of this heading or the headings and sections specified in the previous proviso bears to the amount of all funds provided to all grantees specified in the previous proviso.'

- There is going to be a heavy emphasis on citizen participation and a continuous feedback loop, both pre-and post-action plan development. There is also going to

be an emphasis on transparency in the project and program selection process.

V. Consent Agenda Items

Approval of November 8, 2018 Meeting Minutes – Approved, no opposition

VI. Old Business

Mr. Forbes: Alex, please walk us through these items, and we will discuss as needed.

Ms. Carter:

- a. **Listening Tour Report Out** – The Outreach TAG is in the process of consolidating the 2019 Listening Tour Report Out and the 2019 Outreach and Engagement Plan into a single document that is more comprehensive in nature and that allows further input during the course of the Initiative.
- b. **2019 Outreach & Engagement Plan** – As stated in the item above, these documents are under review and edit. Both remain posted for public comment on watershed.la.gov as well.
- c. **Round 1 Project Application Summary and Evaluation Criteria Worksheets** – This document remains posted for public comment on watershed.la.gov. The Projects TAG has received public comment thus far and incorporated such comments into the draft Round 1 application materials.

VII. New Business

Mr. Forbes: None, our items today consist largely of updates and introductions, so we will move on to those.

VIII. Updates and Introductions/Future Items

Mr. Forbes: Alex, please walk us through these items, and we will discuss as needed.

Ms. Carter: Thanks Pat, for the general public's reference and context, please know that we are acutely aware that this material is heavily focused on Data & Modeling, and this is largely because we expect DOTD to be issuing RFQs for statewide data and modeling contracts over the course of the next few weeks. To provide some context, the deck includes 3 presentations with updates relative to the overall foundation of the LWI Data and Modeling effort. So we'll be hearing about broad Data Deliverables, H&H Models the State is Preparing to Build, and the recently Completed Amite River Basin Model.

1. Data Deliverables

Ms. Carter: To begin our discussion of the Data TAGs action items, we will first be provided with a brief presentation from Cindy How, who will present on behalf of the D&M TAG and speaks to work completed regarding broader data sets including, but not limited to, those that influence H&H model creation. The message here is that the LWI has an opportunity to not only build great H&H models, but also refine and improve them over time by improving the data that feeds into them.

Cindy How took the witness table and began the presentation.

Ms. Carter: As described by Ms. How's presentation, the Initiative has conducted an investigation into existing data gaps and best practices going forward to ensure data quality and consistency, including consideration of appropriate data maintenance and sharing procedures. LWI is currently and will continue to utilize the referenced memos, data gap analysis, and whitepapers in as part of ongoing efforts and will post the Executive Summary and Listening Tour Whitepapers as resources for the public's reference online at watershed.la.gov.

2. Statewide Modeling Framework

Ms. Carter: For this item, Dr. Emad Habib and Dr. Ehab Meselhe, who are working with the D&M TAG, will present an update on H&H Models the State is preparing to build.

Dr. Emad Habib and Dr. Ehab Meselhe took the witness table and began the presentation.

Ms. Carter: As described by Dr. Habib and Dr. Meselhe's presentation, and in consultation with the Data and Modeling TAG and Working Group members, we request that the Council consider the proposed framework in preparation for future finalization of this approach, which we expect to complete this summer.

3. Amite River Model

Ms. Carter: The final briefing for today will be conducted by DOTD and Dewberry Engineers on the recently completed Amite River Model, which illuminates the possibilities associated with a complete H&H model at the watershed scale. At this point, representatives of DOTD will present their materials, should anyone have questions regarding this content, please refer questions to DOTD. This item does not require a motion, and is for informational purposes only.

Sam Crampton and Jerri Daniels took the witness table and began the presentation.

Mr. Forbes: Thank you very much. This is exciting work. This model represents a significant step toward providing high-quality tools to understand flood risk and evaluate projects or proposals within the floodplain.

4. TAG Updates

Sam Martin and Alex Carter briefly provided TAG updates.

- a. Projects TAG – Projects TAG has been posting draft application material online for the Round 1 projects process. The TAG has incorporated public comments into these materials.
- b. Planning TAG – The Planning TAG has prepared a recommendation for provisional watershed region boundaries and has produced guidance on the composition, roles, and

objectives for regional steering committees. This material will be presented for feedback at upcoming meetings with Parish leadership.

- c. Outreach TAG – The Outreach TAG has produced the preparatory material for the upcoming meetings with Parish leadership and is continuing to refine the 2019 Listening Tour Report Out and the Outreach and Engagement Plan.
- d. Data & Modeling TAG – Updates on modeling framework, data deliverables, and the Amite River Model were provided in the earlier content of this meeting. The Data and Modeling TAG will also be convening soon to discuss contracting areas. The TAG will forward this information to the Council shortly following this meeting in order to enable issuance of RFQs for the modeling work as soon as possible.
- e. Policy TAG – The Policy TAG is currently drafting policy objectives to accompany the use of watershed models (like the Amite River Model and others produced by the Watershed Initiative). The Policy TAG is also steadily working on the interagency investigation of the Office of Community Development and the production of whitepapers on specific mitigation strategies (such as freeboard and fill).

Mr. Forbes: Before we move on to closing remarks, this is an opportunity for public comment on agenda items. We ask that it be limited to two minutes per citizen. Is there any public comment at this time?

Public comment was held at this time.

**Ms. Candace Watkins, former Mayor of Covington
Parish President Kenny Matassa, Ascension Parish
Melissa Kennedy, HNTB**

IX. Closing Remarks

Mr. Forbes: Before I motion to adjourn, I am sad to announce that this effort is losing a couple of key players who are moving on to other professional opportunities. Lauren Nichols and Danica Adams have been absolutely critical to the forward motion and the success as to getting us where we are and we are going to miss their efforts. Thank you very much for the work you have done for us.

X. Adjournment

Mr. Forbes: Do I have a motion to adjourn?

Mr. Knotts: Motion.

Mr. Waskom: Second.

Mr. Forbes: Adjournment at 11:08 AM.