

**MINUTES OF
SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY-EAST
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON NOVEMBER 3, 2011**

PRESENT: Louis Wittie, Chair
David Barnes, Committee Member
Timothy P. Doody, Committee Member
Stephen Estopinal, Committee Member

The Operations Committee of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East (SLFPA-E or Authority) met on November 3, 2011 in the East Jefferson Levee District Conference Room, 203 Plaque Court, Harahan, LA. Mr. Wittie called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Opening Comments: Mr. Doody announced that a grant in the amount of \$95,000 has been received for the removal of the waterfall dam in Bayou St. John at Robert E. Lee Boulevard.

Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the September 9, 2011 Operations Committee meeting were approved.

Public Comments: None.

New Business:

A. Discussion of levee certification for non-federal levees

Robert Turner, SLFPA-E Regional Director, explained that a levee must be certified and a levee system evaluation must be performed on a levee in order for it to be shown on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS) and considered in the hydraulic analysis. Levee certifications are forwarded to FEMA for accreditation and inclusion in the hydraulic analysis. A levee must be able to withstand a 100-year event. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is handling the certification of the federal levees. No problems are anticipated with the Mississippi River or perimeter hurricane protection levees. The USACE is also handling the certification of the pump stations.

Mr. Turner advised that there are some non-federal levees in Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes that separate the pump drainage areas of those parishes. The areas inside of the non-federal levees are basically under pump drainage. The areas outside of the non-federal levees basically have gravity drainage or are storm water retention areas. FEMA recently advised that it must be notified about whether the SLFPA-E wants to have the non-federal levees accredited before proceeding with developing the FIRMS. Should the non-federal levees not be certified the base flood elevations could potentially increase at least three to four feet in these areas and National Flood Insurance Program

(NFIP) rates will significantly increase. The SLFPA-E is working with FEMA in an attempt to avoid having the non-federal levees certified, but still considered. The cost of certifying the non-federal levees is estimated at \$4 million to \$4.5 million. The certification process involves surveying work and geotechnical investigations and analyses. Preliminary indications are that the non-federal levees would have to withstand water surface elevations in the range of three to four feet above sea level for a 100-year event; however, other FEMA requirements, such as free board, must also be taken into consideration. Most of the non-federal levees were built as hurricane protection and drainage levees in the 1950's and 1960's; however, these levees now operate only as drainage levees. The Governor's Office and GOHSEP (Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness) have been informed about this situation and will assist with discussions with FEMA, as well as look for methods of funding the certification, if required. Meetings are also being held with public officials relative to this issue. The USACE is expected to complete the certification process for the federal levees during the summer of 2012. FEMA's PAL (Provisionally Accredited Levee) procedure can be used for the non-federal levees. The PAL procedure can be used for levees with no known deficiencies and would allow a two year period to complete the certification process before the final FIRMS are issued.

B. Request to advertise a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for engineering services to prepare plans/specifications to remove abandoned Floodgate No. 9 on 40 Arpent Levee and backfill. (LBBLD)

Stuart Williamson, Lake Borgne Basin Levee District (LBBLD) Executive Director, advised that the subject project is a FEMA obligated project. The advertisement for a RFQ has been prepared and approved by FEMA.

Mr. Doody offered a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Estopinal and unanimously adopted, to recommend that the Board approve the advertisement of the RFQ.

C. Discussion of an Intergovernmental Agreement between LBBLD and the St. Bernard Parish Government with regards to inspecting, cleaning and repairing storm damage to concrete culverts in the Guichard Canal on the west side of Fire Station #3 in Chalmette.

Mr. Williamson explained that St. Bernard Parish is rebuilding Fire Station No. 3; however, there is a problem with some of the drainage culverts. The Parish needs to partner with the LBBLD relative to these culverts. LA DOTD (Department of Transportation and Development) was contacted and advised the LBBLD to make sure that the levee district is not obligated in the event that FEMA does not come through with the funding. Language to this effect is being included in the Intergovernmental Agreement. Mr. Turner advised that FEMA will not initiate a Project Worksheet with two separate governmental entities; therefore, one of the entities must take the lead. Since the Parish wants this project done quickly, it is willing to take the lead. Mr. Williamson added that some minor changes are being made to the agreement and that the document is being reviewed by LBBLD counsel.

Mr. Estopinal offered a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Doody and unanimously adopted, to recommend that the Board authorize the LBBLD Executive Director to execute the Intergovernmental Agreement.

LEVEE DISTRICT REPORTS:

Lake Borgne Basin Levee District (LBBLD): Mr. Williamson reviewed the highlights of the status report (copy appended to minutes).

Mr. Williamson explained that a berm was constructed at the Algiers Ferry Landing during the recent Mississippi River High Water Event because of seepage. The USACE has selected a contractor to drive a sheetpile cutoff wall at this location. The pre-construction conference will be held by the USACE on November 8th for this project.

Orleans Levee District (O.L.D): Gerry Gillen, O.L.D. Executive Director, reviewed the highlights of the status report (copy appended to minutes).

East Jefferson Levee District (EJLDD): Fran Campbell, EJLD Executive Director, reviewed the highlights of the status report (copy appended to minutes).

Stevan Spencer, SLFPA-E Regional Chief Engineer, advised that letters were sent to the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (S&WB) and to City Park relative to the servitude along Bayou St. John. Joseph Becker, General Superintendent of the S&WB, advised that giving up the servitude would not impact the S&WB. Robert Becker, Chief Executive Officer of City Park, advised that City Park's records were lost and requested additional information. Four O.L.D. drawings were located with the servitudes in residential areas on the west side of the Bayou. These drawings will be sent to City Park for their review.

Mr. Spencer reported that the USACE is putting together eight contracts for TRM (Turf Reinforcement Mat). Four projects will be done on the east bank and four on the west bank of the Mississippi River. One of the east bank projects will be located in the area of the Airport Runway Levee in Jefferson Parish and three projects will be located in St. Charles Parish. The USACE is still attempting to meet the June 1, 2012 target for armoring. Comments were provided by the SLFPA-E and the CPRA (Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority) to the USACE. Approval must be obtained by the USACE from General Walsh before the materials can be ordered.

There was no further business; therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.