

**MINUTES OF  
SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY-EAST  
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON OCTOBER 3, 2013**

PRESENT: Louis Wittie, Chair  
Timothy Doody, Committee Member  
Stephen Estopinal, Committee Member

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The Operations Committee of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East (SLFPA-E or Authority) met on October 3, 2013, in Meeting Room 221, Orleans Levee District Franklin Administrative Complex, 6920 Franklin Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana. Mr. Wittie called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

**Opening Comments:** None.

**Adoption of Agenda:** The agenda was approved as presented.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the September 5, 2013 Operations Committee meeting were approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

**New Business:**

**A. New Orleans Wetlands – Bayou Bienvenue: Presentation by non-profit group to develop the area along the Florida Avenue Corridor. (Orleans Levee District)**

Gerry Gillen, Orleans Levee District (O.L.D.) Executive Director, introduced Jeanell Holmes, Founder and Executive Director of New Orleans Wetlands-Bayou Bienvenue.

Ms. Holmes stated that after the presentation she hoped to have a continuing dialogue and partnering relationship with the SLFPA-E. New Orleans Wetlands-Bayou Bienvenue (NOWBB) is a non-profit organization established in 2008. Its mission is to improve the quality of life by reconnecting Lower Ninth Ward residents to nearby Bayou Bienvenue, providing various opportunities through environmental education, cultural preservation and restoration and tourism, and creating quality jobs for underemployed citizens. The proposed project area extends along the Florida Avenue Corridor from Deslond Street to Dubruil Street. The proposed project would include an agricultural community park, a farmer's market, a senior citizens' park, a kids' park with web based devices, an herbal garden, a landscape nursery, an open air stadium, a community center, a nature pavilion, a bayou moon walk and a swamp tour. Everything in the proposed park would be made of biodegradable materials and the park would be powered by wind turbans with solar powered lights. The Lower Ninth Ward Employment Network Community Access Program (L9ENCAP) would teach individuals a holistic perspective through agriculture. Community based concerts and other fund raising events would be held in another section of the project area. Proposed features

include a 500-seat amphitheater with CISCO/Kiosk Tele-presence networking, a jobs training program (Cisco Certified Networking Academy), a sustainable green multi-purpose facility that could be a hub for all cultural events in the Lower Ninth Ward, a major pavilion that would support swamp tours and canoe rentals along with a waterfront restaurant. NOWBB has been working with artist Barnaby Evans relative to the placement of floating flames in the bayou dedicated to the people lost during Hurricane Katrina. A site plan of the proposed project was provided in the presentation. A fenced privacy barrier and trees would divide the 50-foot development area from the railroad tracks.

Mr. Wittie asked about the ownership of the 40 acres of property. Ms. Holmes responded that NOWBB is in negotiations with the City of New Orleans. Mr. Doody asked about the project funding. Ms. Holmes stated that NOWBB is looking at hosting various major fund raising events. Seed money will be sought for the agricultural component. NOWBB is seeking to work with two major local universities. Once the process is started, NOWBB has various programs in place in its business plan to independently manage the area.

Mr. Doody pointed out that the proposed project will require close coordination with the Norfolk Southern Railroad and a number of different entities, such as the City of New Orleans and the New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board (S&WB), as well as property owners in the area. He noted that that there will probably be a number of potential hurdles. He suggested that Ms. Holmes contact SLFPA-E staff member Wilma Heaton relative to the hurdles. He commented that the Authority generally supports the idea of revitalizing the area and sees the benefit of connecting the people to the water. Ms. Holmes pointed out that she reached out to the Norfolk Southern Railroad and that the Railroad expressed that it is open to working with NOWBB. The Railroad is looking at the legal aspects. She pointed out that the project would be phased and a continuous working relationship would be needed. Ms. Holmes stated that NOWBB provided a Power Point presentation to the City Planning Commission in 2009 and has worked since that time to obtain the support of various entities.

**B. Discussion of issuance of a task order to URS for engineering services to provide plans and specifications for Lakeshore Drive Improvements - Reach 2A, 2B and 2C – Plaza Area Paving and Seawall Lights (OLD 27824 SLFPAE Task Order 08-03-003). (Orleans Levee District)**

Mr. Gillen advised that the O.L.D. is proposing to issue a task order to URS for the placement of safety lighting along the sidewalk adjacent to the back of the seawall along Reach 2 from the Orleans Street Canal to Rail Street and to address the street lighting in this area. The task order will also address some permanent concrete work in a 300 to 400 ft. wide area across from Shelter 2. The task order will be issued under an existing Indefinite Delivery-Indefinite Quantity (ID-IQ) contract with URS.

The Committee recommended that an item be placed on the Board agenda for the approval of the task order with URS. Mr. Estopinal pointed out that this task order will close out the professional engineering services for this segment of the erosion control

work along the Lakefront seawall. A Request for Qualifications will be advertised for additional future segments of the Lakefront seawall erosion control work.

**Levee District Reports: (copies of reports appended to minutes)**

**Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) Status Report:**

Stevan Spencer, SLFPA-E Regional Chief Engineer, reviewed the highlights of the HSDRRS Status Report. It was noted that there were some revisions to the report. He provided the following additional comments:

- LPV 03.2B – Some cracks in the recurve wall are still seeping and will be addressed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).
- LPV 109.02A – Settlement issues on both sides of the Hwy. 11 floodwall are being addressed by the USACE. The levee has been raised to the correct height and the USACE's contractor is in the process of seeding and mulching the levee. The floodwall and gate monolith are being analyzed for settlement and bending moments in excess of what is allowable. The USACE is considering the removal of fill from behind the floodwall to reduce the overburden.
- IHNC 02 – Pre-final inspections have been done on all of the structures. Weekly meetings are taking place on closing out the punch list items.
- IHNC Surge Barrier Barge Gate – Unresolved issues relative to the windlasses continue. The USACE will be changing out some of the sensors on the windlasses. The hydraulic fluid will be changed at that time. The USACE is proceeding with windlass protection. The USACE is planning to issue the Notification of Contract Completion (NCC) on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Doody cautioned that close coordination is required with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) since the provision in the Project Partnering Agreement relative to dispute resolution may need to be invoked if the structure is not in the proper condition to be turned over to the local sponsor.
- LPV 145A – The design of the land bridge at Bayou Bienvenue is complete. The USACE is attempting to incorporate comments on the design.
- LPV 149AR – The access road plans and specifications are complete. The project has been placed on hold pending a number of issues relative to the T-wall, such as whether the base slab should be buried, down drag, bending moments and corrosion. The USACE's corrosion report is being reviewed by the SLFPA-E and the State.
- LPV 20.2 Foreshore Protection Reaches 3 and 4 – The NCC has been issued; however, minor turf issues remain. One section where the rock meets the embankment has been eroded and needs to be addressed.

The Committee discussed the potential use of Lakeshore Drive as a haul road for the construction of the Permanent Canal Closures and Pumps (PCCP). Mr. Gillen advised that he is attempting to obtain a video of Lakeshore Drive in order to determine any future potential damage to the roadway. Mr. Estopinal suggested that the bridge spans

could be temporarily removed so that the canals can be accessed by barge. Mr. Spencer indicated that the original Right-of-Entry issued to the USACE for the project provided free access to the property. Mr. Doody requested that Walter Baudier work with Robert Lacour on the potential use of Lakeshore Drive for the PCCP project to assure that the contractor takes the SLFPA-E's concerns into consideration (i.e., potential damages to Lakeshore Drive and traffic patterns).

**Lake Borgne Basin Levee District (LBBLD):** Nick Cali, LBBLD Executive Director, reviewed the highlights of the LBBLD status report. He advised that Dewberry Consultants, LLC, will provide a presentation at the October Board meeting on the Public Outreach endeavor to be undertaken by the LBBLD in conjunction with St. Bernard Parish to provide comprehensive risk communication to the public. This endeavor will last one year to eighteen months and is funded by a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Program Grant (HMPG). The endeavor will also include the USACE, the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) and the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) and will consist of mailers and advertising in anticipation of the hurricane season. As this year's hurricane season comes to a close, the LBBLD will focus on the remaining HMPG and FEMA public assistance projects. A consultant has been retained to manage the HMPG construction projects.

**Orleans Levee District (O.L.D.):** Gerry Gillen, O.L.D. Executive Director, reviewed the highlights of the O.L.D. status report. He commented on the constant operation of the Bayou Bienvenue structure during the past three weeks. The O.L.D. is coordinating with FEMA on a project worksheet written by UNO on the repair of the concrete pier located behind the former Pontchartrain Beach Amusement Park. An agreement is pending with the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation on its takeover of the pier. The O.L.D. will begin advertising for additional personnel to operate and maintain the complex structures that will be turned over by the USACE to the O.L.D. in December. He advised that the remediation work on the O.L.D. safe house is about 90 percent complete.

Mr. Wittie inquired about the status of a floating pier located in the Orleans Canal. Mr. Gillen advised that the pier's owner has not yet applied for an after the fact permit. He is attempting to find out whether the S&WB has issued a permit to allow the pier on the water.

**East Jefferson Levee District (EJLD):** Danny Abadie, EJLD Superintendent of Operations, reviewed the highlights of the EJLD status report. He advised that the final inspections for Foreshore Protection Reaches 1 and 2 will be delayed due to pending issues.

There was no further business; therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.