

MINUTES
FALSE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL
August 18, 2014

The False River Watershed Council met in regular session at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 18, 2014, at the Courthouse Annex in New Roads, Louisiana.

Chairman Mike Wood called the meeting to order and directed Ms. Dinah Bourgeois to call the roll:

PRESENT: Messrs. Alex Appeaning, Owen Bello, Jake Causey, Stephen Chustz, Jimmy Lyles, Cy D'Aquila, Jr., Ron Pourciau, Jerry Hix, Kyle Olinde, Major Thibaut, Ms. Linda Hardy, Dr. Carrie Castille and Mike Wood, Chairman.

ABSENT: Messrs. Rick Ward and Jimmy Chustz.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The council unanimously approved the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The council unanimously approved the minutes from the meeting of May 21, 2014.

UPDATE AND DISCUSSION OF RECENT AND UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- Report on Bid Opening for South Flat Ecosystem Restoration
- Introduction of Contractor for South Flat Ecosystem Restoration

Engineer Gerald Babin of Professional Engineers Corporation, Inc. reported on the bid opening for the south flat ecosystem restoration. He informed the council that RLB Contracting, Inc. submitted the low bid in the amount of \$1.258 million. He discussed putting together a recommendation for the next phase of the project to be presented to the Bond Commission. There is approximately \$900,000 of remaining funds to go toward the next phase.

Mr. Babin presented Contractor Randy Boyd of RLB Contracting, Inc. who introduced himself to the council.

Mr. Thibaut discussed obtaining funds from Capital Outlay by the end of the year.

The council discussed the update on the M-1 canal. Mr. Thomas Van Biersel discussed the permit requirements needed.

Mr. Babin discussed bids and dredging of the dikes. He also discussed M-2 canal process.

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Mr. Boyd thanked the council for the opportunity to work on the project and proceeded to explain background, experience and the work to be done.

Motion by Mr. Thibaut and seconded by Mr. Lyles:

RESOLVED, That the low bid in the amount of \$1.648 million submitted by RLB Contracting, Inc. be accepted for approval of the Pointe Coupee Police Jury.

Unanimously carried.

FUNDING UPDATE

Mr. Thibaut discussed funding from the Bond Commission.

ANNOUNCEMENT/PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

Mr. Thibaut expressed concerns regarding the drawdown unbeknownst to the public. The council discussed public notification.

The council discussed safety concerns, signs to be posted, lighting and agents being on-site.

Mr. Hix congratulated Mr. Van Biersel on receiving the National Legislative Publication award for his report to the legislature.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Keith Davidson expressed concerns regarding falling rocks. Mr. Thibaut stated information has to be obtained from Engineer Kevin Gravois.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Thibaut and seconded by Mr. Causey, the meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

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Motion by Mr. Thibaut and seconded by Mr. S. Chustz:

RESOLVED, That the final plan for the False River project be presented to the Pointe Coupee Police Jury for approval.

Unanimously carried.

PUBLIC OUTREACH UPDATE

Mr. Thomas Van Biersel discussed public outreach. He spoke about using items such as flyers, bookmarks and posters. The Tourism office sent e-mails to aid in public outreach; they also provided stakeholders who may assist on the clean-up day as part of the False River project. The council discussed bags to be available for the clean-up day. Mr. Bello discussed Kiwanis Club to sponsor clean-up project.

The council discussed setting up a booth at the Harvest Festival as part of public outreach. They also discussed short news updates regarding False River Restoration on the Police Jury website. Coca-Cola Company was considered for providing a False River Restoration banner. Information will be provided on the Pointe Coupee utility bills as notification.

2014 LAKE LEVEL DRAWDOWN

The council discussed the 2014 lake level drawdown. A target level of 13.5 feet at the lighthouse gauge was suggested. It was stated that 2.2 ft. is an achievable goal for the drawdown. The council discussed the benefits of the drawdown. Chairman Wood suggested opening the gate at 1.5inches per day.

Motion by Mr. Thibaut and seconded by Mr. Olinde:

RESOLVED, That a request is made of the Pointe Coupee Police Jury for a gate opening on September 2, 2014 to lower the lake level of False River at a target rate of 1.5 inches per day to a target level of 13.5 feet at the lighthouse gauge, being that the gate closes no later than March 1, 2015.

Unanimously carried.

FUNDING UPDATE

Mr. Thibaut discussed funding to be used for the False River project which is in Priority 1. He informed the council there will be leftover funds. He stated more funds are needed to finish the north end. Estimates are needed to present to the Police Jury. A request for funding was made to Capital Outlay. He informed the council he received an update from BRAF regarding funding.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS/PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

Chairman Wood discussed stocking of Florida bass. He stated the bass that are being stocked and larger for increased survival.

The council discussed compilation for the project that was created by Mr. Thomas Van Biersel.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

Motion by Mr. Thibaut and seconded by Mr. Bello, the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

MIKE WOOD, CHAIRMAN