

MINUTES
FALSE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL
March 6, 2013

The False River Watershed Council met in regular session at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2013, at the Courthouse Annex in New Roads, Louisiana.

Acting Chairman Stephen Chustz called the meeting to order and directed Ms. Dinah Bourgeois to call the roll:

PRESENT: Messrs. Stephen Chustz, Jerry Hix, Paul Miller, Cy D'Aquila, Ron Pourciau, Jake Causey, Jimmy Lyles, Kyle Olinde, Major Thibaut, Dr. Carrie Castille, Rick Ward.

ABSENT: Messrs. Owen Bello, Jimmy Chustz, Steve Juge and Mike Wood, Chairman.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

RESOLVED, That the agenda be accepted.

Unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

RESOLVED, That the minutes of the regular meeting of February 6, 2013 be accepted as written and be officially published.

Unanimously carried.

US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Nick Sims, Project Manager for the US Army Corps of Engineers, presented a progress report for work done on False River. He also presented the tentatively selected plan. He discussed dredging on the north and south flats in order to increase fisheries habitat. He informed the council that the report will be presented to their division offices for approval. Mr. Thibaut inquired about funding needed to obtain final approval. Mr. Sims responded the funding is presently obtained. He will inform the council of the next steps when approval is received. He informed the council that a non federal sponsor is needed to continue the project. The sponsor must provide land and any maintenance required. Once the agreement is signed, federal funds have to be requested. Mr. S. Chustz expressed concerns regarding sediment traps being cleaned. In response, Mr. Sims stated sediments traps are mentioned in the report presented, but are not

included in funding. He informed the council that data from sediment collections can be added to the report.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Thomas Van Biersel created reports that include information from the sub-committees which will be reported to the Legislature.

Mr. Miller, of the Water Quality Sub-Committee, stated that data was collected and will be developed into a Best Management Practices Plan. This plan will help prevent water quality issues.

Mrs. Rachel Walley, of LA Wildlife and Fisheries, informed the committee that their drafts were sent to members of their sub-committee but there was nothing to be presently reported. Mr. S. Chustz inquired about commercial fishing. In response, Mr. Pourciau stated that the fishing declined by the middle of December. Commercial fishermen began fishing shad because there was no market for buffalo and carp fish.

Mr. Pourciau, of the Aquatic Habitat Sub-Committee, reported on the old shell bed on the lake. He presented sample of shells (mussels and snails) to the council. He informed the council there was not as much silt as expected. He also identified locations for creation of new beds.

Mr. Chris Knots, of Shoreline Modifications Sub-Committee, discussed creating a debris fence to remove energy wave. He also discussed assistance for bulkhead costs.

Mr. Kyle Olinde, of Operations and Maintenance of Watershed Drainage Network and Sediment Basin Sub-Committee, reported that Mr. Cy D'Aquila is producing a draft for an ordinance to keep road property a distance from main ditches. He also informed the committee that the Police Jury hired a beaver trapper which will help with the siltation issue.

Mr. Jerry Hix, of Lake Level Management Sub-Committee, reported on natural fluctuations in water level. He discussed lowering the lake in 2014.

Dr. Carrie Castille, of Watershed Conservation Sub-Committee, reported they worked with NRCS to get update on BMP's. She also discussed outreach meetings and opportunities.

Mr. Justin Fenstermaker reported on Watershed Drainage. He informed the council he is in the process of calibrating the hydraulic and hydrologic models he produced. He is also in the process of collecting needed data. He may present them at the next scheduled meeting.

FUNDING UPDATE

Mr. Thibaut met with Baton Rouge Area Foundation and discussed a local fund raiser possibly in August, 2013. He suggested an extensive multi media campaign with the help of Mr. Richard Manship. He also reported that NRG will fund 250 thousand dollars per year over a four-year period. NRG has to get approval through the EPA. Mr. S. Chustz informed the council NRG is in the process of signing the consent decree. Mr. Thibaut stated he will try to get the 2.2 million moved up to Priority 5. He discussed legislation to distinguish private property from state owned property.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

Mr. Pourciau inquired about time needed for Watershed Drainage data. Mr. Fenstermaker responded he will have data in April. The council discussed scheduling the next meeting to the third week in April in order to give Mr. Fenstermaker the time needed to present his data as well as time needed to be presented to the Legislature.

Mr. Thibaut stated once the report is submitted to Legislature, the council should continue to meet. He suggested that the members think about who could possibly be added to the council that could be useful.

Dr. Castille discussed with the council the Louisiana Statewide Strategy and whether the council's efforts may be included.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Pourciau and seconded by Mr. Olinde, the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

STEPHEN CHUSTZ, ACTING CHAIRMAN