

**MINUTES**  
**FALSE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL**  
**Wednesday, June 15, 2016**

The False River Watershed Council met in regular session at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 15, 2016 at the Courthouse Annex Building in New Roads, Louisiana.

Chairman Randy Myers called the meeting to order and directed Ms. Dinah Bourgeois to call the roll:

PRESENT: Messrs. Major Thibaut, Cy D'Aquila, Jerry Hix, Jimmy Lyles, Kyle Olinde, Ron Pourciau, L. J. Grezaffi, Stephen Tassin, Bijan Sharafkhani, Thomas Van Biersel Arthur Ewing and Chairman Randy Myers.

ABSENT: Messrs. Rick Ward, Jimmy Chustz and Ms. Carrie Castille.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Olinde and seconded by Mr. Van Biersel:

RESOLVED, That the agenda of the meeting of June 15, 2016 be accepted for approval.

Unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Van Biersel and seconded by Mr. D'Aquila:

RESOLVED, That the minutes of the April 13, 2016 minutes be accepted with a correction for approval.

Unanimously carried.

UPDATE PROPOSED FALSE RIVER ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECT – PHASES I AND II

Engineer Gerald Babin presented visual aid on False River Ecosystem Restoration Phase II on the north flats. He also gave an update of Phase I. Mr. Olinde informed the council there is little vegetation toward the back area. Mr. Babin stated \$1.1 million is allocated for the north flats. He discussed sending letters to landowners to obtain permission to fill their property. He informed the council that the larger areas of land are farther from the lake and more costly.

Mr. Babin stated there are 130,000 cubic yards of dredging to be done on the north island. He also discussed maintaining what will be built. He discussed deep water disposal.

Mr. Babin informed the council that Mr. Jim Lee of Facility Planning stated funding can only be spent on land construction. Mr. Thibaut discussed placing \$750,000.00 in Priority 2; with other funding, the total is \$2.397 million. This amount of funds will have to pass through the session within the next seven or eight days.

The proposed date to commence dredging depends upon the permitting process. In the future, dredging will be done in the south flats.

Mr. Thibaut expressed concerns in regards to when bidding will take place. In response, Mr. Babin stated that it is dependable upon the land chosen and the permitting issues.

Mr. Babin discussed subsoil profile.

Mr. Jim Major expressed concerns about 50 acre property.

Mr. Ewing inquired about the area at Woodmen Lane. Mr. Babin has not looked at it yet.

The council discussed funding from decisions made with House Bill 2.

The council discussed concerns about adverse effects on fisheries.

The council discussed organizing a public meeting about the project sometime during the upcoming months.

Mr. Grezaffi expressed concerns regarding possible lack of funding.

#### UPDATE FALSE RIVER NITROGEN IMPACT MITIGATION PROJECT

Engineer Kevin Gravois gave an update on the False River Nitrogen Impact Mitigation Project. Ms. Bliss Bernard completed the modeling. Mr. Gravois discussed the timeline. He informed the council that the M-1 and M-2 permits have been obtained. He also stated the water is still being tested. Work for the M-1 is schedule to start July 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Gravois plans to speak with landowners in M-2 area. The weirs will be at the bottom location. Mr. Gravois informed the council that agreements have to be obtained from the landowners before bidding takes place. The council discussed work to be done on the Jumonville property. There were citizens who inquired about placement of additional weirs; they were informed that additional weirs will not trap more sediment. Messrs. Glenn Darby and Keith Robillard expressed concerns regarding construction on the island and siltation issues. In response, Mr. Gravois stated there is a process involved in reducing siltration in False River starting this year. Mr. Van Biersel stated initially an agreement has to be obtained from landowners. The council discussed a slight change in the scope. It was stated that landowners must not get flooded. There is a sediment basin that is in use presently. Mr. Robillard expressed concerns regarding plume once weirs are placed. It was stated that plume can be minimized.

## TO HEAR AND CONSIDER LDWF RECOMMENDATION FOR A FALL/WINTER DRAWDOWN

Mr. Brian Heiman of LDWF discussed using water level management as a way to increase productivity. He gave a presentation which included potential benefits and procedures. His recommendation was to reduce the lake level to a target of 6' below pool elevation/8.8' NAVD. Mr. Van Biersel suggested reaching 9.3' NAVD. He also stated that the river should lower 1 ½" per day until 6' level is achieved. The members expect this to take place in September or October. Mr. Heiman suggested a full level drawdown for best management. It was stated that drawdowns can be done on consecutive basis for long term benefits.

Mr. Arthur Ewing expressed concerns as to the lack of data to date to evaluate the result of the drawdown and the lack of an economic assessment.

The council discussed removal of unnecessary fish. Mr. Pouciau expressed concerns regarding fishing season issues.

After further discussion, the following motion was made:

Motion by Mr. Van Biersel and seconded by Mr. D'Aquila:

RESOLVED, That False River lake be reduced to a maximum level of 6' below pool elevation/8.8' NAVD as recommended by Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

The Chairman called for a roll call vote that resulted as follows:

YEAS: Messrs. Thibaut, D'Aquila, Hix, Lyles, Olinde, Pourciau, Tassin, Sharafkhani, and Van Biersel.

NAYS: Messrs. Grezaffi and Ewing.

PRESENT

NOT VOTING: Chairman Myers.

ABSENT: Mrs. Castille and Messrs. Chustz and Ward.

On a vote of 9-3-1-3, the motion passed.

Unanimously carried.

Substitute motion by Mr. Ewing and seconded by Mr. Grezaffi:

RESOLVED, That the False River lake be reduced to a level of 3' as the original drawdown in 2014 and be presented to the Pointe Coupee Police Jury at their meeting of June 28, 2016 and the Secretary of Wildlife and Fisheries.

The Chairman called for a roll call vote that resulted as follows:

YEAS: Messrs. Grezaffi and Ewing.

NAYS: Messrs. Thibaut, D'Aquila, Hix, Lyles, Olinde, Pourciau, Tassin, Sharafkhani, and Van Biersel.

PRESENT

NOT VOTING: Chairman Myers.

ABSENT: Mrs. Castille and Messrs. Chustz and Ward.

On a vote of 2-9-1-3, the motion failed.

The council discussed introduction of an ordinance regarding the project. Mr. D'Aquila will create a draft to be presented to the Police Jury.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

The council discussed doing launches and news release for the public to obtain information on the drawdown.

The council agreed that the next meeting will take place on July 14, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. in the Police Jury meeting room.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Vincent Russo thanked Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries for their efforts.

Motion by Mr. Olinde and seconded by Mr. Thibaut, the meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

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RANDY MYERS - CHAIRMAN