

AMENDED MINUTES
FALSE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2017

The False River Watershed Council met in a regular session at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at the Courthouse Annex Building in New Roads, Louisiana.

Randy Myers called the meeting to order and directed Ms. Jeanne Hendrix to call the roll:

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

Absent: Brad Spicer, Jimmy Chustz

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

Resolved, That the agenda of the meeting of January 11, 2017 be accepted.

Unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Mr. Ewing to approve and second by Mr. Pourciau.

Resolved, That the minutes of the December 13, 2016 are accepted for approval.

Unanimously carried.

UPDATE PROPOSED FALSE RIVER ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECT - PHASE II

Gerald Babin presented the council with packet regarding island project. The island is stable, grass and trees are growing, soil is drying out. There is 18 inches between edge and top. It looks like it will remain stable and additional sediment can be added at later dated if needed.

Alternatives explored on north end project. They looked at property L.J. Grezaffi had. Containment dyke and disposal costs totaled \$1.7 million. Running it to Mississippi River would be \$1.9 million. The savings cost is not worth risk to residential areas near the Grezaffi property. This makes Mississippi River option more likely and is the recommendation of Mr. Babin. He is working with Les Cantrell on reaching out to property owners for access. Permitting process is next. There are several permits involved including to cross levee, to pump into river, and crossing highway.

Mr. Lyles asked about time line. Mr. Babin indicated it could take up to a year. Mr. Lyles asked about a backup plan. Mr. Babin indicated that they would not be very far along in process before there would be indications of the permits not being granted. Running piping up False Bayou would be a cost and time savings.

Mr. Ewing asked if project would include boring under railroads. Mr. Babin indicated that there may be existing culverts that can be used.

Mr. Lyles expressed need to move quickly on this project due to possible delays by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Mr. Pourciau asked if dredging would begin in Spring 2018. Mr. Babin agreed.

Mr. Thibaut stated that last permit process with USACE went fairly quickly. Mr. Babin stated it could be shorter and stated that he would be ready to submit for permit in a couple months. Just need to have agreement with landowner.

Mr. Van Biersel explained time line and how many permits are involved.

Mr. Grezaffi questioned how many landowners were involved and if you could still pump same amounts of silt given the distance. Mr. Babin referred to notes of proposal and stated that 200, 000 cubic yards will be pumped out. Cost of construction and maintenance is an issue once they pump onto private property. There is a longer term responsibility once silt is placed on private property.

Mr. Thibaut expressed that Mississippi River may be slightly more costly, getting rid of possible negative impact on drainage is worth cost and getting rid of future responsibility.

If more money could be obtained, they could remove more yards of silt.

18 inches to 2 feet would get the elevation in the North Flats they would like to achieve. They will avoid areas of hard shell to protect fish habitats.

UPDATE FALSE RIVER NITROGEN IMPACT MITIGATION PROJECT

An update was given by Mr. Thibaut. Access agreements to M1 are being worked on. It is closer for going out to bid. Design is completed and working on staking positions of weirs. One of two has signed access agreements. Other is out of town but is scheduled to meet. Concerns by owners are maintenance and road access. Should be completed in 2 weeks.

Kevin Gravois stated there will be slight adjustments to weirs but for most part landowners are in agreement with design. Once agreements are signed project will go out for bid.

M2 canal - plans are ready. NRG and 2 other property owners are involved. Projects are ready to go out for bid once agreements are done.

Mr. Ewing asked if same access agreements on M1 could be used on M2. Mr. Gravois stated they could with approval from parish attorney.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Ewing asked about boat launch. Mr. Olinde stated that once river level goes up they will have excavator and level out area.

Mr. Lyles questioned end date of drawdown. January 15th is end date. Mr. Olinde stated he would close gates on the 15th.

Mr. Grezaffi asked why gates are not closed given amounts of recent rainfall. Mr. Olinde stated that with rain the river went to 14.4 feet and is now at 14 feet so even with the gates open there was not a significant loss of water. Mr. B. Heiman stated that they set 15th date and want to stick with it. Also purpose of drawdown was to mimic nature and the recent heavy rains and slight drop in river level come as close to natural conditions in a lake as possible.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Myers asked about shorelines, natural bulkhead permits.

Mr. Ewing stated they are still working on it. He wants to see a more formal permitting process with bulkhead construction and to encourage more of a natural shoreline if possible.

Mr. Lyles questioned next years drawdown. Mr. Myers explained that a drawdown would not be concurrent with the dredging project, because the dredge needs a certain water level to operate.

Mr. Grezaffi asked about natural shoreline. Mr. Myers stated that there is research that shows natural shoreline is wildlife friendly and more cost efficient.

Mr. Myer asked Mr. Thibaut about tire pickup. Mr. Thibaut indicated 480 tires have been picked up in first round. Second round was scheduled but there has been no update. Mr. Lyles indicated that second pickup has not happened, and there are still many tires on the roadway. Mr. Thibaut indicated he will ask Sheriff Torres to make another round.

An update was given on barge removal. The water with recent rains has put the project on hold. The volunteers removing the project are looking at a dyke and pump option.

Mr. Grezaffi expressed concerns on notice of meeting to public. Discussion was had on how meetings are set, and giving additional notice of meetings. Mr. Grezaffi wants to improve notice to public. Mr. Myers stated that the matter has been discussed several times. Mr. Myers

stated that board has no funding to run advertisements in local paper. Council is posting meetings and meeting legal requirements.

Mr. D'Aquila asked about setting standing meeting day/time like to police jury. Mr. Myers said he wanted to discuss this option. He would like to set meeting one meeting in advance.

Mr. Lyles stated that he would like to see it on police jury website. Mr. Olinde stated it is posted. Mr. Grezaffi stated it is not fair to not post meetings in The Pointe Coupee Banner. Mr. Ward indicated he would pay for notice in Banner. Mr. Thibaut added that it is an advisory committee and many members who are appointed and have other commitment with their jobs. Getting a quorum is difficult. Mr. Grezaffi indicated standing meeting would not solve the problem either if it has to be moved. He expressed that he still wants notice in paper. Mr. Myers asked Mr. Van Biersel about putting on DNR website. He said he could put on police jury website. Mr. Grezaffi still expressed concerns with this option. Mr. Hicks said that people can call the police jury and ask when the next meeting is scheduled.

The next meeting will be set for March 8th at 3:00 p.m.

Motion to set meeting for March 8th at 3:00 p.m. by Mr. Ewing and second by Mr. Olinde.

Unanimously carried.

Mr. Grezaffi asked if there are plans for another drawdown. Mr. Myers stated at this time the council is not ready to make recommendation.

Mr. B. H. gave presentation on drawdown. They have observed very positive results.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PERSONAL PRIVILEGE:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Nicholas Rockforte
Lori Rockforte
Helen Augustine/ David Bergin
Craig Gosserand
Mary Denny
Richard Manship
Noelie Ewing
Tommy Bryan
Dianne Deville
Betty Fontaine
Angel Bains

Rick Lambert

Mr. Grezaffi attempted to enter motion preventing future draw downs on False River. Mr. Myers stated that it was a prepared statement/motion and should have been brought up earlier to the council. He turned to Mr. D'Aquila to see if Mr. Grezaffi entering this motion was in proper order. Mr. D'Aquila indicated that if there is no second then it fails. Mr. Ward stated he is concerned about passing motion without fulling understanding it and asked to comeback to it in March. Mr. Ewing asked that language be cleaned up. Mr. Grezaffi stated he would wait but expressed concerns. There was discussion by the members on withdrawing motion, substituting motion, or voting on the motion. Mr. Thibaut offered a substitute motion to adjourn and Mr. D'Aquila seconded. There was input from a member of the audience that there first has to be motion to place item on agenda before it can be voted on, and Mr. Grezaffi is out of order. Mr. Myers agreed. Mr. Ewing asked that it be placed on agenda for next meeting.

Motion to Adjourn by Mr. D'Aquilla. and second by Mr. Lyles.

The meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.