

MINUTES
FALSE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL
August 23, 2017

The False River Watershed Council met in a regular session at 3:00 p.m. on August 23, 2017 at the Courthouse Annex Building in New Roads, Louisiana.

Chairman Ricky Moses called the meeting to order and directed Ms. Jeanne Hendrix to call the roll:

Present: Messrs. Major Thibaut, Arthur Ewing, Cy D'Aquila, Jerry Hix, Jimmy Chustz, Kyle Olinde, Mark Ward, Stephen Tassin, Ron Pourciau, Bijan Sharafkhani, Thomas Van Biersel, Ricky Moses

Absent: Messrs. Brad Spicer, Rick Ward, Jimmy Lyles

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion to approve the agenda by Mr. Ewing. Second by Mr. Thibaut.
No opposition.

Resolved, That the agenda of the meeting of August 23, 2017 is accepted.

Unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Mr. Ewing to approve and second by Mr. D'Aquila.

Resolved, That the minutes of the July 12, 2017 are accepted for approval.

Unanimously carried.

UPDATE PROPOSED FALSE RIVER ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECT - PHASE II

Gerald Babin gave an update on Phase II. He provided information on the increased cost of pumping to the Mississippi River and decision to abandon that option. Permitting would be higher than anticipated and not guaranteed. Contractor recommended drying out material as it is pumped out. He has received calls about using land and remaining dried silt. He has looked at three different properties. They are also trying to get a test unit to see what samples would look like. Space and accessibility still an issue with land.

Mr. Moses asked about the value of the materials and who keeps the materials. Mr. Van Biersel stated that because the material has a value it could be subject to restrictions on "giving it away." The land used as the site would still have to have ability to get water back to the lake.

Mr. Thibaut stated that now that the material is of better quality dried, it may open up property owners who are willing to let them use their land.

Mr. Van Biersel mentioned not drying the material and using property along False Bayou.

Mr. Ewing asked about an updated and side by side quote for both options. Additionally, he asked for accurate costs for all options that are being explored.

Mr. Babin mentioned the costs and meeting with property owners. He mentioned a subcommittee to meet with landowners again and discuss this new option.

Mr. Thibaut stated if the project is shovel ready funding would be in better position. Easier to get additional funds if we have a plan in place.

Mr. D'Aquila asked about what would be the easiest option. Mr. Babin indicated that this plan would be easier.

UPDATE FALSE RIVER NITROGEN IMPACT MITIGATION PROJECT:

Mr. Van Biersel stated that as of the meeting date 5 weirs are on M1. They were built smaller than designed but they feel that they will work for small/regular storms.

Mr. Thibaut has seen the work and stated that the structures need to continue all the way up the sides of the canal. The M1 is showing signs of being sprayed on one side but is grown up on the other. Mr. Van Biersel stated that there is still vegetation to be planted. He has drafted an amendment to extend the cooperative agreement. Initially there was \$80,000 allocated for maintenance. Due to a decrease in size and number there is now \$370,000 for maintenance. EPA would most likely approve maintenance work.

Mr. Ewing asked about shoreline build up and erosion control. Mr. Van Biersel stated there is money for modification and maintenance.

Mr. Thibaut stated there is NRCS erosion control up to a point but closer to the mouth of the M1 it has stopped. He asked if this could be addressed. Mr. Van Biersel stated it would fall under maintenance of the channel. There needs to be extensions of the permits to allow for any modifications.

Mr. Thibaut has asked for solicitation on getting quotes for what it would cost for spray M1 and M2 and if this could be done with mitigation funds. Mr. Olinde agreed to keep grass and get rid of brush. Mr. Thibaut also requested that PEC look into raising the sides of the weirs.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. D'Aquila spoke regarding No Wake Zones, the current wake ordinance, and artificial wake enhancing devices on boats. He drafted an ordinance prohibiting the use of wake enhancing devices on False River. He would like to recommend the police jury to enact this ordinance to help mitigate wake activities.

Mr. Brian Hieman spoke to WLF enforcement. The Cane River Lake Authority enacted a speed limit but WLF does not and will not enforce it. WLF will enforce a no wake zone. If a boat produces a large wake but is not in the no wake zone - they will not stop them. They only enforce those operating illegally in the no wake zone. If there is damage to property by a wake then they will enforce that type of violation. The parish would have to enforce the ordinance.

Mr. Thibaut asked about meeting with WLF and getting more strict on enforcing the no-wake zone. Mr. Ewing stated the buoys need be replaced to inform the public on where no-wake zones are located.

Mr. Moses said he feels a meeting with WLF about stepping up enforcement would be helpful.

Mr. Thibaut indicated that there are 100 buoys that need to be placed out. He asked that in addition to local high school students, could inmates assist in setting out the buoys. Mr. Ward stated that he would check into the matter. Mr. Moses indicated that Rapids Parish does use inmate labor to maintain buoys.

Mr. Pourciau indicated the parish ordinance needed to be reviewed and discuss enforcement then other options can be discussed.

It was agreed to have a WLF agent at the next meeting and have a subcommittee look at this issue further.

Mr. Van Biersel stated that the subcommittees needed to be revised and meet in order to prepare the update to the legislature. He will email everyone with a list of committees and ask that everyone sign up for one.

The eco-system restoration subcommittee will be made of Mr. Ewing, Mr. Olinde, Mr. Hix and Mr. Thibaut.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mr. Stephen Smith spoke about the Pointe Coupee Economic Development Committee, and expressed the committee's support of the restoration project.

The next meeting was set for September 20th at 3:00 p.m.

Motion to Adjourn by Mr. Hix and second by Mr. Ewing.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.