

MINUTES
LAKE PROVIDENCE WATERSHED COUNCIL
October 11, 2018

The Lake Providence Watershed Council met at the East Carroll Parish Sheriff's office at 11:00 a.m. on October 11, 2018.

Meeting was called to order by Thomas Van Biersel (R. Moses absent).

ROLL CALL

Council Members Present: T. Van Biersel, Jim Lensing, Andy Brister, Teddy Schneider, Mark Brown, Reynold Minsky, Raynie Harlan (LDWF proctor for R. Moses), Jesse Means and Amee Preau (LDEQ proctor for Amanda Vincent)

Others in Attendance: Ryan Daniel (LDWF), Eddie Foster (NRCS), Brian Howard, LDOTD: Pat Landry, Ed Knight, Doug Taylor, COE: Dan Moore, Ray Wilson, Neil Lewis.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the June 4, 2018 council meeting were approved (Brister, Minsky).

OLD BUSINESS

Jessie Means (LDEQ) provided info. on DEQ's Source Water Protection Program

- contingency plans for water supplies; provided to public water systems
- assessment of potential contaminants
- will begin East and West Carroll Parishes July 2019; will meet with all owners of water wells
- will have educational events

Eddie Foster (NRCS) provided update on MRBI program.

- 2.8 million dollars obligated
- HUC lines have been redrawn, more funding requested
- Hopeful and optimistic that producers will continue participation
- Results of recent research on cover crops could lead to lower costs for farmers

T. Schneider stated that low commodity prices may lead to non-voluntary participation.

Brian Howard commented that it will be uncertain if participation continues but that he and the Council will urge others to continue.

Eddie Foster provided a summary of the Cover Crop Workshop held July 26th at the Cotton Museum.

- Interest and turnout was encouraging
- Some producers were convinced to continue participation
- 100% of producers in the watershed are currently under contract

Andy Brister gave an update on road swap plan between Parish and DOTD.

- ECPPJ passed resolution to submit road swap application to DOTD

Andy Brister gave an update on the Hwy. 134 (Tensas) water control structure.

- ECPPJ submitted for 200k for control structure matching funds
- Brister, L. Denny, and others recently met with Denmon Engineering to discuss potential repairs/replacement
- Denmon told them that a fully functional structure would not be possible until Tensas is cleaned out; no drawdown capability or prevention of backflow
- COE may have jurisdiction over portions of the Tensas. Could potentially fall under Sec. 206 (Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration) with initial 100k for planning/study paid with federal funding; 65:35 match afterward

Discussion followed concerning funding and priorities. R. Minsky stated that he would like the COE to handle major workload on Tensas while Tensas Levee Board could handle smaller projects. Brister asked about the option of pumping water across MS River levee and others commented that it would likely be too costly. It was also agreed that adequate “cleaning” of Tensas will be very costly.

NEW BUSINESS

Raynie Harlan (LDWF) provided overview of the LA Watershed Initiative program (LAWI).

- Flood control program administered through HUD in response to recent statewide flooding
- Funding will be available in a few months; still waiting on guidance to direct funding and establish criteria and prioritization process for local projects
- Funding for flood risk reduction with priority of using natural floodplain if possible
- Statewide listening tour has begun with meetings scheduled in various locations around the state; encouraged others to attend meeting on Oct. 16 in West Monroe

Pat Landry and Ed Knight (DOTD) stated that \$1.2 billion has been allocated to LA for flood mitigation. Modeling will be done on all state watersheds at a HUC8 level. They are currently modeling the Amite basin as a pilot project. Funding will be disseminated by LA Office of Community Development.

R. Minsky asked if LAWI could assist with drainage. DOTD replied that there may be potential if drainage is linked to frequent flooding problems (not just historical floods).

R. Daniel provided overview of SCR 77.

- By Sen. Thompson in 2016; extended sunset for Council until Dec. 31, 2018
- Mentioned alternatives for Council: advisory committee, lake commission, etc...
- Will need agenda listing and vote at next Council meeting to request extension

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

The next council meeting was scheduled for Dec. 12th at 11:00 a.m., to be held in the Sheriffs office.

Meeting adjourned at 11:59 a.m.

Ricky Moses, Chairman