

MINUTES
LAKE PROVIDENCE WATERSHED COUNCIL
October 23, 2024

The Lake Providence Watershed Council met in the Sheriff's office on October 23, 2024.

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Butler.

ROLL CALL

Council Members Present (11): Kristi Butler (Chairman), Thomas VanBiersel (via Zoom), Francis Lensing, Jim Lensing, Mark Brown, Brian Howard, Reynold Minsky, Michael Schooler, Donna Winters, Amy Preau (via Zoom)

A quorum was met.

Others in Attendance: R. Daniel (LDWF), Jacob Brister, Nicholas Greer (NRCS), Anthony Bridgewaer (NRCS), Barry Moore (COE), Cameron Willoughby (COE), Marinna Curtis (LDAF), Raynie Harlan (LDWF, via Zoom), Melanie Bauder (LDEQ), Patrick Banks (LDWF)

PREVIOUS MINUTES AND CURRENT AGENDA

The minutes of the July 17, 2024 meeting were approved: M. Schooler (motion), D. Winters (second).

The agenda of this meeting was approved: F. Lensing (motion), M. Brown (second),

REPORTS

1. Fifth Levee Board update (Minsky) – no answer from COE on chipping along Tensas bank; not sure if COE has sufficient funding for local projects
2. Police Jury Update – None
3. Capital Outlay – None
4. Watershed Council Report (VanBiersel) – report due May 1, 2025; reminder to continue taking photos and provide updates
5. Fisheries Update (Daniel) – provided “fact sheet” showing improvements to fisheries that may be attributed to the MRBI program; Council commented the need to get Soil and Water District to provide this info to public; plans for Christmas tree project; will provide results of upcoming crappie sampling to Council a.s.a.p.

NEW BUSINESS

Marinna Curtis provided overview of PL566 program (small watershed flood reduction): cost-share program, 4 step process (1-PIFR, 2-Request for NRCS funding, 3-Planning & Engineering, 4-Implementation), normally 1.5 – 2yrs. for planning and engineering and 2 – 8yrs. for implementation, possibly for snagging along Tensas Bayou. A. Bridgewater stated that there is a draft plan for Madison Parish and the E. Carroll could be included and partnerships are important

for project selection. Other local entities could also apply for this funding which would reduce likelihood for a LP project.

Michael Schooler gave overview of 319 program (Clean Water Act). There may be options for Disadvantaged Communities to receive funding for cover crop planting. Could possibly pay up to 60% of planting costs (approx.. \$50 - \$60/acre). Need to gage local interest for implementation in fall 2025. Managed by local SWCD. Slightly different requirements than NRCS.

Aimee Preau commented that LDEQ data can show which tributaries are providing the most pollutants so that funding may be prioritized in these areas. Ex.: could identify areas which would benefit the most from filter strips or other vegetative buffers.

COE Update (Barry Moore): stated that COE had received a request for an 1135 (likely from ECPJ), though it has been idle for a while. Will need to investigate it prior to Feb. 2025 briefing. Will likely need updates. There is a cost-share waiver for Economically Disadvantaged communities. May be for a sedimentation study. R. Harlan asked if various requests for funding would hurt chances and B. Moore replied that it should not. M. Schooler suggested identifying separate projects for different funding opportunities.

COMMENTS

F. Lensing stated that a few farmers are still planting cover crops at their own expense.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chuck Berger (LDEQ via Zoom) announced that there will be a LWI Region 3 river and rain gauge meeting soon and urged to attend if possible. He is willing to speak to the Council at the next meeting about nature based river channel design. Council agreed to add to next agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

none

OTHER – Next Meeting Date

- The next meeting date was scheduled for **1:00 PM** on Jan. 22, 2025 in Lake Providence.

Meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.

Kristi Butler, Chairman