

MINUTES
OF THE
RED RIVER WATERWAY COMMISSION MEETING
MAY 18, 2011
10:00 AM
COMMISSION HEADQUARTERS
NATCHITOCHE, LOUISIANA

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Red River Waterway Commission was called to order by Acting Chair, Mr. Nicholas Verret, in the Board Room of the Red River Waterway Commission Office located at 5941 Highway 1 By-Pass in Natchitoches, Louisiana.

2. **ROLL CALL & INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Roll was called and a quorum was present. Others in attendance were asked to identify themselves.

Present: Acting Chairman Nicholas Verret, Commissioner Doug Brown, Commissioner Wayne Davis, Commissioner Marc Dupuy, Jr., Commissioner Paul Fleming, Commissioner Randell Fletcher, Commissioner Andrew J. Hodges, III, Commissioner James F. Maxey, Commissioner Alvin Owens, Commissioner Rogers M. Prestridge.

Absent: Commissioner David L. Crutchfield, II, Commissioner Michael Simpson.

RRWC Staff Members Present: Mr. Ken Guidry - Executive Director, Mr. Randy Walters - Marketing Director, Mr. Mike Boydston - Operations & Maintenance Director, Mrs. Cathy Rushing - Executive Assistant, Mr. Colin Brown - Engineer Supervisor, Mr. Luke Pearson - Real Estate Manager, Mr. Greg Upton - Legal Counsel.

Others Present: Mrs. Robin Cosenza, Mrs. Jessica Broadway, Mr. Rich Brontoli

3. **APPROVAL OF REVISED AGENDA**

By motion of Commissioner Prestridge, seconded by Commissioner Dupuy, the agenda was revised and unanimously approved. Comments from the public were called for, however, none were offered.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

By motion of Commissioner Fletcher, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the minutes of the April 20, 2011 meeting were unanimously approved.

5. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

By motion of Commissioner Owens, seconded by Commissioner Prestridge, the Expenditures, Financial Statements & Investment Reports for the month of April, 2011 were unanimously approved.

6. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a) **Contracts**

Consideration of Amendment to Aerial Spraying Contract RRW-592 - By motion of Commissioner Prestridge, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, the Commission unanimously agreed to defer action on this item and instructed staff to investigate other options for treating the aquatic vegetation issues.

b) **Land Management, Legal Affairs & Affirmative Action**

Authority to Award Leaseback/Pierremont Island, Pool 4, Portions of Tracts 1 - By motion of Commissioner Dupuy, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher, the Commission unanimously approved the renewal of the leaseback of 44 acres at Pierremont Island, Pool 4, Portions of Tract 1 for \$264.00 per year or \$1,320.00 for a five year term to Mr. Ronald Wicker.

c) **Recreation**

Recreation Area Status Report - A prepared report was provided in the meeting packet. Mr. Mike Boydston added the following comments:

- There were approximately 221,000 visitors to the District recreation areas during April, 2011
- All boat ramps at the various District recreation facilities on the Red River had been closed recently due to high water levels. The boat ramps in the Shreveport/Bossier City area are currently still closed due to high river levels, as well as the Ben Routh and Brouillette boat ramps in Avoyelles Parish. However, all other ramps are being re-opened.

d) **Ports** - Prepared Tonnage and Project Status Reports were provided in the meeting packets.

e) **Public Awareness & Marketing**

Marketing Update - A prepared Activity Report was provided in the meeting packet.

Consideration of 2012 BASSMASTERS Classic Program - By motion of Commissioner Owens, seconded by Commissioner Dupuy, the Commissioners unanimously approved the marketing plan relative to the J. Bennett Johnston Waterway in connection with the 2012 BASSMASTERS Classic Tournament program to be held in the Shreveport-Bossier City area in February of that year, with a budget of up to \$176,422.97.

Mr. Ken Guidry took this opportunity to note that Commissioner David Crutchfield had participated in the Dragon Boat Race event held in the downtown Alexandria, Louisiana area. The event was a huge success and there is talk of making this an annual festival event.

f) **Personnel** - No report

g) **Revenue, Banking & Budget**

Adoption of 2011 Tax Millage Assessment Rates - By motion of Commissioner Fleming, seconded by Commissioner Owens, the Commission unanimously approved a resolution(attached) to adopt the 2011 tax millage assessment rates of 1.52 mills for capitol outlay and .82 mills for operations and maintenance for a total of 2.34 mills.

Approval of 2010 Audit - By motion of Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Owens, the Commission unanimously approved the 2010 Audit Report as prepared and submitted by the Roberts, Cherry

Group, CPA's.

Approval of Budget Amendment/BASSMASTERS CLASSIC - By motion of Commissioner Fleming, seconded by Commissioner Owens, the Commission unanimously approved an amendment to the 2011 budget to provide for up to \$176,422.97 to be expended relative to the BASSMASTERS Classic marketing plan.

h) Legislative - Mr. Nick Verret reported on the following legislative issues:

- House Bill 321 by Representatives Jean Doerge, Henry Burns, and Jane Smith provides for the authority to sell water from Lake Bistineau and establish an advisory board which would administer the sale of the water and administer the funds realized from the sales. This bill has not yet come before the Committee for Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs.
- House Concurrent Resolution #13 urges and requests that the State of Arkansas comply with the Red River Compact in regard to take affirmative steps to regulate any diversions or flow in such a manner as to permit an equitable apportionment of the run-off waters into the State of Louisiana. However, this mainly focuses on the Ouachita River Basin and does not affect the Red River Basin. This resolution has not yet come before the Committee on Natural Resources and Environment.

Mr. Verret added that there are some other items relative to construction contracts and procedures. However, he had no additional information on those items at this time. He added that he would keep the Commission informed with regard to any pending legislation that would have any affects on the Red River Waterway Commission. Mr. Guidry requested that Mr. Randy Walters also keep track of these legislative issues.

At this time, Mr. Verret commented on the current Mississippi River flooding issues, as compared to the current conditions on the Red River. He presented a chart of historic flood stages of the Ouachita River at Monroe, Louisiana; the Black River at Acme, Louisiana; the Red River at Alexandria, Louisiana; and the Mississippi River at Natchez, Mississippi. He pointed out that the current flooding conditions on the Mississippi River do not impact the Red River, Ouachita River and Black River systems as did the flood of 1973, mainly due to the fact that those systems have not received the rainfall amounts that the more northern portions of the Mississippi River system has received recently, even though the river levels on the Mississippi River are currently higher than it was during the flood of 1973. Also, in 1973, there was a the danger of losing the Old River Control Structure. Currently, waters are being diverted through that structure and out of the Mississippi River in order to attempt to balance the flows in an effort to avoid the head differential which could lead to erosion around that structure. The lock and dam system on the Red River has definitely contributed to alleviate much of the back-water flowing which otherwise would have occurred absent that system.

7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Guidry noted various up-coming events. By motion of Commissioner Prestridge, seconded by Commissioner Dupuy, the Commission unanimously approved travel reimbursement for the Commissioners and relative staff members to attend the following events:

- Tri-State Engineering Society Meeting June 26-29, 2011 to be held in Destin, Florida. Mr. Colin Brown will be attending that meeting as part of a continuing education requirement in order to maintain his engineering license.
- Louisiana Motor Transport Association, Inc., July 28-30, 2011 in Destin, Florida.
- Tennessee-Tombigbee Annual Conference, August 30 - September 2, 2011 in Point Clear, Alabama.
- National Waterways Conference, September 19-21, 2011 in Ft. Worth, Texas.

At this time, by motion of Commissioner Dupuy, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Commission unanimously approved the addition of the following item to the agenda. Comments from the public regarding this revision to the agenda was called for, however, none were offered.:

- RRVA Texarkana Water Resource Conference, June 1, 2011 in Texarkana, Arkansas.

By motion of Commissioner Owens, seconded by Commissioner Prestridge, the reimbursement of travel expenses relative to the Commissioners and staff to attend this function was so authorized

8. STATUS OF RIGHTS-OF-WAY/ENGINEERING REPORT

Prepared reports were provided in the meeting packet. Mr. Colin Brown also reported on the following issues:

- The contract for the Additional Amenities-North project has been awarded. Work on that project should begin within the next couple of weeks.
- Advertising for the Additional Amenities - Central Project began on Friday, May 13, 2011. Staff anticipates presenting bids for approval in the June 15, 2011 meeting.
- Staff has received the plans and specifications for the Bishop Point Asphalt Project and currently reviewing those.
- Staff has received the executed Cooperative Endeavor Agreement relative to the Red Bayou Irrigation Project from the Caddo Soil & Water Conservation District. Mr. Guidry will execute those documents today. It is anticipated that project will begin soon, however, a definite start date has not been indicated as yet.

9. GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT - No report

- 10. CORPS OF ENGINEERS REPORT** - There was no representative from the U. S. Army, Corps of Engineers present to offer a report. However, the Commissioners were provided with a copy of correspondence from the USACOE relative to a request from the Spring Bayou Restoration Team to consider raising the elevation of Pool 1 of the J. Bennet Johnston Waterway project approximately two feet to provide for gravity flow from the waterway into the Spring Bayou Wildlife Management Area complex for the purposes of ecosystem restoration. Mr. Guidry explained that, basically, the USACOE has denied that request with their reasons noted in the correspondence.

11. RED RIVER VALLEY ASSOCIATION - Mr. Rich Brontoli reported on the following items:

- The RRVA Texarkana Water Resources Conference scheduled for June 1, 2011 in Texarkana, Arkansas will include a presentation regarding invasive species. Mr. Brontoli offered to send the Power Point presentations on CD to the staff for review.
- The Red River is in good shape for navigation. Unfortunately the flooding issues on the Mississippi River hamper access into the Red River. The Natchez Mississippi Port is currently closed. The

Arkansas River is also closed to navigation at this time, as well as several other river systems. With the Red River currently 2 feet from pool stage, Mr. Brontoli will begin contacting the USACOE to request inspections with regard to siltation. He is hopeful that possible emergency supplemental funding may be available for dredging below Lock and Dam #1, especially, given the impact on that area from the flooding on the Mississippi River. It is anticipated that Old River will re-open for barge traffic by the end of this month.

- The USACOE published their work plans for the coming year under a Continuing Resolution
- The Bossier Parish study relative to flooding on Bayou Bodcau and Red Chute Bayou was funded at \$210,000.00
- The USACOE currently has 4 dredges working on the Mississippi River at and below New Orleans, Louisiana.

12. OTHER BUSINESS - Commissioner Prestridge announced that a representative from the North Louisiana Economic Partnership will be attending the June 15, 2011 Commission meeting to present an update on the annual activities of that entity.

13. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC - None

14. RECESS

At this time, by motion of Commissioner Owens, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, and unanimously approved, the meeting recessed for lunch and the Secretary/Treasurer was authorized to pay for the meals of the Commissioners and their guests out of the funds of the District.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting reconvened immediately following lunch, however, there being no further business to conduct at this time, by motion of Commissioner Fletcher, seconded by Commissioner Davis, and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned.

JAMES F. MAXEY
SECRETARY/TREASURER

NICHOLAS F. VERRET, JR.
ACTING CHAIRMAN