

MINUTES
FALSE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016

The False River Watershed Council met in a regular session at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 13, 2016 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, Arthur Ewing, Jerry Hix, Jimmy Chustz, Jimmy Lyles, Kyle Olinde, L.J. Grezaffi, Thomas Van Biersel, Randy Myers

Absent: Brad Spicer, Cy D'Aquila, Ron Pourciau, Stephen Tassin, Bijan Sharafkhani, and Rick Ward

Motion to by Mr. Thibaut to amend the agenda adding presentation by Captain Bob Muller.
Second by Mr. Ewing.

Unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF AMENDED AGENDA:

Motion by Mr. Hicks and a second by Mr. Chustz:

Resolved, That the agenda of the meeting of December 13, 2016 be accepted for approval.

Unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Mr. Lyles to approve and a second by Mr. Ewing.

Resolved, That the minutes of the October 25, 2016 minutes are accepted for approval.

Unanimously carried.

PRESENTATION BY CAPTAIN BOB MULLER

Barge from 1880's believed to be oldest in existence has been discovered with drawdown. Efforts to recover and restore a barge are underway by volunteers. Mr. Muller requested the river to stay at lowest level possible to assist in their recovery efforts. Council expressed support of recovery efforts but informed Captain Muller that river level can only naturally go so low.

Mr. Lyles asked for a time frame and expressed concern on river level in spring and dry winter forecast. River is currently at 11.2 feet - up about 3/4 foot since recent rains. Mr. Thibaut and Mr. Ewing expressed need to have another meeting before January 15th. Mr. Thibaut and Mr. Grezaffi recommended volunteers use a coffer and pump system to help in removing the barge.

UPDATE PROPOSED FALSE RIVER ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECT - PHASE II

Mr. Gerald Babin gave a status of the land search. Additionally, he provided the council with a presentation of silt removal/disposal options and costs of the options. It has been suggested by previous contractor that disposing silt in the Mississippi River would be the best choice. This option would require permitting by the USACE and could take up to a year before pumping could begin.

Mr. Thibaut asked about speaking to Division of Administration about cost savings on some options versus pumping to the Mississippi River. Additionally, he requested that if DOA is not in agreement to cost savings, then PEC should begin permit process with USACE.

After speaking to several people, Mr. Babin stated that there seems to be no reason for the USACE to deny the permit but could be lengthy. Mr. Babin will continue to check with area property owners.

Mr. Ewing asked about difference in cost, and amount of material removed for each option. Mr. Babin gave a brief explanation of what costs stand for.

Mr. Grezaffi expressed that there may be other properties available north of power plant on Oak Street. Mr. Babin stated he did not know if the watershed in the area would be able to handle return water to the river.

Mr. Thibaut again expressed that project needs to be moving forward to show that project is on track. State is cutting projects that are not moving forward.

Mr. Ewing asked to have priority system set for options. Mr. Van Biersel gave explanation on permitting process.

Mr. Myer stated that cost may be increased with pumping to the Mississippi the removal and not having to worry with it returning make it a better option. Mr. Van Biersel stated that after speaking to several divisions it just did not seem to be an issue with any of them to use the river option.

Mr. Van Biersel reminded the council that there would still be a need to have landowner permission for access through their property on the way to the Mississippi River.

Mr. Thibaut, Mr. Grezaffi, and Mr. Babin will meet to look at land options before next meeting.

UPDATE FALSE RIVER NITROGEN IMPACT MITIGATION PROJECT

Mr. Kevin Gravois was not able to meet with J. E. Jumonville. He has everything designed and ready for permitting but would like to meet with the landowners first. He will try again but he needs to go out for bids to get project moving. Mr. Gravois is trying to come up with design that makes every party happy. Agreements with property owners need to be signed. Open bids will be advertised for 30 days. Resolution from Pointe Coupee Parish police jury has been done. Construction should start 30-60 days after bid is awarded.

Mr. Thibaut offered assistance in getting agreements signed.

M2 is still in the design process but should be done shortly.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Ewing asked about compaction in False River with drawdown. Mr. Brian Heiman gave a presentation on compaction stakes. Several of the stakes showed up to 4 inches. There is significant vegetation growth. They are happy with results. 400 acres of exposed land. In the north flats there are several large firm areas with shell. There is evidence of trees and proof that the lake did fluctuate in level naturally. 10.6 ft was the lowest level of the lake. Water quality conditions have improved with regards to oxygen levels. There is a uniform oxygen level.

A. Ewing asked about bulkhead failure reports. K. Olinde noted a shift in his property and bulkhead near his home. M. Thibaut stated he received 3 calls. One of the three appears to be a poorly built bulkhead. Another call was related to a shift in property -but the bulkhead is fine. It appears that 40 feet of the property has sunk 3-5 inches. Mr. Thibaut will be going to meet with engineers and property owner to see what is causing compaction of the property. M. Thibaut noted that neighbor to this property has had significant drainage issues in the past. Final complaint was at base of the outflow channel. It appears that a couple of the sheets kicked out. It too will be looked at in the future.

DWF is doing an update press release. M. Thibaut requested an explanation on why grasses are not being planted during the drawdown. B. Heiman also added that grasses are there, they just might not be visible from above water.

A. Ewing asked about turbidity. DWF stated that there has not been that much change. A. Ewing asked for more data points on turbidity to show benefits of natural shoreline.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PERSONAL PRIVILEGE:

M. Thibaut stated that sheriff picked up about 150 tires. They will make another run in the next week or two. Additionally, M. Thibaut has contact information for someone who is picking up debris behind homes for hire. M. Thibaut stated that there have been questions about inmates working around properties, and for safety reasons this may not be a good option. He stated that

inmates may be helpful in cleaning up exposed area in the middle of north flats.
R. Myers stated that press release showing sheriff's tire pickup efforts would be discussed.

No public comments.

Next meeting to be held January 11, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. at the Pointe Coupee Police Jury meeting room.

Motion to Adjourn by A. Ewing. Second by J. Lyles. No objections.

The meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.