

MINUTES
LAKE PROVIDENCE WATERSHED COUNCIL
March 6, 2018

The Lake Providence Watershed Council met at the East Carroll Parish Sheriff's office at 11:00 a.m. on June 4, 2018.

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Moses.

ROLL CALL

Council Members Present: Amanda Vincent, Francis Lensing, Jim Lensing, Andy Brister, Teddy Schneider, Mark Brown, Reynolds Minsky, Lee Denny, Donna Winters, Ricky Moses (Chairman)

Others in Attendance: Ryan Daniel (LDWF), Eddie Foster (NRCS), Pete Lensing

PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the March 6, 2018 council meeting were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Vincent gave update on LDEQ water quality monitoring on LP. Charts were shown for various parameters. Overall improvements, with the exception of a few spikes, have been observed in turbidity, nitrates-nitrites, TDS, and total phosphorus. She stated that the recently implemented BMP's in the watershed are likely a factor in the improvements of these water quality parameters.

F. Lensing commented on the recent clarity of the water. He mentioned that the water had muddied up in early May for unknown reasons but has since become very clear, much clearer than normal for LP. A. Brister concurred.

E. Foster gave a report on the status of the NRCS MRBI cover crop program. He mentioned that some of the producers in the watershed have recently requested to opt out of the program, citing difficulty with burning certain cover crops (especially wheat) with herbicide was causing delays in spring planting. He mentioned that unusually wet conditions early this year also was a factor in the delayed preparation of the fields. A meeting with producers to discuss cover crop management has been scheduled for July 26th. It is important that these issues be resolved, as this program and BMP's in general will be critical for the recovery of LP.

D. Winters suggested that preliminary results from LDEQ's water quality sampling project be publicized in local media outlets to show that short-term benefits have already been observed. It's also important to indicate that not all of the issues with LP are the fault of the farmers.

A. Brister also commented that more p.r. is needed to promote the use of cover crops and other BMP's and their importance to water quality improvement.

T. Schneider mentioned the issue of cover crop seeding rates, which are required under the MRBI program. The seeding rates given by LSU are for cash crops and not specifically for cover crop usage. Lower rates would likely be sufficient for cover crop purposes.

A. Brister has spoken with Josh Hollins (LDOTD liaison) concerning flood control project for water control structure repairs/replacement. The local funding match is 10% (\$250,000 for this project. Recently passed SB 372* could supply the local funding requirement. This would be a preferred means of acquiring the needed local funding (rather than the Hwy. swap program, which funding could be used for other projects).

*SB372/ACT384 provides for a Rural Grant Opportunity Program within the Statewide Flood Control Program

L. Denny provided an update on a proposed Hwy. swap with LDOTD. The parish would get \$450k credit per mile of state hwy. that it assumes control of. There are 2 highways that are currently being evaluated. This money cannot be used for a study a must be used on an actual improvement project. This issue will be presented to the ECPPJ for a vote in July 2018.

A. Brister mentioned that USACE has not provided any updates in regard to potentially funding a study to improve drainage conditions around LP.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Vincent provided an overview of LDEQ's Source Water Protection Group:

- works with local entities
- conduct outreach and education
- work primarily associated with well water and surface drinking water supplies
- will be in EC parish in Aug. 2019
- would be available to attend LP Council meeting

F. Lensing stated that 200 bags of sakrete have been placed in the leaking Tensas Bayou structure. This has slowed the leakage by approximately 75%. Water is still flowing under the structure, likely undermining it. The lake level is currently 6 inches below the top of the structure on Baxter Bayou.

R. Minsky reported that LDOTD had recently measured heights of both structures. It was agreed that the Council should request the results of those measurements.

A question arose on when the sunset date of the Council had been scheduled for. It was recommended that it should be extended if it expires spring 2019.

*the sunset date is currently scheduled for _____

It was also mentioned that current legislators represented on the Council (Thompson, Chaney, Anders) will all be term-limited in 2019 and this should be accounted for.

L. Denny stated that he would like for at least one more representative from the ECPPJ to attend the Council meetings. It should be helpful to have multiple jurors attend.

The next council meeting was scheduled for Sept. 20th at 11:00 a.m., to be held in the Sheriffs office.

Meeting adjourned at 11:59 a.m.

Ricky Moses, Chairman