

Spring Bayou Lake Commission

Minutes for February 18, 2019

Commissioners in Attendance: Chairman Jimmy Landry, Vice-Chairman Rayford Laborde, Secretary Terry Laborde, Dr LJ Mayeux, Artha Hale, Roland Dugas III, Philip Lamartiniere, Jules Bordelon, Mayor Kenneth Pickett, Police Juror Mark Borrel, Police Juror Trent Clark, & Police Jury President Col. Charles Jones. Also in attendance were Kyle Soileau, James Franks, Mike Ducote, Scott Laborde, Ronald Coco, George Israel, Billy Reason, & Civil Works Director Kevin Bordelon.

The meeting began as Chairman Jim Landry called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Police Jury Meeting Room. Chairman Landry led the group with the opening prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. Secretary Terry Laborde called the roll of commission members. Commissioner Philip Lamartiniere presented a motion that received a second by Mayor Kenneth Pickett to accept the minutes of the January 2019 meeting. The vote was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Roland Dugas read a message to the committee from his phone sent by an official from the US Corps of Engineering alerting him there are plans to probably open the spillway within the next few days to relieve the pressure in the lower Mississippi River.

Secretary Terry Laborde & Chairman Landry discussed the installation of water elevation markers to be put in the Spring Bayou Complex. What began as the installation of four markers may eventually lead to the installation of six markers now. Civil Works Director Kevin Bordelon plans to install the water level markers within the next few weeks.

Police Jury President Charles Jones addressed the commission regarding contact with Ron Bordelon of Pan American Engineers urging quick submissions for government funding under the Lt Governor's office, the Water Shed Initiative Project, and Washington DC funding projects. Jones was optimistic that officials from Washington DC were interested in coming to Avoyelles to discuss Police Jury projects. Jones said Pan American is pushing to have plans for projects ready ahead of time if monies become available. Jones requested assistance from Jody David, Biologist for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, and Pan American Engineers to write our proposals in terminology more acceptable to the grant agencies.

Kyle Soileau from the DU Rice Stewardship Program addressed the commission about the current projects in Southwest Louisiana in association with RCPP, NRCS, and the Water Shed project concerning water quality and water quantity. Soileau said there is a current push towards reducing ground water pumping and more to surface water utilization. Commissioner Jules Bordelon discussed his cooperative efforts with CSP programs on his farm in a five-year contract plan. Commissioner Philip Lamartiniere and Commissioner Roland Dugas also discussed their experience with the programs and the clarity of the water leaving the fields after the water speed

was reduced by the vegetation causing it to drop its sediment in the fields. Commissioner Dugas questioned Soileau about the trail of the money. Soileau replied the money went to landowners or farmers. Commissioner Artha Hale asked if the Spring Bayou Lake Commission could get money from these projects, but he receive a negative response. Soileau went on to discuss about the rationale of the application stipulating that they must involve farming practices. When Chairman Landry questioned Soileau about the probability of our dredging plans Soileau responded he was not familiar of any such applications for funding, but there was a possibility of incorporating dredging as a conservation practice. Discussion ensued with Commissioner Lamartiniere and Vice-Chairman Rayford Laborde emphasizing a plan to pump surface water from the Red River down the canal system through Rapides and Avoyelles parish. Soileau responded that an innovative irrigation project pumping surface water from the Red River would catch attention. Dugas discussed taking irrigation water in fields to reservoirs for tail-water-recovery to be used for irrigation into other fields. Soileau felt that was a plus when applying for funding. Soileau stated the Chicot aquifer is steadily declining so a reservoir project holding water is a positive point along with the tie to conservation. Commissioner Dr LJ Mayeux added that the two local federal reserves hold approximately 7,000-acres of water. From the audience, Billy Reason stated he was an avid duck hunter and the practice of farmers holding water is negative to the hunter's standpoint. Commissioner Dugas countered that his farm holds water after hunting season for his operation.

Chairman Landry emphasized the LDWF was working on permits and plans for dredging portions of the Spring Bayou Complex. Commissioner Hale added that all three land owners of the property adjacent to the portions of Boggy Bayou and Little River planned for dredging have given verbal agreements to the plans and the deposition of dredging material as spoil banks on their property under supervision of LDWF. When the issue of permitting was presented, Police Juror Mark Borrel questioned the effect on camp owners, but Chairman Landry assured him it would not affect. From the Audience, George Israel suggested working with the Vicksburg Corps of Engineers to include piling the new dredged material on the existing spoil banks with the planting of trees and the gaps every 300-feet for water circulation. Commissioner Hale recommending advertising for public hearing once a plan is formulated through LDWF. Commissioner Laborde had presented maps in previous meetings showing the deposition of silt trying to go through Boggy Bayou and felt the re-installation of the Madame Gilbert weir would divert the water towards Little River as it leaves the Coulee Des Gruis. Israel stated some siltation results from water coming into Little River from other sources and then backs into Boggy Bayou at the "hill" towards the boat launch. Reason and Commissioner Laborde speculated that the Old River sediment has been constantly increasing for years and the inevitable outcome will be the complete siltation of Old River. Ronald Coco added that there are new rules and regulations for dredging since the 1989 dredge. Commissioner Bordelon stated

soil type determines siltation due to the size of particles in suspension and hill-soil deposited more silt. In response to a statement by Commissioner Lamartiniere about siltation, Chairman Landry stated Bayou Tassin also dumps silt into the Old River section of the complex. Israel stated his opinion that re-installation of the Madame Gilbert weir would cause water containing silt will try to go down towards Little River depositing silt in that direction. Israel stated a consideration should be made to dredge at Tete Bay. Questions by James Frank concerning the placement of the weir produced a response by Chairman Landry that the weir location should be where there is access by a backhoe to clear obstructions and sediment. Vice-Chairman Laborde's suggestion to place a weir by Bayou Tassin prompted a response from Commissioner Hale that the waterway was too wide there and it would restrict access by the people to access areas.

Chairman Landry recommended each committee meet as necessary and report to the Spring Bayou Lake Commission when additional information was necessary to be presented. In the October 17, 2018 meeting, Chairman Landry assigned the following committees: Chairman Landry delegated commissioners to committees on key topics for discussions in upcoming meetings. Commissioner Hale and Commissioner Mayor Pickett were assigned to the Sediment Removal Committee. Commissioner Lamartiniere and Commissioner Bordelon were assigned to the Water Resources Committee. Secretary Laborde, Commissioner Dugas, and Commissioner Bordelon were assigned to the Water Retention Committee. Commissioner Dr Mayeux and Vice-Chairman Laborde were assigned to the Funding Committee.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dr Mayeux to adjourn at 7:24 pm. Commissioner Bordelon tacked on the second and the motion was unanimously approved.