

**\*MINUTES\***  
**Region 1**  
**REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**TUESDAY, June 9, 2020**

The Region 1 Steering Committee Meeting was held at the DeSoto Chamber of Commerce, Mansfield, LA at 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, June 9, 2020, pursuant to notice duly mailed.

Welcome

- Call to Order
  - The Meeting was called to order by Mr. Jack Skaggs, CEO of The Coordinating and Development Corporation (CDC) at 10:05a.m., who welcomed the attendees who were both in person and on the virtual Zoom call.
- Roll Call: At the request of Mr. Jack Skaggs, Ms. Robin Ramagos, CDC, called the roll of Members present in person.
  - Steering Committee Members present in person were: Mr. Butch Ford (Bossier Parish), Mr. Matt Johns (Rapides Parish), and Mr. Rick Nowlin (Natchitoches Parish).
  - Steering Committee Members present on Zoom were: Mr. Ali Mustapha (Caddo Parish), Mr. Morgan Briggs (Grant Parish), Mr. Nick Cox (Webster Parish), Mr. John Michael Moore (Winn Parish), and Ms. Lindsey Gouedy (Member at Large).
  - Not Present: Mr. Rodney Warren (Bienville Parish), Mr. Dennis Butcher (Claiborne Parish), Mr. Steve Brown (DeSoto Parish), Mr. Shane Hubbard (Red River Parish), Mr. William Ruffin (Sabine Parish), and Mr. Mike Carpenter (Winn Parish)
  - Others in attendance in person were: Mr. John Richmond, Mr. Jack Skaggs, Mr. Austin Vaughn, Ms. Jenae Arceneaux, Ms. Randel Elliott, Ms. Heidi Stewart, and Ms. Robin Ramagos.
  - Others in attendance on Zoom were: Mr. Kent Rogers, Ms. Gina Campo, Mr. P. Foley, and Mr. Pat Forbes.
- Pledge of Allegiance: Mr. Butch Ford led the Pledge of Allegiance
- Invocation: Mrs. Randel Elliott led the Invocation.

Review Purpose of LWI

- Ms. Robin Ramagos reviewed the Background of the Region 1 RSC.
  - Ms. Ramagos stated "Flooding does not follow political boundaries, as major watersheds cross parish and state lines. Actions in one community can impact entire systems. The mission would be to reduce flood risk, improve floodplain management throughout the state and maximize the natural and beneficial function of floodplains. Following the Great Floods of 2016, Gov. Edwards issued an executive order that charged state agencies to coordinate statewide flood risk management efforts through a watershed approach, which acknowledges how water naturally moves throughout our communities. The following State agencies: Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries, LA Department of Transportation & Development, and the LA Office of Community Development have been named in the order that makes up the Council on Watershed Management, which oversees all activities associated with the Louisiana Watershed Initiative. Throughout the implementation of its programs, the LWI coordinates enhanced technology, planning, policy and engagement with state agencies, regional partners, and local communities to build support for an improved, long-term,

state and watershed region management framework that can more effectively address mounting flood risks statewide. Funding to support efforts of the Regional Steering Committee (sometimes referred to as the Committee or RSC), is available through recovery dollars from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to enable proactive approaches to water management statewide. These dollars have been programed through the Office of Community Development via the Regional Capacity Building Grant Program, for which the Committee operating here today is charged. And then if you look on slide seven, the Regional Committee primary tasks is to 1) Adopt a work plan. 2) Compile a prioritized project list. 3) Submit Round 1 award recommendations to OCD. 4) Select a governance model for Regional Watershed Coalition & consider watershed boundaries. That is kind of what our committee is tasked with over the next year. They just extended it to May, if I am correct Nicolette, from the last time we spoke. All of the projects will total five million dollars. So, that is what we have, to spend here for Region 1. The Committee will dissolve after one year, upon determination of an appropriate long-term watershed coalition framework. Regional activities are intended to continue under this longer-term coalition framework and will build upon the work, input, and recommendations of this group. If you want more information on the Watershed Initiative you can go to, "watershed.la.gov" and click on the "Regional Capacity Building Program" under the "Programs" tab.

- Ms. Ramagos reviewed the purpose of the Region 1 RSC.
  - Ms. Ramagos stated, "The purpose of the Committee is to provide policy guidance to the Council on Watershed Management and advance regional coordination for watershed/floodplain-based flood risk reduction and water management. The goals of the Louisiana Watershed Initiative are to operate efficiently, consistently, and with transparency."
- Ms. Ramagos reviewed the Louisiana Open Laws Meeting.
  - Ms. Ramagos stated, "Moving on to slide 10, is the Louisiana Open Law Meetings. As an advisory committee established for the purpose of providing advice and recommendations to the Council on Watershed Management and the Louisiana Office of Community Development, this Committee constitutes a "public body" under La. R.S. 42:13 and is thus subject to and will follow the Louisiana Open Meetings Law. Consequently, in the event of any conflict between any term, condition, or provision set forth herein and any mandate of the grantor or Open Meeting Law, the latter shall prevail. In addition, the Committee will follow the guidelines of the Louisiana Office of Community Development and provide notice at least 5 business days of notice for any official meeting of the Committee or sub-committee. In accordance with 42:14 of the Open Meetings Laws, any individual or representative of any organization will be allowed to address the Committee on any agenda item that requires a vote be taken. To exercise this privilege, no prior request for placement on the agenda is necessary. Comments from the public may, at the discretion of the Chairperson be entertained at the beginning of the agenda or be after introduction of an item to be voted on and before any discussion by members of the Committee. The Committee shall not be required to entertain comments on any item which does not require that a vote be taken and/or does not appear on the agenda, however the Chairperson shall have the discretion to hear such comments. A person wishing to comment on any agenda item may be requested, at the discretion of the Chairperson, to complete a "public comment form" prior to the meeting indicating the specific agenda item that he/she would like to address. Any person appearing before the Committee in connection with such agenda

item shall first state his/her name and shall limit his/her remarks to three (3) minutes. However, the Chairperson may deviate from this time limitation unless his/her decision is overridden by a majority vote of the Committee. Any person who has been recognized to speak to the Committee on an agenda item shall reserve his/her comments to matters that are strictly relevant to that specific item. All comments shall be presented in a respectful manner, and participants must conduct themselves orderly and with civility. Comments or language of a lewd, insulting, or provocative nature shall not be tolerated or permitted. If an organization, formal or informal, wishes to address the Committee on any specific agenda item, then such entity shall select one person as its spokesperson. This limitation shall not prevent others who are associated with the organization from speaking on their own behalf.”

- Ms. Ramagos reviewed the Duties and Responsibilities of the Steering Committee.
  - Ms. Ramagos stated, “Slide eleven is kind of the review of the duties and responsibilities and then we will move into the adopting of the minutes, bylaws, and workplan. Working in conjunction with the selected grant applicant and the fiscal agent, The CDC in partnership with NLCOG, for Region 1 of the Louisiana Watershed Initiative, this Regional Steering Committee shall assist in the development and delivery of work products requested by the grantor and endeavor to form a permanent watershed coalition within the parameters defined by the Louisiana Watershed Initiative. Committee members are expected to attend all meetings. Failure to attend 4 consecutive meetings, the Committee will vote for the removal of said member, and the Committee will have the ability to make a new appointment. Our committee is going to consist of 15 total members, 1 representative from each of the 12 parishes, as well as 3 appointments made by The CDC and NLCOG. So, there will be three “at-large,” members. And we are still trying to get our 15th member, so if y’all know of anyone, please let us know. And then, which we will vote on later, will be the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. The Committee shall appoint a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The Chairperson shall serve as the presiding officer at each meeting, and in the absence of the said Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall serve in that capacity. Moreover, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall perform all other duties and responsibilities as commonly ascribed to such offices. Both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by simple majority vote at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee. Where a quorum is present, each shall serve for the duration of the Committee or, upon the resignation of membership of such officer, until his or her replacement is elected.
- Ms. Ramagos reviewed the Conflict of Interest guidelines.
  - Ms. Ramagos said, “There is a conflict of interest section and I do not have it as a slide, so I do apologize for that. So, the RSC members are subject to the Louisiana Government Code of Ethics and HUD conflict of interest rules, and should not participate in any discussion, deliberation or voting on matters prohibited under those provisions. A committee member must recuse themselves from deliberation and abstain from voting on any matter taken up by the Committee that may affect a business or other entity in which he or she has a significant interest. And we must also follow the Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised. These procedures and any amendments thereto shall be approved by majority vote of the members of the Committee. No amendment that restricts or limits the requirements of Open Meetings or Public Records Laws will be permitted. This Committee shall exist only for such period of time as required by the Louisiana Watershed Initiative acting pursuant to the rules, regulations, and dictates of the grantor and the United States Department of Housing

and Urban Development, with the intention that it will be replaced by a permanent entity.”

- Ms. Ramagos said, “So that is just kind of an overview of what we went over last time. I know we have some more members and some members that were not here last time. So, I wanted to review that so that everyone would be on the same page.”
- Mr. John Michael Moore asked if the committee member were required to submit the LA Ethics Personal Financial Disclosure Documents.
- Ms. Nicolette Jones stated that the OCD had a process for exposing any potential or future conflicts in their Policy and Procedures but that at this time committee members did not have to submit any personal financial documents.
- Mr. Skaggs introduced and thanked the Natchitoches Parish President, Mr. John Richmond, for coming to the meeting.
- Mr. Skaggs also stated that there has been a couple of questions about the video conference meeting. He expressed to the board that The Coordinating and Development Corporation had received a notice that would be filled out and put with the minutes. Mr. Skaggs read the notice stating, “Basically it says, ‘Therefore, in accordance with Section 4 of Governor’s Proclamation Number 30 JBE 2020: Additional Measures for COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, the Regional Steering Committee of Watershed Region 1 will hold its, and we will put today’s date, meeting virtually. Regional Steering Committee of Watershed Region 1 will utilize the online platform “Zoom” and livestream the meeting. So, we will be covered with the meeting minutes in that.”
- Mr. Rick Nowlin said, “That’s good, I am glad you brought that out but that would be affective only for the period that the emergency is in effect. When the emergency ends that would no longer be in affect and would have to be here. Is that correct?”
- Ms. Ramagos stated that Mr. Nowlin was correct.
- Mr. Nowlin then suggest that the bylaws should be amended to state that RSC members must be present for RSC meetings.
- Mr. Skaggs then asked Ben and Nicolette if Region 1 RSC needed to amend their bylaws stating that once the emergency was over that the committee needed to go back to Open Meeting Laws?
- Ms. Jones stated, “Your bylaws should show that you are in compliance with the Open Meeting Law. During the public emergency you are subject to be able to follow the proclamation. I don’t see it necessary for you to amend your bylaws as long as it states that your meetings will follow the open meeting laws.”
- Mr. Nowlin suggested that “if authorized by the state” be added to section 2.

#### Review and Adoption of Meeting Minutes, Bylaws, and Workplan:

- Regional Steering Committee Meeting #1 minutes
  - Mr. Skaggs asked for a motion to approve the adoption of the meeting minutes from the March 10, 2020 meeting. Mr. Butch Ford motioned, with a second by Mr. Matt Johns. With no further discussion, the motion was called and approved unanimously.
- Regional Steering Committee Bylaws
  - Mr. Skaggs asked Mr. Nowlin to go through the changes he suggested
    - Mr. Nowlin suggested that in Section 2, delete the period and put comma and state “when authorized by the state of Louisiana.”
    - Mr. Nowlin suggested that in section 2 where it talks about voting shall be open by all hand and or by hands, that we should strike “a show of hands” and add “viva voce”

- Mr. Nowlin suggested that in article 3, section 3 where it discusses talking about public comments, that all statements should be directed to the committee as a whole, and end the sentence there, and strike the second part of the sentence.
  - Mr. Skaggs asked if anyone had any objections to the changes Mr. Nowlin suggested.
  - Mr. Matt Johns reviewed the changes discussed:
    - First sentence under section 2 in article 3. Removed period and add “when authorized by State of Louisiana.”
    - First sentence of second paragraph under section 2 article 3. “Voting on all business by should be open,” remove “a show of hands” and simply include “by voice.” And add the Latin, “viva voce.”
    - Bottom half of the last full paragraph section 3 article 3, add a period after “all statements shall be directed to the Steering Committee as a whole and not to any one member,” and strike the rest of the sentence.
  - Mr. Skaggs asked for a motion to approve the adoption of the bylaws with the suggested changes by Mr. Rick Nowlin in Section 2, Article 3 and in Section 3, Article 3. Mr. Rick Nowlin motioned, with a second by Mr. Matt Johns. With no further discussion, the motion was called and approved unanimously.
- **Region 1 Regional Steering Committee Work Plan**
  - Ms. Ramagos explained that plan is a guidance of what the state has asked for the RSC to accomplish during the committee meetings.
  - Ms. Ramagos stated that under the meeting series, the committee is on track to meet all of the dates they need to meet, but the committee will need to add a date and meet in July.
  - Ms. Ramagos asked if the RSC could do a hybrid meeting and Ms. Jones stated that it would be fine to do a hybrid meeting for the July meeting.
  - Asked if it would be a full meeting or just a webinar.
  - Ms. Jones explained that it would be a full meeting and open to public meeting laws
  - Ms. Ramagos explained that the plan was just some points and tasks that the committee will need to meet.
  - Mr. Johns asked about the “roles” activity on the work plan
  - Ms. Jones explained that it was important to look at the existing structures and entries and how they are handling watershed management and decide on what a future coalition could look like.
  - Mr. Skaggs asked for a motion to approve the adoption of the Region 1 Regional Steering Committee Workplan. Mr. Butch Ford motioned, with a second by Mr. Ali Mustapha. With no further discussion, the motion was called and approved unanimously.

Elect Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

- Mr. Skaggs asked if there were any nominations for the Region 1 RSC Chairperson.
- Mr. Ford nominated Mr. Matt Johns as the Region 1 RSC Chairman.
- Mr. Skaggs if there were any other nominations for chairman and there were none.
- Mr. Skaggs asked for a motion to elect Mr. Matts Johns as Chairman for Region 1 RSC. Mr. Butch Ford motioned, with a second by Mr. Rick Nowlin. With no further discussion, the motion was called and approved unanimously.
- Mr. Skaggs asked if there were any nominations for the Region 1 RSC Vice Chairperson.
- Mr. Mustapha nominated Mr. Butch Ford as the Vice Chairman for the Region 1 RSC.

- Mr. Skaggs if there were any other nominations for chairman and there were none.
- Mr. Skaggs asked for a motion to elect Mr. Butch for as Vice Chairman for Region 1 RSC. Mr. Ali Mustapha motioned, with a second by Mr. Matt Johns. With no further discussion, the motion was called and approved unanimously.

Discuss regional priorities

- Project Inventory and Project Inventory Database
  - Ms. Heidi Stewart stated that Ms. Ramagos emailed everyone the Project Inventory List and explained that the Project Inventory List was due at the end of October 2020 but that really it is a living list.
  - Ms. Stewart went on and expressed that the State was building a tool and it would be released as soon as it was finished. She explained that the tool was where individuals would be able to describe their project, the location, the type of stage it was in, the scale of impact, the estimated benefits, and if there were any plans or studies that have already been completed.
  - Ms. Stewart stated that she was available to help anyone, who had a project, input their project into the tool once it was available.
  - Mr. Johns asked if the projects from this list were the same as the list of projects that came available from Round 1?
  - Ms. Stewart stated that the project inventory list is the long-term list of projects.
  - Ms. Ramagos asked if projects from Round 1 could be placed on the Project Inventory List?
  - Ms. Stewart stated that any project could be added onto the list but being on the list does not guarantee any money.
  - Ms. Stewart asked if there were any projects that the RSC wanted to discuss.
  - Mr. Johns asked if the “home buyouts” that many regions were considering should be put on the list?
  - Mr. Skaggs stated that, that type of project can be added to the list but explained that it is a strenuous process, but that the group can decide to do that if there are many homes in distress.
  - Mr. Ford stated that since 2016 Bossier Parish has purchased about thirty-two homes and is still working on a few more. Mr. Ford explained that it is a very time-consuming process and there must be good staff in place.
  - Mr. Johns stated that his thought process with adding this type of project to the list is to help the other parishes that might be understaffed. Mr. Johns stated that in Rapids Parish, they have purchased about 45 homes, all in one community.
  - Mr. Ford stated that the committee should get a list of repetitive loss structures from each parish and see how many homes it is and then decide by October 2020.
  - Mr. Skaggs stated that his only concern is the workload for this type of project but that that could be discussed at a later meeting.
  - Ms. Stewart listed off the different types of projects and explained that the list is not limiting the RSC but just there to guide them. The type list included the following:
    - Wetlands and Coastal Enhancement
    - Flood Storage
    - Critical Facility Mitigation
    - Levees and associated components
    - Physical and Non-Structural Mitigation

Closeout

- Ben Wicker to give brief overview of Flood Risk
  - Mr. Wicker explained that the next meeting would be discussing and assessing the flood risks and exercised to have with the RSC members and public to give everyone the same baseline that Region 1 encounters and this meeting is an opportunity to get everyone on the same page and get from the RSC committee members their input on what they think the Region 1 risks are.
- Q & A
  - There were not any questions asked.
- Public Comment
  - There were no public comments.

Adjourn: Next Steering Committee Meeting: July 14, 2020

- Mr. Jack Skaggs asked if there was any further business to come before the Committee, and with there being none, the June 9, 2020 meeting was adjourned.

**CERTIFICATE**

The undersigned, Secretary to the Corporation, certifies that the above and foregoing are the true and correct minutes of the meeting of the Members of the Region 1 Regional Steering Committee held on June 9, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

  
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Mr. Jack Skaggs, Secretary