

MINUTES
Region 1
REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, January 12, 2021

The Region 1 Regional Steering Committee (RSC) Meeting was held at the Warrior Network in Bossier City, LA at 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday January 12, 2021, pursuant to notice duly mailed.

Welcome/Call to Order/ Invocation/ Pledge

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Matt Johns at 10:13 a.m., who welcomed the attendees, held the invocation, and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

At the Chairman's request, Mrs. Heidi Stewart called the roll of members present or by proxy. Those present were: Chairman Matt Johns, Vice Chairman Butch Ford, Ms. Lindsay Gouedy, Mr. Nick Cox, Mr. Ali Mustapha, and Ms. Zazell Dudley. Proxies held were: Mr. Tom Fontcuberta for Mr. Steve Brown. Others in attendance were: Mr. Ben Wicker, Mr. Austin Vaughn, Ms. Jenae Arceneaux, Mrs. Randel Elliott, Mrs. Heidi Stewart, Mrs. Alexandra Carter, Mrs. Nicolette Jones, Ms. Helen Waller, Ms. Laura Ashley Overdyke, Mr. Kent Rogers, Mr. Jack Skaggs and Mr. Pearson Harbour. A quorum was present.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Chairman Johns called for the adoption of the official minutes for the December 8, 2020 meeting with the following changes:

- Mr. Morgan Briggs be listed as present and Ms. Carolyn Hayes be listed under "Others in Attendance," and not as a proxy for Sabine Parish.

Ms. Zazell Dudley motioned to adopt the minutes, with the provided changes, with a second by Mr. Tom Fontcuberta. With no further discussion, the meeting minutes for the December 8, 2020 meeting, were unanimously adopted.

Review and Adopt Governance Recommendation

- Mrs. Stewart stated that the committee was going to review the Region 1 Provisional Recommendations and then would be able to make any changes the Committee saw fit or adopt the recommendations as it.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the introduction part of the Governance Recommendation explained the watershed boundaries for Region 1 and she asked if there were any comments or changes and there were none.
- Mrs. Stewart explained that the Regional Summary stated what various tasks the Coalition might be tasked with or need authority to complete.
- The Governance Recommendation Regional Summary stated that The Regional Watershed Coalition should conduct regional watershed management and assist local entities with watershed planning, policy, project prioritization, and data/modeling in the following ways:
 - Planning and Development Regulation

- a) The coalition should conduct regional planning to preserve some areas, retain water, and coordinate and prioritize O&M of river systems in region.
 - b) The coalition should potentially be tasked with facilitating updates to NFIP maps and building standards.
- Project Implementation
 - a) The coalition should facilitate the development of passive projects (low O&M).
 - b) The coalition should promote or require natural channel design to prevent further silting processes and allow for natural channel meanders and retention areas.
 - c) The coalition should coordinate with upstream states to improve channel health before it gets to Louisiana.
- Data and Modeling
 - a) The Coalition should be enabled to house and operate the LWI watershed models in Region 1.
- Outreach and Engagement
 - a) The coalition should provide public outreach and education to residents and local leaders.
- Recommended Authorities for the Coalition
 - a) Authority to cooperate or contract with other governmental agencies.
 - b) Authority to finance, fund, plan, establish, acquire, construct, or reconstruct, enlarge, or extend, equip, operate, and maintain systems and infrastructure.
 - c) Authority to generate revenue (e.g. issue/sell bonds, borrow money or accept grants, collect fees, levy tax/special assessments).
 - d) Authority to adopt and enforce development codes.
- Mrs. Stewart asked if there were any comments or changes to be made to the Regional Summary and there were none.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that she would be reviewing the Governance Recommendation Roadmap to Implementing the Recommendation out of order because some of the recommendations needed more discussion than others.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the first recommendation was:
 - The Coordinating and Development Corporation/Northwest Louisiana Council of Governments shall facilitate all meetings of the Coalition and shall perform administrative functions related to the work of the Coalition.
- Chairman Johns asked if anyone was opposed to the first recommendation and there was none.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the second recommendation was:
 - All of the watershed coalitions in the state should be authorized by a single charter that includes a list of standards and authorities identified by all regions, wherein each region is able to choose which standard or authority to implement and at what degree within individual coalition bylaws/regional charters.
- Chairman Johns explained that in summary, the charter would provide a menu of options and each coalition had the option to choose from that menu, on how they would like to implement standards for the betterment of the region.
- Third recommendation was:

- The regional watershed boundaries should be recognized or approved by a legislatively authorized state agency, board or commission that has the authority to amend the boundaries at the request of the coalitions through a public process.
- Chairman Johns asked the committee if there was any discussion needed and there was none.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the next provisional recommendations had slight changes than what was sent out to the committee.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that what was sent out to the committee stated, “The coalition should be enabled by legislation under state charter.”
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the staff recommended that the statement be a little more detailed and read as follows:
 - The coalition should be enabled by legislation via a state agency, board, or commission.
- Chairman Johns asked what the reason for the change was?
- Mrs. Stewart stated that when the staff went back and listened to the recording of the last meeting the second version was more accurate to what the committee discussed.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the same reasoning goes for the next recommendation as the original draft stated, “The coalition should be composed of public representatives, with a technical advisory committee.”
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the staff recommended that the recommendation be changed to read as follows:
 - The coalition should be composed of primarily public representatives and include a technical advisory committee. The technical advisory committee members should not be a part of the watershed coalition but should act as subject matter experts and make recommendations to the coalition.
- Chairman Johns stated that he thought that was more accurate to what the committee discussed and asked if there were any objections and there were none.
- Mrs. Stewart stated the original draft stated the next recommendation to state, “The coalition should have the ability to obtain external funding and maintain stable local funding.”
- Mrs. Stewart stated the staff recommended the recommendation be changed to read as follows:
 - The coalition should have the ability to obtain funding through external sources, stable local sources and collect special assessments.
- Chairman Johns asked if there were any objections or discussions and there were none.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the next two recommendations had not been previously covered by the committee so there was likely a discussion that was needed.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the first recommendation to discuss stated, “The coalition should have oversight by a state agency that provides consistency and state-level management.”
- Chairman Johns asked if when the coalition decided to pursue a project or enact a policy, would that decision still be needed to be approved by the state oversight agency or was the state oversight agency just making sure the coalition was in line with what the legislation is?
- Chairman Johns asked Mr. Ben Wicker and Mrs. Alexandra Carter how the state envisioned that recommendation statement?
- Mrs. Carter stated that that recommendation statement was really for those regions that wanted to use an organizational structure with a state agency.

- Mrs. Carter stated that the State did not want to propose what they thought might work for each region.
- Mrs. Carter stated that some regions were saying they wanted a certain state agency to have to report to and those regions were making specific recommendations with which state agency they would like to report to.
- Mrs. Carter stated that the main purpose of that recommendation statement was to decide if the region had a preference of a certain state agency that would provide vertical alignment or just work alone without a state agency.
- Chairman Johns stated that since the Committee already stated that Region 1 was going to be working with a state agency to help with boundaries that he felt this recommendation was necessary but asked the committee what their thoughts were.
- Mr. Kent Rogers stated that in his opinion that recommendation looked structurally similar to the way the MPOs were established in the state by them being their own agency but working through the state with the DOTD.
- Chairman Johns asked if the committee members were ok with a little vagueness of that statement, knowing that there would be some state agency in the vertical alignment?
- The Committee agreed that they were ok with the recommendation statement.
- Mrs. Carter stated that she suggested the recommendation be edited to read, "A state agency should provide as needed technical support to the coalition and facilitate coordination between regions."
- Chairman Johns asked if there were any comments or objections and with there being none, the recommendation would read as follows:
 - A state agency should provide as needed technical support to the coalition and facilitate coordination between regions.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the second that needed a discussion stated, "The state should lead the effort in drafting the legal elements that reflect these recommendations while the regions collect feedback on provisional recommendations and the regions should be kept aware of continued progress."
- Chairman Johns ask if "specific legal elements," referred to the specific legislation that was going to create the recommendations?
- Mrs. Stewart stated that she believed that is what it referred to.
- Mrs. Carter stated that the State did not want to move forward without all the regions being on the same page and without getting each region's inputs on what that could look like.
- Mrs. Carter stated as the State gathered the eight recommendations from each region, they were actively trying to figure out what degree of coordination each region wanted to have with the State in drafting the next step.
- Mrs. Carter stated that based on the conversations with the Watershed Coordinators the preferred option would be that the State take the recommendations and put together options and then would coordinate the with the regions throughout the outreach process.
- Mrs. Carter stated that the outreach process was going to be a huge task and that maybe the State could help divide and conquer and stay in communication throughout the process and make sure everyone is aware of the continued progress.
- Chairman Johns asked if the region would be able to take any ideas that the State thought up and shift and edit it before it was put into legislation?

- Mrs. Carter stated that was correct because the regions would be getting feedback on the provisional recommendations and the state expected each region to come back in May 2021 and refine the regions own recommendations.
- Mrs. Carter stated that the state was of the mindset to put together a packet of some options and keep the regions informed of what those options were, but the State would not finalize anything until the end of the spring or early summer after all the outreaches were complete.
- Chairman Johns stated that he felt that that recommendation accurately reflected what Region 1 anticipated as the path forward, but it had not been formalized.
- Chairman Johns stated that since that was the first discussion of the recommendation, he asked if anyone had any comments or objections to the way it was stated and there were none.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that that was the last recommendation and asked if the committee wanted to vote and adopt the recommendations as stated with any changes discussed?
- Chairman Johns stated that he would entertain a motion to adopt Region 1's Formal Governance Recommendations with changes as stated.
- Ms. Zazell Dudley motioned to adopt the Region 1 Governance Recommendations, with a second by Mr. Tom Fontcuberta. With no further discussion, the recommendations, were unanimously adopted.
- Mrs. Carter congratulated the Committee and stated that Region 1 was the first region in the state to adopt their formal provisional recommendations.

Discuss Updated Program Timeline

- Chairman Johns stated that the next item on the timeline was, "Discuss Updated Program Timeline," and that Mr. Ben Wicker would be the one informing the committee of it.
- Mr. Wicker stated that prior to the end of January 2021, the entire RSC needed to review the Flood Risk Governance Summary that was sent out.
- Mr. Wicker stated that the Summary was an entire rundown of all the work done over the past couple of months.
- Mr. Wicker stated he would be making some minor edits to it to include the language discussed in the meeting and would send that out by the close of the business day, but he encouraged everyone to look at that packet and memo if there were any changes that needed to be made prior to January 30, 2021. please let me know because that is going to act at the document that goes out to the public for their input on our provisional governance structure that we are going to make official come June 2021.
- Mrs. Carter expressed the importance of the Summary because it would help the Watershed Coordinators.
- Mrs. Carter stated that there was a Regional Communication Plan that was a template for the region to use as the meeting strategy with parish leadership, stakeholders, and the public and to build the outreach and engagement between January 2021 and April 2021
- Mrs. Carter stated that the region should keep in mind when setting up meetings, that the information in the Summary would be the material to go over with the parish leaderships.
- Mrs. Carter urged the committee to use it as read ahead material prior to the meetings.
- Mr. Wicker stated that if anyone had any questions and wanted to get on the phone with Nicolette or him to please give them a call or send an email.

- Mr. Wicker stated that engagement and outreach to parish leadership, stakeholders, and the public would be conducted between January and April 2021.
- Mr. Wicker stated that May to June 2021 the feedback received would be used to refine the recommendations in order to put together the official recommendations for the region.
- Mr. Wicker asked if there were any questions.
- Chairman Johns asked if outreach and engagement would be the responsibility of the coalition members?
- Mrs. Carter stated that it would primarily be the responsibility of the Coalition because the Coalition would consist of people who live, breath, and work in Region 1 and who would be better equipped to speak on the recommendations that have been made.
- Mrs. Carter stated that each region's Fiscal Agents would be meeting with Henry Consulting and would have the chance to layout the region's plan on outreach and where the region thought they might need support from the LWI.
- Chairman Johns asked if that was something that needed to be laid out in the RSC's February meeting?
- Mrs. Carter stated that that was the idea, and that she was reviewing the final draft of the Regional Communication Strategy and was trying to get it ready to send to the Watershed Coordinators within the next week or so.
- Mrs. Carter stated that then the Watershed Coordinators would be able to weigh in and let her know which outreach option would or would not work in their regions.
- Mrs. Nicolette Jones stated that one thing she wanted to add about the next step was that the LWI would be working with the watershed coordinators to refine the strategy for outreach but part of that would be making sure all the stakeholders and local leaders were aware of what the RSC voted on.
- Mrs. Jones stated that the LWI wanted to solicit and gather feedback from those stakeholders and local leaders, so one thing that would be helpful would be if the RSC members would identify those who needed to be brought to the table and whose feedback should be gathered in that process.
- Mr. Wicker stated that the following dates were important dates that were coming up on the Round 1 Project Program Timeline:
 - February 26, 2021 – Deadline to submit project full application.
 - April 2021 – Awards announced for \$60 million in statewide projects.
 - July 2021 – Recommendations for \$40 million in regional projects.
- Mr. Wicker asked if there were any questions and there were none.
- Chairman Johns stated that each region submitted a different number of projects and that Region 7 submitted 128 projects and Region 1 only submitted eight projects.
- Chairman Johns asked if there was any rating given to the number of projects or was it just a free for all?
- Mrs. Carter stated that it had more to do with the quality of the project than how many each region had.
- Mrs. Carter stated that the first round was about having the best projects funded, so even though Region 1 had less projects, it did not mean that Region 1 was less competitive.
- Chairman Johns asked Mr. Wicker if he had anything else to discuss about the timeline and Mr. Wicker did not.

- Mr. Wicker asked if there were any questions online or in the room and there were none.

Intro into CRS, The Community Rating System

- Mrs. Stewart stated that the CRS ran through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the CRS was voluntary and gave citizens flood insurance discounts based on how much the community was doing to encourage and lessen potential flooding.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that most communities were already doing tasks to get credit on the CRS and were not even aware of it, so she encouraged the members to get their communities signed up.
- Mrs. Stewart encouraged the three that were already in the system to improve their rating.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that some of the benefits for participation besides the obvious insurance discounts, were helping to spread awareness to the communities, reduced damage to property and public infrastructure, and avoidance of economic disruption.
- Mrs. Stewart explained that to participate, the community had to obtain credits in the following categories:
 - Public Information
 - Mapping and Regulations
 - Flood Damage Reduction
 - Warning and Response
- Mrs. Stewart stated that there were currently 19 creditable activities that the community could do to receive credits.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that Shreveport was currently a class 8 and Bossier City and Caddo Parish are class 9s.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that a class 9 would give citizens a 5% discount for anyone who live in the community.
- Chairman Johns asked if the percentages were cumulative and Mrs. Stewart answered him by stating they were not.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that class 1 was the best and gave the citizens a 45% discount.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that some of the activities such as elevation certificates were going to be a requirement to enroll in the program and at a minimum a community must maintain elevation certificates for any buildings built after the date of enrolling.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that communities could get credit for public outreach, public library or community website with flood information, open space preservation, and flood plain mapping.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that if anyone had any questions, they were welcome to speak with her.
- Mrs. Stewart stated the current Coordinator's Manual online was the 2017 Edition but that during January 2021 an addendum was released.
- Chairman Johns asked if that whenever the coalition is official, would the coalition be able to do the work to help communities complete the paperwork to claim their credits since it is a lot of paperwork to claim credits within the system.
- Mr. Rogers stated that that was a possibility and something that the staff would investigate.
- Chairman Johns stated that at some point he wanted to talk through the logistics of the coalition helping communities complete the work to be able to claim their credits.

Project Inventory Update

- Mrs. Stewart stated that last fall was when the Project Inventory was presented to the community, but she wanted to remind everyone about it.
- Mrs. Stewart stated the inventory was a living document and any projects a parish had; she urged the committee members to add to the inventory.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that there were very few submissions for the region.
- Mrs. Stewart stated all watershed related projects and plans that were either planned, underway, or recently completed within the past two years should be submitted.
- Mrs. Stewart stated anyone could submit a project and that the Round 1 Projects were included but there was no specific funding source attached to the inventory list so the projects could be sent to Round 2, Round 3, and/or be sourced by other funding.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that Region 1 had very few projects and that if that continued then there was a fear that the region would not get a guarantee of funding in Round 3.
- Mrs. Stewart stated there was a quick survey link that she would be happy to resend to anyone and explained that the survey was very straight forward.
- Mr. Rogers asked if the idea was for members to submit any projects whether they were trying to receive funding or not?
- Mrs. Stewart stated that was correct because there may be other funding sources that the staff would be able to help with.
- Chairman Johns urged the committee members to submit at least one project even if the member thought the project would never be funded.
- Chairman Johns asked if there were any questions on the project inventory and there were none.
- Chairman Johns asked if there were any questions for the State or from the State and there were none.
- Chairman Johns asked if there were any Public Comments and there were none.

Adjourn

Chairman Johns asked if there was any further business to come before the Committee, and with there being none, the January 12, 2021 meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

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 January 12, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.



Bump Skaggs, Secretary