

MINUTES
Region 1
REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, February 9, 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 February 9, 2021, pursuant to notice duly mailed.

Welcome/Call to Order/ Invocation/ Pledge

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Matt Johns at 10:05 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, Ms. Zazell Dudley, Mr. Morgan Briggs, and Mr. John Michael Moore. Proxies held were: Mr. Tom Fontcuberta for Mr. Steve Brown and Mr. Kenneth Ebarb for Mr. William Ruffin. Others in attendance were: Mr. Ben Wicker, Ms. Jenae Arceneaux, Mrs. Randel Elliott, Mrs. Heidi Stewart, Mrs. Nicolette Jones, Ms. Laura Ashley Overdyke, Mr. Kent Rogers, Mr. Pearson Harbour, Mr. Johnathan Lachney, Ms. Janice Lovett, Mr. Edward Knight, Mr. German Velazquez, and Mr. Robert Tomasek. A quorum was present.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Chairman Johns called for the adoption of the official minutes for the January 12, 2021 meeting. Vice Chairman Butch Ford motioned with a second by Mr. Tom Fontcuberta. With no further discussion, the meeting minutes for January 12, 2021, were unanimously adopted as presented.

Regional Updates

- Mrs. Stewart stated there were a total of 326 projects in the state that were eligible to submit a Round 1 application.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that only eight of those projects were in Region 1.
- Mrs. Stewart stated the full application for Round 1 was due on February 26, 2021.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the staff had spoken to all the applicants and seven are in the process of submitting the full application and one had a staff change and was not aware that they needed to do anything.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that in April 2021, the state will award \$60 million dollars to those selected from the Round 1 applications and the \$5 million dollars would be awarded by the RSC in August or September of 2021.
- Mrs. Stewart informed the RSC members of the postcard that the staff created and sent out.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the staff sent out about 115 of the postcards across the region to parishes and municipalities across Region 1 to spread the word about the Watershed Projects and about the Watershed Inventory in general.
- Mrs. Stewart urged the RSC members to continue to submit any projects.

- Mrs. Stewart also reminded the RSC members to contact any members of the staff if they had any questions or concerns.
- Chairman Johns asked Mrs. Stewart what the total dollar amount of projects submitted were because he wanted to see how far the \$5 million would go if the state did not select any projects from Region 1.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that she did not have that total but that she would gather this information and inform the committee at the next meeting.
- Mrs. Stewart moved forward with the next update which was explaining the new work plan.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the work plan was adopted by the committee members last year, but the staff had adjusted some of the dates to reflect when tasks or activities had been completed or when tasks or activities were now expected to happen.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the current Regional Steering Committee was expected to disband in August of 2021.
- Mrs. Stewart then asked the committee members if anyone had any announcements, concerns, or questions about any projects.
- Chairman Johns stated that in Region 5 RAPC had submitted five or six pre applications for Round 1 and one had been kicked out of pre-eligibility.
- Chairman Johns stated that the rest of the projects submitting full applications for Round 1 but that they had also identified alternate funding sources for all the projects except for one.
- Chairman Johns stated that each parish had received an allocation of funding from Hurricane Laura and so the region planned to use some of that funding, and it would pay for at least one if not a couple of projects.
- Chairman Johns stated that he thought Region 5 only had one more project to figure out additional funding sources for but that it was for elevation and buy outs.
- Chairman Johns asked if there were any other committee members that had updates to share with the committee and there were none.

Governance Recommendation Discussion

- Mrs. Stewart stated that the committee adopted the Provisional Governance Recommendations for Region 1 in January 2021.
- Mrs. Stewart explained to the committee that the staff would begin engaging with parish leaderships, stakeholders, and the public to get feedback before the committee finalized their recommendations in May or June of 2021.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the State would be providing an outreach toolkit and had been working on a communication plan which the staff expected to receive in the next week or two and would share it with the committee once it was received.
- Vice Chairman Butch Ford asked if all of the regions' governance recommendations were going to be the same?
- Vice Chairman Ford asked Chairman Johns if Region 1 had adopted the same recommendations as the other regions that he was on the committee for?
- Chairman Johns stated that he was on three other RSCs and that Regions 1, 2, and 4 were close to the same.
- Chairman Johns stated that Region 5 was a little different because it was more of an eligibility and the parishes had to buy in where the others were giving authority directly.

- Chairman Johns stated that it would be interesting to see how the OCD planned to put all of that together when they presented it to the Council on Watershed Management and see what they will come out with to recommend to the legislator.
- Mrs. Nicolette Jones stated that Chairman Johns was correct and there were a lot of similarities between the regions, especially in terms of the work proposed by the coalition and the process in chartering the coalition.
- Mrs. Jones stated that some of the regions were different in the level of authority or level of effort that was given to each coalition.
- Mrs. Jones stated that part of the State's process would be vetting those recommendations at the state level, with the Council, other agencies, The Governor's Office, and other state level stakeholders.
- Mrs. Jones stated that each region's Watershed Coordinator and staff would be leading the effort to engage the local and state stakeholders to inform them of Region 1's provisional recommendations to receive feedback.
- Mrs. Jones stated that in late spring of 2021, the feedback and comments would be looked at to see how the models the State was creating interplayed with each other.
- Vice Chairman Ford asked if the design consultant had been issued a notice to proceed on the model and if DOTD had been issued a notice to proceed?
- Mrs. Jones stated that she was not aware if they had or not but that she would get that information to the staff to share with the RSC.
- Vice Chairman Ford stated that it was his understanding that it was going to take a couple of years to perform the modeling, so he just wanted to know the latest on them.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that next she wanted to go a little more in depth into the provisional recommendations the committee selected just to make sure everyone still agreed.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that Region 1 had adopted the following recommendations:
 - 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 felt confident that those expressed the region's intent and asked if there was a reason why the committee needed to revisit those recommendations?
- Mrs. Stewart stated that there was not an issue, that she just wanted to make sure everyone understood them and that everyone was still on the same page because this was one area where Region 1 was different than most of the other regions in the state.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that most of the other regions selected that the coalition be composed of an equal mix of public and private representatives, but Region 1 should have the public representatives covered by the technical advisory committee.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the following structure was a potential structure for the coalition that could be added to or thrown out if the RSC did not agree with it:
 - Regional Coordinating Entity will coordinate all regional activities and assists in the development of recommendations to voting membership.
 - a) NLCOG and The CDC

- Watershed Coalition will vote on recommendations provided by committees based on the information and technical assistance provided to them by the Technical Advisory Committee.
 - a) Parish President, Parish Administrator or their designee, one per parish [12]
 - Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, DeSoto, Grant, Natchitoches, Rapides, Red River, Sabine, Webster, Winn
 - b) At Large members, representing large regional entities [1,3,5]
 - Chair of TAC, Sparta Ground Water Conservation District Commission, The Port of Caddo Bossier, Red River Compact, Red River Waterway Commission etc.
 - c) Non-Voting Members [?]
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, LWI, DOTD
- Technical Advisory Committee will identify opportunities and challenges and make recommendations to the voting body.
 - a) Levee Boards and Drainage Districts [5]
 - Bossier, Caddo, Natchitoches, Nineteenth, Red River
 - b) Representatives of municipalities [4, more?]
 - Shreveport, Bossier, Alexandria, Natchitoches (population 15,000+)
 - c) Other Government Agencies [?]
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, LWI, DOTD
 - d) Out of State Representatives [2, 3]
 - East Texas, Southern Arkansas, Southeast Oklahoma?
 - e) Community Organization Reps [1, 5]
 - Ex. Sparta Ground Water Conservation District Commission, The Port of Caddo Bossier, Red River Compact, Red River Waterway Commission, etc.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that if anyone saw someone not on the list to let her know and she would add them to the list.
- Vice Chairman Ford asked Mr. Rogers if he agreed with the makeup and Mr. Rogers stated that he did agree with it.
- Chairman Johns stated that with the MPO, DOTD is a voting member so he was not sure if the State would want the DOTD to have a vote or not.
- Mr. Rogers asked if any of the other regions had DOTD listed as a voting member?
- Mrs. Stewart stated that none of the other regions have their structures fully made out and that she was just proposing this one to get a start on it, to get it fully lined out in the next couple of months.
- Ms. Overdyke asked if any of the other regions had a representative from the Wildlife Fisheries?
- Mrs. Stewart stated that she thought Region 4 had a representative from LDWF on their steering committee, but she was not positive.
- Ms. Overdyke stated that she was just trying to figure out if LDWF had any relevant experts that would be helpful with some of the regional waterways as they might have ideas for floodplain restoration.
- Vice Chairman Ford stated that he thought DOTD needed to have a vote and be engaged in the voting side of it.

- Vice Chairman Ford stated that the DOTD had technical floodplain employees that work with them and who look at the entire region and those could be on the Technical Advisory Committee but that the administrator from each district needed to be a voting member.
- Chairman Johns stated that he agreed, and he asked if there were any opposition from any of the other committee members and there were none.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that currently the RSC had one representative from each parish which equaled one vote per parish.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that Region 1 had five parishes that were only in Region 1, six parishes that were in two of the regions, and one parish that was in four regions.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that some of the regions were looking at basing the coalition membership on the sub basins.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that in Region 1 there were 11 sub basins and a problem with basing the membership on the sub basins would be that the Southern basin would encompass all the Rapides Area and most of Grant, Winn, and Natchitoches.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that this would cause them to lose a vote if gave a vote per sub basin.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the other problem with basing membership off the sub basins was that most of the northern basins were in Arkansas.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that if each parish received one vote then each parish would receive about 8.3% say.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that another option would be to give a second vote to some of the larger municipalities.
- Vice Chairman Ford stated that he thought if a community had a certain population or more then it needed to have a voting right and the smaller communities could work with their parish.
- Mr. Mustapha stated that he agreed because those larger municipalities had more stake and issues, so they needed to have voting rights.
- Vice Chairman Ford stated that those municipalities that needed to have a voting right would be Natchitoches, Bossier City, Minden, and Shreveport.
- Chairman Johns stated that he agreed because there were so many people there and it would make sense to add those four votes as long as they would be able to appoint someone that would be willing to participate.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that he wanted to take a poll to make sure everyone agreed.
- Mrs. Stewart stated the options were:
 - A) Each parish has one representative.
 - B) Each parish has one representative and each municipality with a designated population has an additional representative.
 - C) Another method of weighting votes and membership.
- Chairman Johns stated that B made the most sense for all the reasons previously stated and that Natchitoches, Bossier City, Shreveport, and Minden were the four municipalities that the committee wanted to consider.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that the next issue that needed to be considered was the at-large Members and that currently the RSC had three at-large members that were appointed by NLCOG and CDC.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that currently the list had an odd number that would be needed but that might change if the second DOTD district was added.

- Mrs. Stewart asked the RSC member if they still wanted to have any at-large members on the Coalition and if so how many and if the RSC wanted to designate specific organization or did they want to just leave it and change it as thing came up?
- Mrs. Stewart stated that some things to consider were the following:
 - Sparta Ground Water Conservation District Commission, The Port of Caddo Bossier, Red River Compact, Red River Waterway Commission, the chair of the technical advisory committee, etc.
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, LWI, DOTD, etc (as voting or non-voting members)
 - Out of state members: East Texas, Southern Arkansas (as voting or non-voting members)
- Mrs. Stewart stated that Ms. Laura Overdyke was from the Caddo Lake Institute and she had been to most of the RSC meetings.
- Ms. Overdyke stated that she was a voting member on the Texas Floodplain organization so she would try and bring back as much information that might be relevant to Region 1.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that she did not know of anyone specific in Arkansas to be considered.
- Mr. John Michael Moore stated that he could help with that on Red River Compact side.
- Chairman Johns stated that he did not strongly feel one way or the other.
- Vice Chairman Ford stated that he felt the committee would need some guidance from the State on this question.
- Chairman Johns stated that when the bylaws are formed, if they allowed it that it might make sense to start small and add at large members later, with a vote from the coalition when there was someone specific that would serve.
- Ms. Overdyke stated that she would be happy to be a voting member and on the Texas side they had solidified the members and the bylaws.
- Lindsey – Sparta Ground Water Commission actually had their bylaws the same way and they had organizations that served as technical advisory.
- Ms. Goudey stated that speaking for the Sparta Ground Water System and they would maintain whatever role of participation was deemed by the coalition.
- Mr. Rogers stated that the bylaws could entail an option for up to 5 at large members, non-voting members, to be determined by the voting members.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that she thought everyone was in agreement to simply list possible members (including but not limited to) and designate them later.

Program Updates from OCD

- Chairman Johns asked if there were any updates from State.
- Mr. Ben Wicker stated that the State had received all the recommendations from around state except for region 5 but would be getting that later in the week.
- Mr. Wicker stated that it was most important to make sure that these were put into working by June.
- Mrs. Jones stated that the State had been working on gathering research into long term funding options for Regional Watershed Management and statewide efforts.
- Mrs. Jones stated that the findings from the research would be presented at one of the RSC's upcoming meetings in either March 2021 or April 2021.

New Business


- Vice Chairman Ford stated that the RSC needed to approve an item being added to the agenda.
- Vice Chairman Ford stated that the item to be added to the agenda was to have Mr. Timothy Shane Young added to the committee and the representative for Red River Parish.
- Chairman Johns called for the motion to add the item to the agenda. Vice Chairman Butch Ford motioned with a second by Mr. Ali Mustapha. With no further discussion, roll call was taken and with all yays and zero nays, the motion was unanimously passed to add voting to replace Mr. Shane Hubbard as the RSC representing member for Red River with Mr. Timothy Shane Young.
- Chairman Johns called for the approval of replacing Mr. Shane Hubbard with Mr. Timothy Shane Young as the representing RSC member in Red River Parish. Vice Chairman Butch Ford motioned with a second by Mr. John Michael Moore. With no further discussion, Mr. Timothy Shane Young was approved to replace Mr. Shane Hubbard as the representative for Red River Parish.

Adjourn

Chairman Johns asked if there any Q & As, public comments, or any further business to come before the Committee, and with there being none, the February 9, 2021 meeting was adjourned at 10:46 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 February 9, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.



Jack "Bump" Skaggs, Secretary