

Special Meeting
Of the
Assumption Parish Police Jury

Monday, February 22, 2021
5:00 O'clock p.m.

1. The Special Meeting of the Assumption Parish Police Jury was called to order by Police Jury Vice President Irving Comeaux in the Assumption Parish Police Jury Chamber located at 4813 Highway 1, Napoleonville, Louisiana.
2. Police Jurors recorded as present were: Mr. Irving Comeaux, Ward 3; Mr. Michael Dias, Ward 5; Mr. Leroy Blanchard, Ward 7; Mr. Jamie Ponville, Ward 8; Mr. Myron Matherne, Ward 9.
Police Jurors recorded as absent were: Mr. Ron Alcorn, Ward 1; Mr. Jeff Naquin, Ward 2; Mr. Patrick Johnson, Ward 4; Mr. Chris Carter, Ward 6.
3. Police Juror Leroy Blanchard led the prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
4. President Patrick Johnson and Police Juror Ron Alcorn entered the meeting at this time.
5. President Patrick Johnson recognized Police Juror Leroy Blanchard, who stated that phase 1 of the Drainage & Flood Mitigation Master Plan was completed in November 2020. He stated that at the previous meeting the Jury approved to bond out future GOMESA funds to gain some capital to put into some projects. He stated that the Jury will bond out 75% of the GOMESA to get \$12 million now to use as matching funds or to fund 100% projects throughout the parish. The projects that were identified in the master plan and also other projects that will be submitted by the Jury. He then stated that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss the scope of phase II of the master plan and to determine what level of detail we would like to go to as a parish and what that would result in. He added that the more detail of a model the better we can prioritize projects and know what impacts will have and what affect a single project would have on the other projects and the money can be optimized based on the prioritization and what will give us the most for those funds. Mr. Blanchard stated also that the Jury will discuss how they will spend these GOMESA funds over the next three years. Police Juror Irving Comeaux suggested that GIS Engineering inform the Jury of the different grants that are available because some of the projects included in the master plan are more than what the Parish is receiving. He also stated that the most important thing is for the Jury to prioritize the projects throughout the entire Parish. Police Juror Ron Alcorn stated that GIS Engineers has completed the Master Plan for Phase I that identify areas that are committed to the Watershed Initiative so now we should be identifying projects locally that are impacted and not only use bond funds but find matching grants opportunities. I brief discussion was held regarding the projects committed to the Watershed Initiative in Phase I and the Region 6 committee handling prioritizing them. Following the discussion, Police Juror Leroy Blanchard presented the Jury with suggestions relative to categorizing the projects (Tier 1, 2 & 3). He proceeded stating that Tier 1 are projects less than \$100,000, Tier 2 is \$100,000 to \$1,000,000 and Tier 3 is projects \$1,000,000 and over. Examples of Tier 1 are community subdivision improvements and levee gaps. Tier 2 would be minor outfall canals and Tier 3 major outfall canals, Attakapas Landing and new levees. He then stated from 2021-2024, (3 yr. period to spend funds) once the funding is received, \$1,000,000 in projects can be funded from Tier 1 in the 1st year. He stated that for the Tier 2 & 3 projects the Parish can be working on the drainage master plan to get their priorities straight. Then in 2022, for the Tier 2 projects, the Parish can initiate engineering design and apply for the various matching grants and for Tier 3 we are waiting on the designs because it will be incorporated if we obtain the grants over \$1,000,000. He stated that in 2023 the Parish is trying to obtain grants knowing that matching funds will be needed for those grants. He further stated that in 2024 whatever funds are still available is when we fund the project from the principal amount. Police Juror Janie Ponville stated that the funds need to be used to go after the matching grant to get the most for our dollars. Police Juror Ron Alcorn stated that he has a \$2 million project that is shovel ready with 80% being funded through Capital Outlay and would like to see the match come from GOMESA. In response, no one had any objections to the request by Juror Alcorn. Police Juror Leroy Blanchard stated that there will be 4 months before the bond issuance is completed therefore, we have time to determine how the money will be spent. He stated that this meeting was to determine the level of scope to complete the master plan due to the time sensitivity. He added that we can't wait until the money is received to get the plan started because it's that information that is needed to obtain the grants. Following a brief discussion, Police Juror Leroy Blanchard stated that no one can quantify how much to raise the levees, how much of an impact will the Bayou Chene Project have but the phase II part of the master plan gives us that answer.
6. Police Juror Jeff Naquin entered the meeting at this time.
7. President Patrick Johnson recognized Jacob Loeske, GIS Engineering, who stated that they have included 19 projects in the master plan but because they are included doesn't mean that you will obtain a grant for it. He then stated that whenever improvement is done in Pierre Part and the water comes in the lake faster is it going to flow out faster or will someone downstream will flood? He added that this information is not known but he plans to team up with other parishes (Region 6) to obtain information and put everything together to create a model that will work for everyone. He stated that you have to have a benefit cost analysis/ratio to collaborate the model to know how to prioritize the projects. He further explained and stated that with that knowledge and before

improvements are made, we have to know that the model is acting and performing like it is in real life. In response, he stated that the study would be an 18-month period starting with surveying and real cross sections at channels and then imputing it in daily. Police Juror Ron Alcorn initiated a brief discussion regarding localized community flooding problems. Following the discussion, Police Juror Leroy Blanchard stated that the surveying by GIS Engineering of the communities were put into the models so they would know how to handle getting the water from the smaller ditches to the larger ditches from the field to getting it out to the lake. He further stated that in order to know specific impact we have to get as detailed as possible to know how much a community can withstand. In response, Jacob Loeske stated that this is what he meant with the inundation and further explained what would be the outcome, how it would be used and the actual benefits of indicating how to get the water where it should be to drain. Police Juror Leroy Blanchard gave an example of how important the study is referring to the Cancienne Canal Project that is underway. Following a brief discussion, President Patrick Johnson stated that everyone is referencing the same and we all meet the criteria for flooding. He then stated that we're all in favor of improvements but how does Assumption Parish look in comparison to other losses of other parishes. He stated that with all the improvements that the Parish has done we may get water in yards which is a nuisance but we're not getting water in the homes anymore. In response, Mr. Loeske stated that the Upper Barrateria requested funding to make improvements but their water flows to Assumption Parish therefore, that gives us an argument to benefit our needs. Police Juror Leroy Blanchard stated that there are funds that are dedicated to Louisiana in the stimulus package and if we're not ready to start applying for the grants we will lose out. Police Juror Irving Comeaux stated that there are two (2) different issues, the local flooding and the back water flooding. He then stated that Soil Conservation informed the Parish that the area was sinking about 1 ft. every 30 yrs. and suggested that we work and raise the levees yearly but nothing has been stated lately. He then stated that the current study states to redo the levee but no guidance. In response, Mr. Loeske stated that no surveys were done. They used data from historical information not exact science to get a rough estimate/cost over a distance. He also pointed out that the Parish Engineer stated that the FEMA grants are focused on the flooding side but there is CDBG, NRCS, and USDA which are other avenues that are not just focusing on flooding events. He further stated that these grants request your benefit cost ratio and you won't have that unless you have data that typically comes from the study. In response, he stated that his office sought out the NRCS grant and are awaiting a new form to proceed. President Patrick Johnson requested that the open line of communication remains so that we can tie the Legislative support that we have into it so we can get the effect we're looking for. In response, Mr. Loeske stated that if the NRCS application comes through in 3 months, that would cover a large part of the study cost. He also stated that they have been in touch with them and all parts of the communication has been very positive. He stated that within a month we would should have something at the State level. He then stated when the application comes in he's hoping that in a 1-week turn the information can be inserted and sent back and from there a study to do surveying to get true elevations on channels and an inspection can begin. He stated that getting the Bayou Chene model inclusive of their facts, assumptions and elevations, will give us a better idea of what's at the bottom and how is everything tying together. He stated that they know that the water is not getting from point A to point B. A brief discussion was held regarding the Bayou Chene Project, what it does, what will happen when they push water into Bayou Black and what will occur with the CPRA 2022 plan design phase. Police Juror Leroy Blanchard stated that the Parish is fortunate because \$413,000,000 is allocated towards the project so we can trust that they will do something for us or be vocal to ensure that they will. In reply to the Parish doing something now, he stated that the Parish has \$2 million in the GOMESA account, we will bond out and it's possible for us to allocate \$1 million for real projects at the small level that are no regrets type projects. He further stated that this would buy some time for the data in the master plan to help guide us as to where the remainder of the funds need to go. Police Juror Irving Comeaux stated that the people need the relief now not 10 yrs down the road. Mr. Loeske added that the idea is to have the model done and the benefit cost ration so that we can spend the \$2 million to cover a larger region of improvements. Police Juror Jeff Naquin stated that the Parish is fortunate on the bayou because of the farm land because the famers contribute a lot but at the end of the day areas like Pierre Part, Bayou L'Ourse, Lower Texas, etc., all low-lying areas, are draining using pumps and levees. Police Juror Jeff Naquin stated that he didn't feel it was necessary to spend \$500,000 for someone to tell us the tributaries leading to Lake Verrett need to be dredged and cleared. He stated it was common sense. In response, Police Juror Leroy Blanchard stated that if this is common sense why has it not been done in 30 yrs. He also stated that Mr. Naquin is thanking the farmers who do a great job of getting the water to the swamp but don't have the right to continue digging all the way to the lake when it's the Parish's responsibility. He added that the Parish has failed the farmers in allowing them to get their water off their land. Police Juror Irving Comeaux stated that he believes that each one of the Jurors needs to submit their local drainage problems and we can prioritize those.

8. Police Juror Chris Carter entered the meeting at this time.
9. Public comments were then received by Warren Gonzales, Beryl Gomez and Carol Aucoin. Mrs. Gonzales questioned the Cancienne Canal Project and whether the dam would be removed. Mrs. Gomez and Mrs. Aucoin each commended the Jury on their efforts and working together in light of the big picture and the betterment of the entire parish. Both were in favor of moving forward with phase II of the Master Drainage Plan.
10. Continued discussions were had regarding options for moving forward with phase II. Police Juror Jamie Ponville motioned to approve 4 months of study effort by GIS Engineering with the anticipation that the grant funding with NRCS would then be available to complete the final 14 months of work and

funding. The cost was agreed upon at \$120,000 (\$30,000 per month) to be funded through GOMESA funds. The study efforts will begin surveying and model development.

11. Police Juror Jamie Ponville offered a motion, seconded by Mr. Myron Matherne, "THAT, the Police Jury approve and authorize the use of \$120,000 of GOMESA Funds for the Partial Engineering Study to begin Phase II of the Drainage Master Plan (4 months of work with the anticipation of Grant Funding through NRCS to fund and finalize the full study)." The motion was unanimously adopted. (resolution attached)
12. The jurors did also agree that each juror should be preparing a list of their Tier I projects to be presented to the full jury for prioritization.
13. Police Juror Jeff Naquin offered a motion, seconded by Mr. Jamie Ponville, "THAT, there being no further business to come before the Assumption Parish Police Jury, the meeting be adjourned." The motion was unanimously adopted.

Kim M. Torres
Secretary-Treasurer

Patrick Johnson
President