

**MINUTES OF  
SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA FLOOD PROTECTION AUTHORITY-EAST  
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON APRIL 18, 2019**

PRESENT: Herbert I. Miller, Chair  
Clay A. Cosse, Committee Member  
Mark L. Morgan, Committee Member  
Herbert T. Weysham, III, Committee Member

---

The Operations Committee of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East (Authority or FPA) met on April 18, 2019, in the Franklin Avenue Administrative Complex, Meeting Room 201, 6920 Franklin Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana. Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

**Opening Comments:** Mr. Miller advised that an agreement was reached with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on the proposed plan to resolve the seepage issue at Bellaire Drive (along the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal).

Mr. Miller requested that the presentation on the FPA Safety Initiative be provided to the Committee.

Rusty Kennedy, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), provided an overview of the FPA Safety Culture Initiative:

- The 2018 Safety/Risk report on the FPA developed by Arthur J. Gallagher indicated that the FPA had some good safety practices; however, the practices were not being carried out across the organization.
- According to the Gallagher report, Workers Compensation (WC) claims were within the comfort level; however, there was an inability to close out some WC claims. The WC team and Gallagher representative will meet quarterly to work out these issues. Gallagher will also provide additional data in order to determine areas of particular interest. It was pointed out that only four claims have been filed thus far in 2019.
- A Human Resource (HR) led Focus Group was recently established consisting of all levels of staff from across the organization. This setting allowed employees to voice their perceptions concerning the FPA's current safety culture relative to:
  - The importance of safety
  - Employee perception about working conditions
  - Current state of safety awareness and training
  - Clear instructions on reporting
  - Organizational wide buy in
  - Open communication for near misses or concerns

- Field observations made the FPA aware that documentation on incidents is inconsistent across the organization and is lacking. In addition, the FPA is not following thru on lessons learned.
- Plans for the Safety Initiative over the next several quarters include the following:
  - Continued engagement with Gallagher to utilize their ability to provide metrics and analytics to track current safety culture
  - Formalize an organizational wide safety manual
  - Create an all-inclusive organizational safety committee
  - Standardized reporting
  - Encouraging near miss reporting
    - [safety@floodauthority.org](mailto:safety@floodauthority.org) email account
    - Whiteboards at field locations
  - Increase frequency of safety topics (currently monthly)
    - Utilizing message boards, bi-weekly updates to address seasonal/trends
    - Utilizing organizational emails to broadcast safety to admin staff
  - In person Mandatory monthly safety topics to include topics for admin staff
  - Increase tracking of incidents to focus on trends
- Safety Initiative for 2020 and beyond:
  - Continued safety education and certifications at all staff levels
  - Additional Safety Focus Groups to evaluate the safety culture as seen by staff
  - Continued engagement of Gallagher or similar assets to gauge the FPA's safety standards

Mr. Kennedy requested input from the Operations Committee on the Safety Initiative.

Mr. Morgan inquired about the FPA's Experience Rating Mod. Matt Byrd with Arthur J. Gallagher explained that Gallagher has the published mods; however, the data is not accurate due to the FPA's reorganization and the past melding of different exposures, which no longer occurs. Gallagher is in the process of placing the historical data into a system similar to the NCCI model and the results are expected to be available within a couple of weeks.

Mr. Morgan suggested that employees acknowledge the receipt of training. Derek Boese, CAO, explained that the FPA realizes that improvements are needed in the documentation of training in the area of safety as well as other areas. Mr. Morgan asked did the FPA have a Safety Manager. Mr. Boese responded that the FPA currently has a Safety Manager; however, there are some training deficiencies.

Mr. Weysham referred to the four WC claims filed thus far in 2019 and asked the number of man hours that were worked. Mr. Kennedy explained that the FPA is developing the analytics needed to provide a response, which should be available going forward. Mr. Weysham asked had the FPA implemented a formal Safety Program. Mr.

Boese responded that the current efforts are moving toward that goal. The current safety program is not documented, it is inconsistent across the organization and there are no Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). The FPA is attempting to formalize and document a Safety Program.

Mr. Weysham commented that in industry four WC claims in a quarter could shut down a company. He added that he works for a company in the oil and gas industry, which has a formal OSHA regulated safety program, and that there are only a couple of WC claims in a year with over one million man hours worked.

Mr. Miller commented that he was thrilled that the FPA has taken this safety initiative and is moving towards a consolidated safety approach. He advised that he chaired the Jefferson Parish Government Safety Committee for seven years and offered assistance.

**Adoption of Agenda:** The agenda was adopted by the Committee.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the February 21, 2019, Operations Committee meeting were approved.

**Public Comments:** Mr. Miller offered to allow Ray Landeche to provide comment when the Committee considers Agenda Item D.

**New Business:**

**A. Discussion of the proposed advertisement of the repairs of Floodgates W-33 and E-07, which were damaged as a result of two separate train derailments, for bids, with the costs of said repairs to be reimbursed by the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad and/or any other parties or entities determined liable for said repairs.**

Ryan Foster, FPA Engineer, explained that the engineering firm for the design of the repairs is Linfield, Hunter and Junius (LHJ) and that the engineering work is being done under an Indefinite Delivery-Indefinite Quantity (ID-IQ) contract. LHJ's initial submittal was provided to the USACE and Coastal Restoration and Protection Authority (CPRA). The first round of comments were received from the USACE and CPRA and dealt with details or notes in the specifications and did not relate to the design. The FPA anticipates issuing the advertisement for bids as soon as final approval is received from the USACE and CPRA. The New Orleans Public Belt Railroad (NOPBRR) has reimbursed the FPA for the emergency removal of portions of the gate and the work required to reopen the tracks. The FPA is trying to ensure that the gates are fully functional for the height of the hurricane season. However, as a contingency, LHJ included the design and specs for a temporary closure structure to be located on site and ready to put in place within twelve hours' notice.

Mr. Foster further explained that the floodgates cross CSX railroad tracks; however, the derailments involved NOPBRR trains. Discussions have taken place between CSX and

NOPBRR regarding responsibility for the damages (i.e., were the derailments caused by a track or train engineer issue). Both entities were provided with estimates for the repairs. Mr. Boese added that the discussions took place immediately after the derailments and that the FPA received prompt payment from the NOPBRR of \$77,000 for the emergency work that took place. Therefore, the FPA is confident that it will be reimbursed for the repairs.

The Operations Committee will recommend that the Board approve the advertisement for bids for the repairs to Floodgates W-33 and E-07.

**B. Discussion of the proposed advertisement and issuance of Requests for Qualifications for professional Geotechnical and Civil Engineering Services and Surveying Services for the purpose of entering into Indefinite Delivery-Indefinite Quantity (ID-IQ) contracts for services on an as needed basis.**

Mr. Boese advised that the current ID-IQ contracts for the subject services expire on August 31<sup>st</sup>. No changes are anticipated to the scopes of services for Surveying and Geotechnical Services. Previously, separate RFQs with overlapping scopes of services were issued for Civil, Coastal and Hydraulic Engineering Services. He recommended that the three disciplines be consolidated under Civil Engineering Services and that the pool of engineering firms be expanded. He advised that he and Mr. Miller will meet to review the draft RFQs and scope of services and that feedback from Board members is anticipated.

The Operations Committee will recommend that the Board approve the advertisement and issuance of the RFQs.

**C. Discussion of the proposed issuance of a Task Order to AECOM in the not to exceed amount of \$107,459.60 under an ID-IQ contract with said firm for resident inspection and construction administration services for the repairs to the Double Light Blue Light Pole Bases on Lakeshore Drive at West End.**

Mr. Foster explained that the repairs to the Double Light Blue Light Pole Bases on Lakeshore Drive at West End commenced several weeks ago. The proposed task order would allow AECOM, the designer of the project, to provide part time resident inspection and construction administration for the project.

The Operations Committee will recommend that the Board approve the issuance of the proposed task order to AECOM.

**D. Discussion of the proposed advertisement of Phase IV of the Lake Pontchartrain Seawall Erosion Control Project for bids.**

Ray Landeche, a resident in Lakeshore Subdivision, explained that Lake Terrace Park, which was a very popular area of the lakefront pre-Katrina, is located within Phase IV of the Seawall Erosion Control Project. Lake Terrace Park has been closed for 13 years.

He stated that he met with Ryan Foster for a preliminary look at the Phase IV design, which includes parking bays and roadway changes. Phase IV includes 3,000 feet of lakefront; however, the current design only has 50 parking spaces. The Lakeshore Subdivision area (lighthouse to Orleans Canal) of the lakefront includes 5,000 feet of seawall and 600 parking spaces, and the Lake Vista area (Orleans Canal to Bayou St. John) includes 4,400 feet of seawall and approximately 500 parking spaces. On a busy day parking still overflows into the neighborhoods. He stated that he was attending today's meeting in the hopes of obtaining additional parking spaces for the Lake Terrace Park area so that parking does not overflow into the neighborhood. Both fully developed areas have one parking space for every eight to nine feet of seawall. Therefore, Lake Terrace with 3,000 feet of seawall should have a similar ratio or 333 to 375 parking spaces. He requested that the design be opened for public comment and that the responsibilities included in the Memorandum of Understanding between the FPA and Non-Flood Protection Asset Management Authority (NFA) be clarified so that Lake Terrace Park, which was heavily utilized pre-Katrina, is brought back to its prior condition.

Mr. Foster commented that this is the first time he had heard about the parking space comparisons along the lakefront. He explained that prior to Hurricane Katrina, Lake Terrace Drive was a thruway that allowed vehicles to travel behind the homes and continue onto Lakeshore Drive at Bayou St. John. The levee was raised after Katrina and Lake Terrace Drive became a dead end cul-de-sac. Several safety issues have been experienced as a result of the dead end and barricades were put in place to block vehicles from using the cul-de-sac. Vehicles currently park in eight to ten unofficial spots. The design for Phase IV includes a turning lane off Lakeshore Drive to allow access to 50 parking spaces, which were determined to be sufficient for the current use of the area. Overflow parking is available on the east side of the London Avenue Canal.

Mr. Boese added that the FPA had not received any other feedback or comments concerning the Phase IV design relative to additional parking. He explained that increasing the number of parking spaces would take up a significant amount of the park itself and a dramatic amount of green space would be lost. The area is fairly unique in comparison to the rest of Lakeshore Drive because Lake Terrace Drive is no longer a thoroughfare—it is a dead end due to the USACE's redesign of the levee. The park is owned by the Orleans Levee District, but managed by the NFA. Consistent communications take place between the FPA and NFA relative to a variety of issues; however, the number of parking spaces in Phase IV had not been an issue. The design engineering firm for the Lakefront Seawall Erosion Control Project is Design Engineering, Inc. (DEI).

Mr. Miller suggested that the item be deferred for one month so that the Operations Committee can receive a written report from DEI about the feasibility of increasing the number of parking spaces in Phase IV.

Mr. Foster commented that he and DEI staff discussed the number of parking spaces and the conceptual layout for Phase IV and that a collaborative decision was made on the number of parking spaces.

Wilma Heaton, NFA Chair and FPA Director of Governmental Affairs, explained that as the FPA's representative on the NFA Board she would comment that although Mr. Landeche makes a vital point about parking relative to the 5.2 miles of Lakeshore Drive, which is in desperate need of parking, the Lake Terrace Park area is unique because it is a high security risk area. She asked that the Lake Terrace Property Owners Association, which is an extremely active organization, be briefed and that its position be requested on this issue.

Mr. Miller recommended that the item be deferred for one month in order to receive information from the civic association so that the FPA can be comfortable with the design relative to number of parking spaces. There was no objection to deferring the item.

There was no further business; therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.