

MINUTES

Livingston Parish

June 9, 2021

Pursuant to notice duly posted in the public lobby of the Livingston Parish Governmental Building, the Livingston Parish Citizens Drainage Committee met on June 9, 2021, at the hour of six o'clock (6:00) p.m. in the Parish Council Chambers, located in the Livingston Parish Governmental Building, 20355 Governmental Boulevard, Livingston, Louisiana with the following members present:

Joey Sibley
Brian Clemmons
Pat Genre
Kevin Hull
Stephen Howze
Ron McMorris
Eileen McCarroll
Ernie Balfantz
~~Eric Harrell - Vice chair~~
Shane Marler- Chair

The Chair, Shane Marler, asked Miss Lauren White to call the roll.

The Chair read agenda item 2a, "Old Business: Discussion and Review of Master Drainage Plan for the Parish of Livingston." Mr. McMorris asked for a moment of silence for Councilman Jeff Averett's family before moving forward. The chair obliged. The Chair began with a statement on the need of funding. He suggested perhaps getting some agreement with a government entity such as the newly formed Gravity Drainage District No. 8 to progress them as a parish-wide drainage and to help the district and this committee on funding. Mr. Howze stated that to be funded, the district would have to pass a tax. Since the districts were split up, and they had their own taxes, he felt it would be difficult to combine them. The chair allowed a discussion from the board. Mr. McMorris wanted to revisit the idea of an outline of projects. Councilman Delatte approached and stated that he did not know the legalities regarding a cooperative endeavor. He was not certain if this Citizen's group could sign an agreement. He suggested that perhaps the council as a whole could vote to allow them to do that. He did understand that this group would not get any grant money without being tied to a government entity, such as a drainage district that's already formed. He spoke of projects and felt that a channel to the North Pass was a worthy project. He reiterated Mr. McMorris' suggestion to get a list of parish-wide projects together. The chair asked if district eight had any legal representation. Mr. Delatte replied that they were just getting started, had no legal representation and were not yet funded. Councilman Mack approached and spoke of a Councilman's idea to form a Gravity Drainage super board made up of a member or representative of each Gravity Drainage district and a member of parish administration where the council would write out their role or responsibility. The board could work with the Citizens Gravity Drainage District on projects. Together, they could seek funding to improve parish drainage. He planned on putting this on the council agenda within the next two meetings.

The chair briefly addressed agenda item 3a "New Business: Update from Livingston Parish Grants Department – Steve Kistler/Mark Harrell." A brief discussion was allowed as to what method Mr. Steve Kistler used to seek projects. Neither were present at the meeting and attempts to have them to speak were unsuccessful.

The chair allowed discussions under agenda items 4, “Other Business” and 5, “Committee Comments/Concerns”. Mr. McMorris briefly discussed a plan to take to the council. The chair allowed a conversation about water displacement in regard to new development. Councilman Mack approached and spoke of his desire for a master gravity drainage plan for Livingston Parish. He felt that it would identify improvement projects, the watersheds that exist within the parish (Amite, Tickfaw, Natalbany), etc. He explained that the LA Watershed Initiative was put together by the government for the purposes of identifying drainage improvement projects that would benefit a large area. Mayor McCarroll spoke of her two years on the Master Plan Committee. She stated that the 2013 plan, although outdated, had a drainage component although the 2016 water events and amount of residential and commercial development added additional concerns. In addition, the three developed and funded drainage districts had the ability to secure grants and to hire professionals. She added that, parish wide, municipalities and districts each have rules and ordinances. So, what the parish has for unincorporated areas would not apply to the Town of Albany. She wondered how to determine what areas took precedence as there were various legal entities. Councilman Mack added that there is a master drainage plan, but not a master gravity drainage plan for the parish.

Councilman Delatte suggested getting a prioritized list together. Mrs. Genre agreed as Mr. Clemmons wished to see a study on the major watersheds of the parish in addition to a mapping of each waterway with information on base flow and overflow dependent upon rain levels. He noted a problem drainage area being Beaver Creek at Hwy 16 and on Cane Market. Mr. Howze replied that Mr. Kistler was on that issue and a brief discussion ensued. Lauren White asked the committee to email them to her as she volunteered to begin a list for them. The chair allowed a discussion from the committee as they spoke of problem areas to be included. Ms. White noted that the ordinance committee was currently working on some of the things that had been mentioned.

Public Input: Steve ____ spoke against developments occurring often in wetlands and felt that Congressman Graves should do something as he was in charge of the board that oversaw Army Corps funding.

Mrs. Genre asked about duplicating the committee’s own priority list and wondered if Mr. Steve Kistler would review it for that purpose when it became available. Someone asked if a list could be obtained from Mr. Steve Kistler on projects in the works. Ms. White stated that she would reach out to him.

Public Input: David Watts (lives on the Old Tickfaw River). He shared his concerns with Livingston Farms and felt that the parish allowed them to create the problem. He didn’t feel that he should be responsible for a drainage problem that someone else created.

Councilman Mack was asked by the chair to give a general overview on development in relation to the council and Planning Commission. The Chair allowed an extensive explanation which included an engineer with Alvin Fairburn and Associates approached to answer the chair’s questions about a preliminary plat.

Councilman Mack returned to the podium and discussed maintenance on retention ponds. The chair allowed a discussion.

A **MOTION** was offered by Ron McMorris and duly seconded by Stephen Howze to recommend to the ordinance committee that when roads are accepted into Parish maintenance, and they assume responsibility for roadside drainage, that they also assume responsibility for the retention/detention ponds within the development.

YEAS: MR. MARLER, MR. CLEMMONS, MR. MORRISON, MRS. GENRE, MR. HOWZE, MR. MCMORRIS, MRS. MCCARROLL, MR. BALFANTZ

NAYS: MR. HULL

ABSENT: MR. SIBLEY, MR. HARRELL

ABSTAIN: NONE

Mr. Clemmons asked to request of the parish council to consider doing a watershed study on major waterways to know how many cubic feet and inches of rain they can expect to know how to plan. Mr. McMorris asked if the study needed to be more specific.

A **MOTION** was offered by Brian Clemmons and duly seconded by Ron McMorris to recommend to the Council that a study be performed for the waterflow on all major waterways.

YEAS: MR. MARLER, MR. CLEMMONS, MR. MORRISON, MRS. GENRE, MR. HULL, MR. HOWZE, MR. MCMORRIS, MRS. MCCARROLL, MR. BALFANTZ

NAYS: NONE

ABSENT: MR. SIBLEY, MR. HARRELL

ABSTAIN: NONE

Public Input: Steve ____ stated that the study was fine for those living north of the Interstate. However, in the southern area, with a good east wind the water doesn't go anywhere, it just stands there. He's had more water from that than from a hurricane.

Mr. McMorris asked to move to agenda item 3b under new business, "Discuss New Facebook Page Content and Administration." The chair asked Mrs. Genre to speak and allowed a discussion about whether or not it would need to go before the council. Clarification was needed.

A **MOTION** was offered by Ron McMorris and duly seconded by Eileen McCarroll to create a Facebook group pending approval from the Council.

YEAS: MR. MARLER, MR. CLEMMONS, MR. MORRISON, MRS. GENRE, MR. HULL, MR. HOWZE, MR. MCMORRIS, MRS. MCCARROLL, MR. BALFANTZ

NAYS: NONE

ABSENT: MR. SIBLEY, MR. HARRELL

ABSTAIN: NONE

Having no other business, a **MOTION** was offered by Stephen Howze and duly seconded by Pat Genre to adjourn the June 9, 2021 meeting of the Livingston Parish Citizens Drainage Committee, with no further discussion and where none opposed.

/s/ Angie Cornett
Angie Cornett, Deputy Clerk

/s/ Shane Marler
Shane Marler, Chairman