

**DRAFT, subject to revisions and/or amendments**

**LOUISIANA RECOVERY AUTHORITY**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
State Capitol - House Committee Room 1  
Friday, December 16, 2005

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Norman Francis, chairman of the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA), called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. in House Committee Room 1 of the State Capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. It is noted for the record that notices to the public and news media of the time and place of the meeting had been given in compliance with the Louisiana Open Meetings Law.

**II. PRAYER**

Reverend Chris Andrews, of the First United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge, led the board in prayer, followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**IV. ROLL CALL**

Ms. Karen Stephens called the roll.

**Board Members Present:**

Dr. Norman Francis, Chairman  
Mr. Walter Isaacson, Vice Chairman  
Mr. Boysie Bollinger  
Mr. Tim Coulon  
Mr. Rene Cross  
Mr. James Davison  
Ms. Donna Fraiche  
Mr. Tom Henning  
Ms. Sibal Holt  
Mr. John T. Landry  
Mrs. Laura Leach  
Mr. Walter Leger  
Dr. Calvin Mackie  
Mr. Sean Reilly  
Mr. Virgil Robinson  
Dr. Mary Ella Sanders  
Mr. Matt Stuller  
Mr. Rod West

**Board Members Absent:**

Ms. Dale Atkins  
Rev. Harry Blake  
Ms. Donna Brazile  
Ms. Linda Johnson  
Ms. Mary Matalin  
Ms. Susan Taylor  
Mr. David Voelker  
Mr. Mike Woods

**Ex-Officio Members Present:**

Representative Joe Salter  
Senator Don Hines  
Senator Diana Bajoie

**Ex- Officio Members Absent:**

Representative Yvonne Dorsey

**Staff Members Present:**

Mr. Andy Kopplin, LRA Executive Director  
Ms. Karen Stephens, House Legislative Services Committee Secretary  
Ms. Gloria Angus-Bolds  
Mr. Charles Braud  
Ms. Jessica Dardenne  
Ms. Dominique Duval-Diop  
Mr. James Gilmore  
Ms. Kim Hamilton  
Ms. Catherine Heitman  
Mr. Adam Knapp  
Ms. Pam Laborde  
Ms. Meg Mahoney  
Ms. Alison Neustrom

**Other Witnesses Present:**

Mr. Gary Matherne  
Mr. Drew Sachs  
Ms. Sharon Robinson  
Ms. Sydney Coffee  
Secretary Scott Angelle  
Mr. Dan Hitchings

**V. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PRECEDING MEETING**

The Chairman called for a motion to approve the Minutes of the December 1, 2005, LRA Board meeting. There being no comments or corrections, upon motion duly made and seconded, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

**Approval of the minutes and ratification of actions taken at the December 1, 2005, meeting of the LRA Board.**

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**RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting of the LRA Board held on December 1, 2005, as presented to this meeting, are hereby approved and all actions taken by the Board presented at such meeting, as set forth in such minutes, are hereby in all respects approved as actions of the LRA Board.**

*Voting: Coulon, Cross, Davison, Fraiche, Francis, Henning, Isaacson, Landry, Leach, Leger, Mackie, Reilly, Robinson, Stuller, and West*

## **VI. EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

### **Chairman of the Board Report**

Dr. Norman Francis stated that one of the first priorities of the LRA was to ensure the safety of Louisiana citizens. He said that the federal commitment of \$3.1 billion for rebuilding the levee system was a major first step toward attaining that priority. He noted that Mr. Don Powell, spokesman for President Bush, said the goal of the administration was to build the best levee system known in the world. Dr. Francis said that the state now had the resources with which to begin that work.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Andy Kopplin, executive director of the LRA, gave an hour-long PowerPoint presentation (Attachment #1), which detailed the recovery effort to date and outlined the framework for the rebuilding plan:

- 786,000 displaced persons, of which 368,000 were relocated within the state
- 658 victims identified, of which 511 were released to family members
- 15,000+ travel trailers distributed, though 70,000 trailers are expected to be needed
- 22.7 million cubic yards of debris removed, equivalent to 10 World Trade Centers
- 81,000 businesses affected, of which 15,564 remain closed (10% of the state's businesses)
- 354,000 unemployment insurance claims, almost double the annual number in three months

Mr. Kopplin said that coordination continued with the Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) and state agencies on the implementation of short-term recovery items: temporary housing, wraparound services for evacuees, temporary locations for schools and health clinics, and social services. He said that LRA staff was working aggressively with Family Recovery Corp, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Social Services (DSS), and other state agencies on the placement of evacuees by the January 7, 2006, end-date for FEMA-funded hotel/motel housing. He stated his belief that the end-date would be extended in Louisiana due to the lack of permanent or temporary housing.

Mr. Kopplin reported that, as a result of Mr. Matt Stuller's previous comments that New Orleans does not look "open for business," LRA staff was working with the Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism (CRT) on the plan for debris removal. He said that the Department of Corrections had identified the key corridors to be cleared and was using prison labor for the removal.

Mr. Kopplin said contracts with private companies for DNA testing had been finalized and the remaining victims would be identified and returned to their families as soon as possible. He explained that 4,200 people were reported missing, and staff was working with databases across the country in order to find relocated persons.

Mr. Kopplin further detailed the status of the recovery effort:

- Job training was underway
- Business recovery centers were opened throughout the state
- No environmental catastrophes were found, except for the Murphy Oil spill, thus no health advisories were issued and the affected areas were safe for residents and visitors
- Coordination of removal of vehicles and vessels
- Timelines for debris removal, vessel salvage, trailer delivery, and hazardous waste collection

Mr. Kopplin noted the dates of upcoming events:

- January 13 - LRA board meeting
- January 25 - 100-day Benchmark

Mr. Rod West asked about the disparity between the demand for temporary housing units and the current capacity, particularly whether or not capacity was likely to increase in the near-term. Mr. Kopplin said that trailer placements had increased from 200/day to almost 500/day, and that the gap was closing.

Mr. Walter Leger said that the Housing and Redevelopment Task Force found that of the 15,000 damaged apartment units in New Orleans, 1,500 were expected to be in place within 60 days, and 3,500 within six months. He said that roughly 10,000 units had no projected recovery date. Mr. Leger explained that the task force was meeting with FEMA personnel on Monday, December 19, 2005, in an attempt to convince FEMA to transfer some of the trailer money into loans to apartment owners for reconstruction, which would save money in the long run.

Mr. John Landry asked if the slow pace of trailer deployment was due to a lack of supply, and whether Louisiana trailer vendors were being used to meet the demand, rather than out-of-state vendors. Mr. Kopplin explained that FEMA had complied with the LRA request to purchase trailers from Louisiana vendors, and the slow pace was due to a shortage of trailer sites.

Mr. Landry asked if a process existed which would prioritize the placement of trailers on private property, as opposed to group sites. Mr. Kopplin said that there was a dual-track system in place to handle the two types of distribution. Mr. Gary Matherne, deputy secretary for the Department of Revenue, further detailed the administration's attempts to convince FEMA to place trailers on private property.

Mr. Kopplin explained part two of the PowerPoint presentation, which detailed the priority focus areas:

- Secure external funding
- Restore levee safety and coastal protection
- Create jobs and economic recovery
- Rebuild housing and neighborhood communities
- Build critical local services: K-12 education, basic and emergency healthcare
- Reestablish support services: long-term healthcare, family services, post-secondary education, infrastructure

Mr. Kopplin stated his belief that the city of New Orleans could be rebuilt in three years, if housing were rebuilt at the same rate as in Atlanta, the fastest growing area in the nation. He stressed that policies and reforms were needed in order to accelerate private-sector investment in housing. Relative to Mr. Kopplin's remarks, Senator Bajoie introduced her guest, Mr. Thomas Settles, a builder of hurricane-safe housing. She gave the printed information on hurricane-safe housing to Mr. Walter Leger, chairman of the Housing Task Force, for future study. Mr. Kopplin completed the PowerPoint presentation with an explanation of the status of levees and the overall progress made in the LRA plan.

### **Executive Presentation on Hazard Mitigation Issues**

Mr. Tim Coulon presented a report on hazard mitigation issues and briefly discussed the first resolution for consideration by the board, relative to the preparation of an application for FEMA funds under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to support an outreach and education campaign. Ms. Donna Fraiche asked if parishes could use Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for the required 25% funding match under HMGP. Mr. Coulon said yes. Mr. Drew Sachs, representing James Lee Witt Associates, explained that CDBG funds were unlike other federal funds, in that once the money was transferred to the state it lost its federal "color," and could therefore be used to match other federal funds.

There being no further comments or discussion on the motion duly made by Mr. Tim Coulon and seconded by Mr. John Landry, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

**To adopt a resolution which would direct the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (OHEP) to prepare, in coordination with the LRA, an application for FEMA funds under the HMGP to support a five-year hazard mitigation outreach and education campaign.**

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**RESOLVED, that the LRA directs the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (OHEP) to prepare, in coordination with the LRA, an application for FEMA funds under the HMGP to support a five-year hazard mitigation outreach and education campaign.**

*Voting: Bollinger, Coulon, Cross, Davison, Fraiche, Francis, Henning, Landry, Leach, Leger, Mackie, Reilly, Robinson, Sanders, Stuller, and West*

Mr. Coulon introduced a second resolution for consideration by the board, relative to linking the HMGP funding at the parish and community levels to their adoption of FEMA Flood Advisory Elevation information. Mr. Sachs explained that the old 1984 FEMA flood maps did not accurately reflect the actual risk, and posed the question, "Do we want people to rebuild to standards that are on maps that we now know are flawed, or do we want people to use the best available data during the interim period until new maps can be issued?"

Dr. Norman Francis asked if homeowners that rebuild to the old standards would be able to acquire federal flood insurance. Mr. Sachs stated his belief that, unless otherwise required, communities would continue to issue building permits based on the old FEMA flood maps. Mr. Virgil Robinson commented that this was the very reason why so many people were uncertain about returning to rebuild. He said the LRA needed to move quickly to resolve this issue. Mr. Coulon said that the resolution under discussion only related to hazard mitigation funds, though common sense dictated that permits would not be issued under the old code

at this point. Mr. Andy Kopplin pointed out that new flood elevation information for St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Orleans, and Jefferson parishes would not be available until February and permits were now being issued in those parishes using the best available data, which was from the old FEMA flood maps. He challenged the members to give some thought as to how the LRA could use its role in hazard mitigation to influence parishes to use the best available data. Mr. Sean Reilly urged the members to send a signal that the state would not "take precious federal dollars and use them to put people back in harm's way."

Mr. Walter Leger asked to what extent had catastrophic flooding been a factor in the new base flood elevations. Mr. Sachs said that flood maps were based upon a 100-year event, which was an event that had a 1% chance of occurrence in any given year. He said the flooding in St. Bernard parish was the result of a storm surge far greater than a 100-year event, possibly in excess of a 200-year event for that parish. Mr. Sachs explained that FEMA would take all of the data for 100 years or more into consideration for the new maps, including the catastrophic flooding. Mr. Landry said he believed this to be a very reasonable resolution.

There being no further comments or discussion on the motion duly made by Mr. Sean Reilly and seconded by Mr. Tim Coulon, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

**To adopt a resolution that would make funding from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program an incentive for parishes and communities that adopt FEMA Flood Advisory Elevation requirements.**

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**RESOLVED, that the LRA has authority to make funding from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program an incentive for parishes and communities that adopt FEMA Flood Advisory Elevation requirements.**

*Voting: Bollinger, Coulon, Cross, Davison, Fraiche, Francis, Henning, Holt, Isaacson, Landry, Leach, Leger, Mackie, Reilly, Robinson, Sanders, and Stuller*

Mr. Coulon introduced a third resolution for consideration by the board, relative to HMGP priorities and funding.

There being no further comments or discussion on the motion duly made by Mr. Walter Leger and seconded by Dr. Norman Francis, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

**Authorization to open and end discussions relative to the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program priorities and funding.**

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**RESOLVED, that the Board is hereby authorized to open and end discussions relative to the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program priorities and funding.**

*Voting: Bollinger, Coulon, Cross, Davison, Fraiche, Francis, Henning, Holt, Isaacson, Landry, Leach, Leger, Mackie, Reilly, Robinson, Sanders, Stuller, and West*

There being no further comments or discussion on the motion duly made by Mr. Tim Coulon and seconded by Ms. Donna Fraiche, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

**Authorization to set Hazard Mitigation Grant Program priorities and funding.**

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**RESOLVED, that the Board is hereby authorized to set Hazard Mitigation Grant Program priorities and funding.**

*Voting: Bollinger, Coulon, Cross, Davison, Fraiche, Francis, Henning, Holt, Isaacson, Landry, Leach, Leger, Mackie, Reilly, Robinson, Sanders, Stuller, and West*

**VII. TASK FORCE REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS**

**Federal Legislative Task Force**

Mr. Walter Isaacson, vice chairman of the LRA, recapped Dr. Norman Francis' announcement about the \$3.1 billion federal commitment for levee reconstruction. He said the next phase would be to get as much as \$3 billion/year in offshore revenue shares to help with coastal restoration, and that the Louisiana congressional delegation would work to that end during the spring term. He explained that the U.S. Senate had just passed a bill that included the Gulf Opportunity Zone (GOZONE) tax break. Mr. Isaacson updated the board on the status of the bill authored by Congressman Richard Baker that would establish the Louisiana Recovery Corporation, and also reported on the status of the CDBG funding. Mr. Isaacson urged the members to continue to project a dynamic, positive presence to the state and to the nation, and to consider bold reform whenever possible.

*Dr. Norman Francis recessed the meeting for lunch. He reconvened the meeting at 12:52 p.m.*

**Audit Committee Report**

Mr. Virgil Robinson presented the report of the Audit Committee, which met on December 6. He outlined the steps taken by the committee to begin the process that would insure transparency and accountability in Louisiana during the recovery process. He explained that the committee was negotiating with several accounting firms, and he hoped to have that process completed in the first quarter of 2006. Mr. Robinson said that detailed reports were received from:

- Mr. Steve Theriot, legislative auditor - accounting procedures for the public entities in receipt of disaster-relief funds
- Ms. Sharon Robinson, state inspector general - tracking expenditures within state government
- Division of Administration personnel (DOA) - the Request for Proposal (RFP) process

Mr. Robinson requested that the chairman add the following persons to the membership of the Audit Committee:

- Mr. Mike Woods, LRA board member
- Mr. Barry Ewing, Council for a Better Louisiana (CABL)
- Mr. Jim Brandt, Public Affairs Research Council (PAR)

On behalf of the chairman, Mr. Walter Isaacson authorized the addition of the members.

Inspector General Sharon Robinson explained the concept, history, and use of Independent Private Inspectors General (IPSIG), otherwise known as integrity monitors. Mr. Robinson introduced a resolution for consideration by the board, relative to the use of IPSIGs for contracts that meet the following conditions:

- Contracts that exceed \$20 million
- Time and material contracts with no upper limit
- No-bid contracts
- Debarred contractors

Mr. Matt Stuller asked about the qualifications of the inspectors and what kind of accountability could be expected. Ms. Robinson said inspectors completed a certification process in order to become members of IPSIG, and the agency that contracted with the inspector would provide oversight of the IPSIG. Mr. Robinson explained that part of the accounting firm's responsibility would be to audit the data provided by the inspector to insure compliance with the contract, and report any problems to the LRA. Mr. Andy Kopplin clarified that the DOA, rather than the LRA, hired the accountant. He said that the taxpayers may be able to save money on open-ended contracts by using IPSIGs.

There being no further comments or discussion on the motion duly made by Mr. Sean Reilly and seconded by Mr. James Davison, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

**Authorization to call for the use of Independent Private Sector Inspectors General (IPSIG) for certain contracts of the state government and to urge the similar use of IPSIGs for certain federal and local government contracts.**

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**RESOLVED, that the Board is hereby authorized to call for the use of Independent Private Sector Inspectors General (IPSIG) for certain contracts of the state government and to urge the similar use of IPSIGs for certain federal and local government contracts.**

*Voting: Coulon, Cross, Davison, Fraiche, Francis, Henning, Isaacson, Landry, Leach, Leger, Mackie, Reilly, Robinson, Sanders, and Stuller*

In other business, Mr. Robinson said that the Audit Committee would meet on a calendar quarterly basis.

There being no further comments or discussion on the motion duly made by Mr. Virgil Robinson and seconded by Dr. Calvin Mackie, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

**Authorization to accept the report of the Audit Committee.**

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**RESOLVED, that the report of the Audit Committee is hereby adopted.**

*Voting: Coulon, Cross, Davison, Fraiche, Francis, Henning, Isaacson, Landry, Leach, Leger, Mackie, Reilly, Robinson, Sanders, and Stuller*

**Long Term Planning Task Force Report**

Ms. Donna Fraiche presented the report of the Long Term Planning Task Force, which met on Monday, December 12, and thanked staff for their assistance. She explained that 19 Governmental Recovery Planning Workshops were held in December, and attendance varied depending upon the size of the community and the commitment of the parish leaders. Ms. Fraiche said the task force received a report from Mr. Brad Guer, the director of EFS14. She distributed copies of FEMA's "Long-Term Community Planning Process - A Self Help Guide" (Attachment #2) dated December 2005, to the members. She said that eight parishes had received the guide so far, and the parish presidents were enthusiastic about them.

Ms. Fraiche said the next round of workshops would take place December 15-21 and would include more public participation. She explained that locations such as St. Bernard Parish were experiencing "meeting fatigue," and suggested that LRA put the results of past meetings into a one-stop place to look at all of the different plans that are being developed at every level. Ms. Fraiche said that Orleans Parish government was the last of 20 parishes to schedule their meeting.

**Coastal Protection Task Force**

Mr. Rene Cross presented the report of the Coastal Protection Task Force. He explained that the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) was established by statute during the 2005 1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Session as a vehicle to drive the development of a comprehensive coastal protection strategy. He pointed out that the LRA Coastal Protection Task Force was a duplication of CPRA effort and recommended that the focus of the task force shift away from plan development to guidance and oversight of the CPRA and the development process. Mr. Cross introduced a resolution for consideration by the board that would accomplish that goal and asked that the membership of the proposed new committee include the members of the Coastal Protection Task Force. Mr. Walter Leger urged LRA members to promote the CPRA more publicly.

There being no further comments or discussion on the motion duly made by Mr. Rene Cross and seconded by Mrs. Laura Leach, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

**Authorization to dissolve the Coastal Protection Task Force and create the Coastal Protection Committee.**

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**RESOLVED, the Coastal Protection Task Force is hereby dissolved and the Coastal Protection Committee is hereby created.**

*Voting: Coulon, Cross, Davison, Fraiche, Francis, Henning, Isaacson, Landry, Leach, Leger, Mackie, Reilly, Sanders, and Stuller*

Ms. Sydney Coffee, executive assistant to the governor for coastal activities, and chairman of the CPRA, said the lead agencies of authority in the CPRA were the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), headed by Secretary Johnny Bradbury, and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), headed by Secretary Scott Angelle. She explained that there was an urgent need to integrate coastal restoration with levee protection in a comprehensive plan. Ms. Coffee stated that CPRA was empowered to oversee levee authorities, to coordinate all coastal restoration and hurricane protection efforts, to develop a comprehensive coastal protection master plan and oversee its implementation, to seek federal funding, and to speak in "one voice" for the state on this effort. She stressed that the cost of implementing the plan was \$32-40 billion, with about \$14 billion of that total being dedicated to the coastal restoration effort.

Secretary Angelle presented a summary of Act No. 8 (Senate Bill No. 71 by Senator Reggie Dupre) of the 2005 1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Session. He said the measure received huge bipartisan support in the legislature, and spoke at length about the historic nature of the legislation that integrated, for the first time, coastal protection efforts throughout all of the state agencies. Secretary Angelle offered a brief PowerPoint presentation to support his summary, and afterward spoke about the planning underway to facilitate the levee consolidation that the governor strongly favored.

Mr. Sean Reilly said he hoped to have some specifics on proposed levee consolidation for the board to consider at the January 13 meeting.

Mr. Walter Isaacson asked which group was ultimately responsible for making sure the levees were safe. Secretary Angelle said the corps and the levee boards shared responsibility, but Act No. 8 would make the newly formed CPRA the primary agency for the state. He said the operation and maintenance of the levees had traditionally been passed down to the local level, which was an issue that should be addressed by the CPRA. Mr. Isaacson asked if there was anything wrong with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (corps) having primary responsibility to make sure levees are maintained. Secretary Angelle thought there was no problem with that concept, although he did not know if the corps would agree to it.

Mr. Tim Coulon said the corps was responsible for construction, levee boards were responsible for maintenance, and the two groups shared responsibility for inspections. He stated his belief that the problem was "not that the message is not getting out ... it's that nobody's listening ...there's an emotional tie to a fixation on a consolidated levee district that has no merit in fact ... other than perception ... and I think the proactive approach is ... let's make it fit into the concept and we all can work together ... and you can go

Washington ... and say we have a process in place ... People are concerned and ... I believe it can be overcome quite easily ... and we can come up with a solution." Mr. Isaacson stated his strong belief that "this is not a question of perception, this is a messed up system for making sure how levees work. It didn't work last time around, and people don't just have a wrong perception, they are correct that we don't yet know who is ultimately responsible for those levees, and we've got to get it right. And we have to make it a simple answer instead of making it more confusing."

Mr. Sean Reilly said he believed the board just had two discussions: one, relative to levee consolidation, which will be an interesting discussion for the board in January; and two, relative to who is ultimately responsible for maintaining the integrity of levees.

Mr. Rene Cross asked Secretary Angelle about the role of the CPRA. Secretary Angelle clarified that the authority would be responsible for deciding where to build a levee and the construction of the levee would be the responsibility of the corps, in most cases. Ms. Coffee said the authority was responsible for putting together a comprehensive coastal protection plan at the state level, the corps was mandated to do the same thing at the federal level, and it was the intent of the authority to completely coordinate with the corps so that there was one plan in the end. Secretary Angelle reminded the members to keep in mind that some levees were federally authorized and some were not, and the corps was helping to rebuild those damaged, non-federally authorized levees. Mr. Cross stated his understanding that the new authority would also attempt to place non-federal levees that have to do with hurricane protection into the federal program. Mr. Leger said that the corps built levees on the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO) in St. Bernard Parish that "dissolved like sand castles on the beach when a wave hits," whereas the locally maintained levees were still standing without a breach. He said that St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes needed Category 5 protection, and wondered if the area would be repopulated if even that protection were provided.

Mr. Kopplin said that ultimately the CPRA would have oversight of the proper action of the local levee boards, subject to the development of the master plan, regardless of any future levee board reform.

Mr. Dan Hitchings, director of Task Force Hope for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, presented a report on hurricane protection recommendations and options. (Attachment #3)

Mr. Reilly said that one thing we have to do is "control what we can control and we don't have permitting authority over local jurisdictions." He stated his belief that the board was sending the strongest message possible on where people should rebuild.

Mr. Hitchings reminded the members that Mr. Don Powell's recommendation of \$3.1 billion for coastal restoration was made on behalf of the Bush administration and forwarded to Congress for funding action.

### **State Legislative Task Force**

Mr. Sean Reilly said the LRA existed by virtue of an executive order, and would need to seek legislative creation in order to continue to function for the long term. He listed some of the issues to be explored: appointment authority for the board, staggered terms, and scope of authority. He said he asked PAR to look at different models of disaster response and make a recommendation on "how the board should look," in the event the legislature chose to create the board by statute. Mr. Reilly said he hoped that parishes such as Orleans, East Baton Rouge, and St. Bernard would create their own recovery authorities to work at the local level with the LRA.

## **Additional Task Force Reports**

### **Human Services Task Force**

Dr. Calvin Mackie presented an overview of the issues discussed by the Human Services Task Force that met on December 14. He said the state had seen an increase in reports of abuse and neglect, and as a result, the task force passed an urgent resolution which asked the LRA board to make mental health treatment, child welfare, and other social services one of the top federal funding priorities. Mr. Andy Kopplin clarified that the task force resolution was directed to the full board and should properly be referred to the Federal Legislative Task Force. Mr. Kopplin said that the president's supplemental redirect of \$17 billion included social services block grant money that could be directed to this targeted use. Dr. Mackie stressed that the need was immediate and not something that could be put on the back burner.

### **Infrastructure and Transportation Task Force** **Environmental Task Force**

Mr. John Landry said that he and Ms. Donna Fraiche had called a joint meeting of the Infrastructure and Transportation Task Force and the Environmental Task Force on December 14. He outlined an idea proposed by Mr. Ted Falgout for the restoration of diminished dunes in the Port Fourchon area using marsh grass that was currently being hauled away as debris, and at great expense. Mr. Landry said that Mayor Randy Roach and American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) member Tom Jackson made a motion "to encourage the appropriate state and federal agency to secure funds for and/or adopt an expeditious permitting process for the experimental use of hurricane-generated waste in coastal restoration or protection projects." He said the immediate concern was that research opportunities would be missed because the marsh grass was being hauled away. Mr. Landry explained that Mr. Falgout had volunteered the money for the experiment and asked the board to concur in the resolution.

Dr. Norman Francis said the board was one short of a quorum and could not vote. Mr. Andy Kopplin suggested that the information be immediately forwarded to the relevant state and federal agencies, which would put them on notice that the item would be on the agenda at the January 13 meeting.

## **VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

## **IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no comments from the public.

## **X. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

## **XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Kopplin said that the U.S. House of Representatives had just passed the GOZONE legislation as passed by the Senate earlier, and those tax breaks were on the way to the president for signature.

Mr. John Landry asked about the inclusion of Hurricane Rita in the legislation and invited comment. Mr. Andy Kopplin said the legislation covered Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma.

Dr. Norman Francis announced future meeting dates:

- January 13 in Baton Rouge
- February 16 in Lake Charles
- March 16, April 13, and May 11 in Baton Rouge

## **XII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Kopplin, Executive Director

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Date approved: \_\_\_\_\_