

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

**LOUISIANA RECOVERY AUTHORITY  
Board of Directors Meeting  
State Capitol - House Committee Room 1  
Thursday, March 16, 2006**

**MINUTES**

**I.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Norman Francis, chairman of the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA), called the meeting to order at 9:12 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**

Pastor Dennis Hebert of True Light Baptist Church led the board in prayer.

**III.**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Dr. Norman Francis led the board in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IV.**

**ROLL CALL**

Ms. Robyn Cockerham called the roll.

**Board Members Present:**

Dr. Norman Francis, Chairman

Mr. John T. Landry

Mr. Walter Isaacson, Vice Chairman

Mrs. Laura Leach

Ms. Dale Atkins

Mr. Walter Leger  
Sen. Diana Bajoie

Dr. Calvin Mackie  
Mr. Boysie Bollinger

Mr. Sean Reilly  
Mr. Tim Coulon

Mr. Virgil Robinson  
Mr. Rene Cross

Rep. Joe Salter  
Mr. James Davison

Dr. Mary Ella Sanders

Rep. Yvonne Dorsey

Mr. Matt Stuller

Ms. Donna Fraiche

Ms. Susan Taylor  
Mr. Tom Henning

Mr. David Voelker  
Sen. Don Hines

Mr. Rod West  
Ms. Linda Johnson

Mr. Mike Woods

**Board Members Absent:**

Rev. Harry Blake  
Ms. Donna Brazile  
Ms. Sibal Holt  
Ms. Mary Matalin

**Staff Members Present:**

Mr. Andy Kopplin, LRA Executive Director  
Ms. Gloria Angus-Bolds  
Mr. Dave Bowman  
Mr. Charles Braud  
Mr. Miles Bruder  
Ms. Robyn Cockerham  
Ms. Jessica Dardenne  
Mr. James Gilmore  
Ms. Ann Guissinger  
Ms. Catherine Heitman  
Ms. Kim Jupiter  
Mr. Adam Knapp  
Ms. Melissa Landry  
Ms. Meg Mahoney

**Witnesses Present (in order of appearance):**

Ms. Angela Glover Blackwell  
Mr. Chris Reade  
Mr. Andres Duany  
Mr. Aaron Broussard  
Dr. Mark Peters  
Dr. Gary Muller  
Mr. David Taylor  
Chief Newell Norman  
Mr. John Young  
Mr. Keith Chiro  
Mayor Ronnie Harris  
Mayor Robert Billiot  
Mayor David Camardelle  
Mayor Tim Kerner  
Mr. Giuseppe Miserendino  
Judge David Gorbaty  
Mr. Joseph DiFatta, Jr.  
Mr. Craig P. Taffaro, Jr.  
Mr. Kurt Weigle  
Ms. Nicole Sabel

V.

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

The Chairman called for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2006, LRA Board meeting. There being no comments or corrections, upon motion duly made by Mr. David Voelker and seconded by Mr. Sean Reilly the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

**Approval of the minutes and ratification of actions taken at the February 20, 2006, meeting of the LRA Board.**

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**RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting of the LRA Board held on February 20, 2006, as presented at 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: Bollinger, Coulon, Cross, Davison, Fraiche, Francis, Henning, Hines, Isaacson, Johnson, Landry, Leach, Leger, Mackie, Reilly, Robinson, Salter, Sanders, Stuller, Taylor, Voelker, West and Woods.*

**VI. EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

**a. Chairman of the Board Report**

Dr. Norman Francis thanked the chairpersons of the task forces for all of the hard work that they have done. He then went on to thank the many organizations and volunteers that brought congressional members to Louisiana in hopes of securing additional funding from congress. Dr. Francis spoke about the importance of the congressional monies. He reminded the Authority that the plans that get approval and funding need to be specific to hurricane impacted localities. Dr. Francis went on to express the desire that Louisiana residents, in particular those in hurricane-impacted areas, get the opportunity to share in the economic development and recovery of Louisiana.

Mr. Boysie Bollinger inquired as to where to go to get information concerning the availability of jobs and/or contracts for the citizens of Louisiana.

Dr. Francis asked staff to research those issues and subsequently make that information available.

Mr. Andy Kopplin noted to the authority that very little state money had been spent thus far on recovery. He continued that the majority of the spending had been done by FEMA and the Corps of Engineers, whose “transparency is none at all.”

Mr. Bollinger inquired if a list of contacts could be established.

Mr. Kopplin suggested the information be made available on the web site (LouisianaRebuilds.info).

**b. Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Andy Kopplin presented a slideshow (See Attachment A) with visuals of the housing recovery plan. He noted that this is the same slideshow that was presented to Chairman Powell in Washington, D.C. to make the case for the additional funding. He presented facts and figures on the damage Louisiana suffered in comparison to Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida due to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma. Mr. Kopplin also presented information on the rental property rebuilding plan. He continued by presenting information on the infrastructure rebuilding plan.

Ms. Linda Johnson noted to Mr. Kopplin that the Education Task Force could make available data from Cameron and St. Bernard Parish in regard to uncovered school needs.

Mr. Kopplin acknowledged that data as well as the data that John Landry has in regard to Vermilion Parish's educational needs. He continued by reiterating that Mr. Landry's committee is going to have many challenges deciding what pools of money to put aside for ports, schools, etc.

Ms. Susan Taylor sought clarification of the federal disbursements of funding for recovery efforts. She suggested creating a visual slide to reiterate the allotments.

Mr. Kopplin explained the funding process that the impacted states have gone through in efforts to obtain funding. He thanked her for her suggestion and noted that such information had been vocally shared with congress but it would be a good idea to have a visual for future presentations.

Sen. Don Hines shared with the Authority an interaction he recently had at a meeting of Senate Presidents.

**c. Vice Chair of the Board's Report**

Mr. Walter Isaacson complimented the job that Mr. Andy Kopplin, Mr. Sean Reilly, and Mr. David Voelker in establishing a formula for the use of CDBG funds and the economic development monies (housing funds included). This formula was taken to Don Powell, who analyzed it and thus has supported the additional funds for Louisiana in congress. Mr. Isaacson noted the dedication and support of President Bush in securing the additional funding. He encouraged the authority to remind congress how important it is to bring back the Gulf Coast, but not at the expense of Louisiana. Mr. Isaacson continued by mentioning two national newspaper articles that complimented the Louisiana rebuilding plan. He expressed the magnitude of support that Louisiana has in Washington, D.C. Mr. Isaacson encouraged the authority members to not pick apart Louisiana's rebuilding plans until the money had passed congress.

Dr. Norman Francis thanked Mr. Isaacson for his remarks and report.

Sen. Diane Bajoie inquired about the amendment that Texas is submitting to congress which seeks additional funding. Specifically, if the money Texas sought would be subtracted from the Louisiana allotment or if it was additional money from another source.

Mr. Isaacson stated that he was under the impression that they were seeking funding not attached to Louisiana. He and Mr. Kopplin discussed and gave explanations upon why Texas is seeking additional funding not related to the money Louisiana has sought.

## **VII. GUEST PRESENTATIONS**

### **a. Status of the Planning Process**

Dr. Norman Francis recognized Ms. Donna Fraiche.

Ms. Fraiche spoke of the success of the charrettes in Southwest Louisiana and St. Bernard Parish. She also noted the many localities who are still interested in hosting charrettes and ensuring that citizens' voices were heard and included in the rebuilding plans. Ms. Fraiche then introduced Mr. Andres Duany, of Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Co., who has successfully coordinated the charrettes in Southwest Louisiana and St. Bernard Parish.

Mr. Andres Duany briefly spoke about the happenings in South Louisiana. He defined the process of the charrette. Mr. Duany stressed the importance of showing people the area they would settle upon should they be moved. He reiterated the need for organization and communication during the charrettes. Currently, he has coordinated charrettes in Lake Charles, Erath, Vermilion, and St. Bernard Parish. Mr. Duany pointed to the positive changes that the hurricanes have brought (GO Zone). He went into detail about the possible future plans of St. Bernard Parish. Mr. Duany closed by praising the timing of the charrettes.

Mr. Rod West inquired about what New Orleans could do to prepare for charrettes and to rebuild during the election cycle. He and Mr. Duany had a discussion in regard to this subject.

Mr. Rene Cross requested a charrette for Plaquemines Parish.

Mr. Tim Coulon inquired about the status of the cottages in regard to FEMA authorization. Mr. Duany stated that there had been some progress made in changing the law, but there was still work to be done in that regard.

Mr. Matt Stuller asked what the LRA could do to put its plans into implementation. Mr. Duany responded with ideas on how communities could run successful charrettes.

Dr. Francis thanked Mr. Duany for all the work and time that he put into the successful charrettes around the state. He also inquired about the existence of notes from the charrettes.

### **b. Introduction to the LouisianaRebuilds.info Web Portal**

Dr. Norman Francis recognized Ms. Donna Fraiche.

Ms. Fraiche spoke on the planning process and the upcoming launch of a planning tool to assist municipalities in submitting their rebuilding plans. Ms. Fraiche then introduced Ms. Angela Glover Blackwell, a representative for PolicyLink. Ms. Blackwell spoke on the background of LouisianaRebuilds.info. She noted the importance of the portal bringing together government and private resources. Ms. Blackwell listed many of the partners that have joined together to bring this portal to Louisiana.

Ms. Blackwell then introduced Mr. Chris Reade of the Louisiana Family Recovery Corps. He noted that Louisiana individuals have worked cohesively to bring the technical aspect of the web portal to life. Mr. Reade gave a detailed demonstration of the LouisianaRebuilds.info web portal. He spoke about the upcoming plans for the portal as well as the goal of longevity.

Dr. Calvin Mackie asked about the ability to find out community information.

Mr. Reade explained that there is community as well as neighborhood information. He continued that there may be changes to the portal depending on what the usability studies reveal.

Mr. John Landry complimented the portal. He expressed his desire to see an equal amount of resources donated to Rita as well as Katrina. Mr. Landry inquired about the procurement of stories for the portal.

Mr. Reade assured Mr. Landry that there was a balance between Katrina and Rita issues. He spoke of the importance of keeping the site strictly informational and not political. Mr. Reade went on to say that one of the economic partners has hired a group of reporters. These reporters are the ones that are gathering the stories and bringing them to the portal.

Ms. Laura Leach asked for clarification on the process those without Internet access have to obtain the same information.

Ms. Blackwell noted the grant monies that the organization has received to further this project. She reiterated the use of community technology centers. She continued that the offline communication strategy is still being finalized and could be brought to the authority at a later date.

Dr. Francis noted the importance of citizens working together and the final products that can come from those collaborations. He went on to note that the LouisianaRebuilds.info web portal is one place that information about employment could be obtained by citizens.

Sen. Diane Bajoie inquired about the communication between the portal and local websites.

Ms. Blackwell assured her that all of the local websites are connected to the portal. Mr. Reade reiterated the cooperativeness of the local websites. He noted that they accept suggestions for future content and websites to link to.

*Dr. Norman Francis recessed the meeting at 11:29 a.m. for a brief break. He reconvened the meeting at 11:43 a.m.*

## **VIII. TASK FORCES - DISCUSSIONS AND REPORTS**

### **a. Housing Task Force**

Dr. Norman Francis spoke on the importance of the Housing Task Force and the work they have been doing in getting the displaced citizens of Louisiana back into their homes. He then recognized Mr. Walter Leger, Jr.

Mr. Leger expressed his thanks to Mr. Andres Duany for all of the work that he put into the rebuilding of the state, but especially for the work in St. Bernard Parish. He also explained to the Authority why there was an issue about whether the Housing Task Force had a quorum during the last meeting. Mr. Leger described the actions that the Housing Task Force took last month. He mentioned that they had informative meetings with citizens. Mr. Leger explained the Housing Plan that the Housing Task Force has thus far developed. He went through several scenarios and explained that the broad concepts and principles of the plan were the important aspects because each case is going to be individual. However, the program will have a \$150,000 cap of assistance for each scenario. Mr. Leger assured the authority that “the money would go where the damage is.”

Mr. Andy Kopplin explained the process that the housing action plans must go through for approval. This process begins with LRA approval, Joint Budget approval, legislative approval, time period for public comment, and finally HUD approval.

Mr. Boysie Bollinger asked about the parallels of the Louisiana Housing Plan in regard to the Mississippi housing plan.

Mr. Leger explained that the Louisiana plan revolves around returning people to pre-storm equity levels. He deferred to Mr. Kopplin for further explanation.

Mr. Kopplin explained that the goal was to be comparable. The cap is the same in both states. Louisiana does have a loan program to assist individuals with returning to their homes. He was not sure if there was a comparable program in Mississippi.

Mr. Bollinger than inquired whether the housing Task Force was advocating any add-ons programs (i.e. if an individual from New Orleans relocates within New Orleans).

Mr. Leger stated that the Housing Task Force is still discussing all options.

Mr. Bollinger inquired about whether the state or private bankers will execute the mortgages (in the plan).

Mr. Leger informed him that some state resources will have to be spent to monitor and implement the program. He stated that this was not a finalized plan as far as the implementation.

He continued that banks are already set up to monitor the program (i.e. who the owner is, insurance payments).

Mr. Kopplin stated that the role of the LRA is to make the policy recommendations to the governor and the legislature. Implementation will be carried out through the CDBG Office or other state agencies. The broad consensus is to contract out the bulk of the work.

Mr. Tim Coulon asked if the processes will run simultaneously (i.e. division of administration signing contracts).

Mr. Kopplin assured the authority that the processes do run simultaneously.

Ms. Dale Atkins asked for clarification on the formula for insurance reimbursement (total insurance reimbursement received or for the building itself).

Mr. Leger stated that it was the combination of hazard and flood insurance. This does not include the contents of the house. Homes with only wind damage are not eligible for the program.

Dr. Calvin Mackie inquired if there had been discussion concerning individuals whose homes may be taken by eminent domain. Dr. Mackie went on further to explain the situation in regard to individuals who have received letters from the Army Corps of Engineers.

Mr. Leger was unaware of this situation.

Mr. David Voelker explained that the Army Corps of Engineers has petitioned to change the language in the letter to pay pre-Katrina values. He stated that the issue is being addressed.

Mr. Leger added comments explaining that the methodology behind the plan is to let the market do its job.

Dr. Francis questioned the definition of “assess” in the application.

Mr. Leger explained several different methods that could be used to obtain appraisal values.

Dr. Francis and Mr. David Voelker commented on the meeting with Don Powell and complimented all those involved. Mr. Voelker continued by complimenting Mr. Walter Isaacson on the work that he is doing in Washington.

Sen. Diana Bajoie asked for clarification on the definition of single-family dwellings.

Mr. Leger noted that that issue is still up for discussion.

Mr. Kopplin informed the authority that those changes have already been made in the document as well as the addition of automated evaluation methods being included into the assessment procedures.

Mr. John Landry asked what happens to those who cannot afford to elevate their low-assessed houses.

Mr. Kopplin explained the loan program and the appropriate contribution formula. He then explained the silent mortgage option.

Ms. Linda Johnson sought information about an older adult housing scenario.

Mr. Kopplin responded with an explanation of the affordable loan package.

Mr. Tim Coulon asked whether the authority would see the details of the plan again or should the authority move forward.

Mr. Kopplin referenced the action plan procedure. Dr. Francis commented on the day's actions in regard to the approval of the recommendations.

Ms. Donna Fraiche included comments about how important communication is to the approval of the Housing Plan. She suggested seminars and informative kits to keep the public aware.

Mr. Leger assured Ms. Fraiche that public comments have been at the forefront of the Housing planning process. He then asked Dr. Francis for the Board to affirm the actions of the task force to clear up any issues with regard to the lack of a quorum.

Dr. Francis then called for a roll-call vote to amend the meeting agenda to include a new action item. Ms. Robyn Cockerham took the roll-call vote.

**Amend the Agenda of the March 16, 2006, LRA Board meeting to include an action item to vote to ratify/affirm the actions of the Housing Task Force that have been taken in its meeting on March 15, 2006.**

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**RESOLVED, that the agenda to the March 16, 2006, LRA Executive Board Meeting be amended to include a vote to affirm/ratify the actions of the Housing Task Force taken in its meeting on March 15, 2006.**

*Voting: Atkins, Bajoie, Bollinger, Coulon, Cross, Davison, Dorsey, Fraiche, Francis, Henning, Isaacson, Johnson, Landry, Leach, Leger, Mackie, Reilly, Robinson, Stuller, Taylor, Voelker, West, and Woods*

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

**To adopt the housing plans recommended by the Housing Task Force.**

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**RESOLVED, that the Board hereby adopts the LRA Housing Task Force recommended housing plans.**

*Voting: Atkins, Bajoie, Bollinger, Coulon, Cross, Davison, Dorsey, Fraiche, Francis, Henning, Isaacson, Johnson, Landry, Leach, Leger, Mackie, Reilly, Robinson, Stuller, Taylor, Voelker, West, and Woods.*

**IX. LUNCH**

*Dr. Norman Francis recessed the meeting at 12:49 p.m. for lunch. He reconvened the meeting at 1:31 p.m.*

**X. GUEST PRESENTATIONS**

**a. Jefferson Parish Planning**

Dr. Norman Francis introduced Mr. Aaron Broussard, Jefferson Parish President, who introduced a number of individuals (See Witnesses) representing Jefferson Parish. Collectively, they presented a detailed slideshow (See Attachment B) which presented the current status of Jefferson Parish. It also detailed the rebuilding plans of the parish.

Ms. Donna Fraiche asked for clarification on the indigent care figures. She then asked whether there was anything that the LRA could do to assist the Jefferson Parish Hospitals in receiving reimbursement.

Dr. Mark Peters responded that the applications had been filed and noted that since Katrina, East Jefferson Hospital was \$17 million short. Dr. Gary Muller noted that West Jefferson is a bit higher due to a larger indigent care population.

**b. St. Bernard Parish Planning**

Dr. Norman Francis introduced Judge David Gorbaty, representing St. Bernard Parish. Judge Gorbaty, along with Mr. Joseph DiFatta, Jr. and Mr. Craig P. Taffaro, Jr., presented a slideshow (See Attachment C) that highlighted the rebuilding plan of St. Bernard Parish. The presentation also focused on the devastation that occurred during the hurricanes. Judge Gorbaty also explained to the authority the role of the Citizens Recovery Committee.

Ms. Donna Fraiche reminded the St. Bernard Parish representatives that there will be a planning tool available to municipalities to assist with the planning process.

Mr. Walter Leger, Jr. expressed his thanks to the representatives of St. Bernard Parish for the hard work that they have been doing.

**X. TASK FORCES - DISCUSSIONS AND REPORTS**

**a. State Legislative Task Force**

Mr. Sean Reilly presented the report of the State Legislative Task Force. He reminded members that the Regular Legislative Session would be starting soon and that it was imperative for legislators to understand the measures that the LRA is sponsoring. He went on to encourage all board members to contact the legislators they know and explain to them the importance of these measures.

**b. Additional Task Force Reports**

Ms. Linda Johnson gave a report (See Attachment D) from the Education Task Force. The report included three preliminary recommendations from the Task Force.

Mr. John Landry requested that a future LRA Board meeting be held in Lafayette.

**XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

**XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Kurt Weigle, representing the New Orleans Downtown Development District, complimented and thanked the LRA for the work that has gone on in the state. He brought to the attention of the LRA the housing possibility of Downtown New Orleans.

Ms. Nicole Sabel representing Democracy Values gave a presentation on the Gulf Coast Rebuilding Initiative. This program aims to combine the Gulf Coast states' rebuilding efforts into a single piece of legislation in congress to aid in the rebuilding initiatives.

**XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

**XIV. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

**XV. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Kopplin, Executive Director

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