

**AGENDA & NOTES**  
FOR  
**TERREBONNE**  
**HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE**

10/6/2014

@ 5:30 PM

Bayou Terrebonne Waterlife Museum  
7910 W Park Ave  
Houma, Louisiana 70360

**I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Terrebonne Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Committee held their fifth open to the public meeting at the Bayou Terrebonne Waterlife Museum in Houma, Louisiana, on Monday October 6, 2014. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity to review the preliminary draft, and allow attendees to provide input on all aspects of the plan.

Jennifer Gerbasi of Terrebonne Parish introduced herself and asked attendees to introduce themselves and their goals in attending the meeting.

**II. SUMMARY OF HMPU PROCESS TO DATE**

The previous meeting schedule and public notices and outreach were provided to start the meeting. The documents and studies available for review were listed and by consensus, the meeting moved on to comments on the plan contents or gaps.

**III. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS ON THE PRELIMINARY DRAFT**

1. According to the plan, there are 158 pumps in the Parish. Where is the water from a particular destination supposed to go? Education necessary for the public about how the pump systems work would better set expectations. Plan shows the maps, but doesn't show the area that each pump drains.
  - a. Response: This information was not available at the meeting. The educational component will be taken into consideration in the plan if there is no current document available.
2. Maintenance of the drainage system needs to be improved. Is there a maintenance plan and a set schedule that ensures that the system will work in an event? An education campaign about litter is needed to protect the drainage system, and at least as important is enforcement by the Sheriff's office.
  - a. Response: These are important observations. The parish does have a maintenance schedule that is too broad to include in the plan. However, committee members not present at the meeting will respond to the request. On the litter issue, there have been ongoing educational efforts to encourage proper trash disposal. Fines for littering have been increased. Storm drain protection and maintenance have been

brought up by community members in offline discussions during the planning process.

In continued discussion, the increased fines were not seen as a strong deterrent since enforcement was not consistent. The storm drains in particular were a concern (grass clippings, etc) as it can create backup and flooding in an event.

3. Chabert has a new levee system and drainage valves. Who is responsible for those valves and their operation? Is there a maintenance or day to day operational plan that is available to the public?
  - a. Response. The levee department is participating on the committee, and will respond with the information that is available. If the information is not available, the development of this and other levees will be considered as a project to update public information in the future.
4. Who is responsible for which levees, and is there a maintenance plan for that? Is the same party responsible for enforcement of restrictions on levee use or abuse? Without enforcement, how are people to know the importance of the levee system, how it performs, and what activities are allowed? Is the maintenance proactive?
  - a. Response. There are surge levees and drainage levees, and the Levee District and the Parish have responsibility for specific levees. The responsible party was not certain though the sheriff's office may prosecute. This was tabled until further information could be provided. There is a new levee safety video being developed as a result of a grant. Like other videos on topics such as permitting and mitigation options, the video provides an overview of the importance of the levees, appropriate and inappropriate activities, and the need for citizens to report any activity that could weaken the levee and increase risk of failure.
5. The plan doesn't speak to threats from outside the parish. Flooding from the Mississippi and the Atchafalaya is not covered. Is there a plan for a breach in Donaldsonville or elsewhere?
  - a. Response: The Steering Committee discussed this topic in light of the potential flooding in 2013 that was averted. Due to the lack of control the Parish felt it had over the upstream dams and levees, the topic was not pursued. Rather, state and federal sources were considered more appropriate to lead these efforts.
6. What protections do we have for the water supply if there is a manmade disaster or act of terrorism. Examples could be an oil spill followed by a hurricane which washes the oil into the bayou system, or contamination within the water system. How secure are the water treatment facilities, and can this be a part of this multithread plan?
  - a. Response: The tribes submitted similar concerns about the combination of manmade and natural disasters on recovery and resources. This objective is being considered for inclusion in the plan. The plan does outline various methods for providing potable water in the event that saltwater intrusion affects the water sources for the Parish. These plans for saltwater intrusion are likely to be applicable to other contamination scenarios.
  - b. The plan is focused on natural disasters for the most part, and not terrorism. Staff will request any plan related to this threat to the water system be provided.

The summary of the public discussion was that proactive maintenance of the built infrastructure and enforcement of current regulations will be more effective than more new regulations that are not enforced. Likewise, plans or standard operating procedures for maintenance should be developed if they don't exist, but regularly scheduled implementation is just as important.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

Written or verbal comments were requested for any further comments on projects or the draft content, layout, or process.