

LOUISIANA WATERSHED INITIATIVE
REGION 4 REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
REGULAR MEETING

JANUARY 27, 2020

10:30 AM

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Mr. Alberto Galan called the meeting to order.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Myles Hebert (Cameron Parish), Jacob Marceaux, (Beauregard Parish), Carl Thompson (Vernon Parish), Alberto Galan (Calcasieu Parish), Matt Johns (Rapides Parish),and Kenneth Ebarb (acting as proxy for William Ruffin, Sabine Parish)

Not Present: Gardner Rose (Coushatta Tribe), Steve Brown (Desoto Parish), John Marceaux (Jeff Davis Parish)

Others Present: Terry Frelot (Calcasieu Parish), Jennifer Cobian (Calcasieu Parish), Amber Downs (Calcasieu Parish), Natasha Willis (Calcasieu Parish), Nicolette Jones (LA OCD), Tom Fontcuberta (DeSoto Parish), Kara Bonsall (Cameron Parish)

3. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Jacob Marceaux led the Invocation.

Mr. Alberto Galan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Take appropriate action to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2020, Regional 4 Region Steering Committee meeting.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Myles Hebert and seconded by Mr. Carl Thompson, and the motion result was Passed.

5. Take appropriate action where needed regarding requested changes to the composition of the Region 4 Regional Steering Committee by the Louisiana Office of Community Development.

Discussion: Ms. Jones with the Louisiana Office of Community Development stated that fiscal agents from each region were required to submit their final list of steering committee members by January 27, 2020. The list of the Region 4 Regional Steering Committee members was received the Louisiana Office of Community Development. After reviewing the final list, the Louisiana Office of Community Development had a few recommendations. Ms. Jones referred to the guidance set by the Louisiana Office of Community Development that suggests the steering committee members should reflect technical expertise as well as diversity. The Louisiana Office of Community Development is recommending that the Region 4 Regional Steering Committee make Gardner Rose, Coushatta Tribe, a voting member since he represents a separate jurisdiction within Allen Parish. She also stated that because this would create an even number of members (10) on the RSC, we should look to add an additional member to both out the membership recommendation from the guidance. She suggested they choose someone from a regional organization with interests in multiple parishes and to use this opportunity to meet additional demographics. By adding Gardner Rose as a voting member and adding an additional voting member, the Region 4 Regional Steering Committee will be consistent with its guidelines. Mr. Alberto Galan suggested that anyone with a nominee that may meet the state's guidance can submit an email with the person's name along with a description of qualifications to discuss at the next Region 4 Regional Steering Committee on March 2, 2020.

Mr. Alberto asked for clarification regarding amending the CEA between the parishes due to adding Mr. Gardner Rose as a voting member of the Region 4 Regional Steering Committee. Ms. Jones stated that OCD does not have any specific guidelines concerning the CEAs that established the RSC other than the requirement that each parish had to have a CEA with Calcasieu Parish regarding their appointment of fiscal agent for the Regional Capacity Building Grant.

A Motion to make Gardner Rose, Coushatta Tribe, a voting member for the Region 4 Regional Steering Committee was made by Mr. Jacob Marceaux and seconded by Mr. Matt Johns, and the motion result was Passed.

6. Discussion to take appropriate action where needed regarding consistent statewide policy, guidance, and governance procedure application for all regional steering committees under the Louisiana Watershed Initiative.

Discussions by Mr. Jacob Marceaux regarding concerns that the Louisiana Watershed Initiative steering committees do not have state-wide governance in the form of a senate level committee.

Ms. Jones with The Louisiana Office of Community Development and Jennifer Cobian with the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury clarified that the regional steering committees are being overseen by the Council on Watershed Management that was created through the executive order of the governor for the purpose of overseeing the Louisiana Watershed Initiative. Ms. Jones stated that they are open to comments and recommendations about each of the region's individual needs. Mr. Jacob Marceaux asked for additional comments regarding the creation of a senate level committee. Mr. Matt Johns stated the board was created via executive order to move somewhat fast to get projects started. He stated there are arguments for both sides, but he would be satisfied with either way. Mr. Myles Hebert has concerns that adding another level of governance would slow the process down.

7. Receive any available update from Office of Community Development.

Ms. Jones with Office of Community Development stated there is no official update. The Office of Community Development is still in the process of reviewing the pre-applications. They will send out an email once an update becomes available.

8. General discussion or update from each parish and tribe, if any, regarding this initiative and project, infrastructure, modeling, or other identified needs that exist within each Parish to begin goal and priority setting for Region 4:

Allen Parish – Not present.

Beauregard Parish – Waiting for approval/disapproval from the pre-application round. They are looking at floodplain conservation easements.

Calcasieu Parish – Jennifer with Calcasieu Parish Police Jury stated that hearing each of the regions issues and projects has been beneficial. Mr. Wes Crain encourages the Region 4 Regional Steering committee to continue thinking of projects that will have a regional impact. Mr. Crain also encouraged the rural areas to look at conservation easements.

Cameron Parish – Looking at modeling effort to help reduce water to the Mermentau Basin and Calcasieu Sabine Basin.

DeSoto Parish – Not present.

Jeff Davis Parish – Not present.

Rapides – No project update.

Sabine Parish – No project update.

Vernon Parish – No project update.

Coushatta Tribe – Not present.

9. Adjournment.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Matt Johns and seconded by Mr. Myles Hebert.
Meeting adjourned.