

House Select Committee on Homeland Security

Minutes of Meeting
2017-2018 Interim
October 11, 2017

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Franklin J. Foil, chairman of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security, called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m. in Room 6, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Franklin J. Foil, chairman
Representative John F. "Andy" Anders
Representative Chad Brown
Representative Jean-Paul P. Coussan
Representative Kenny R. Cox
Representative Julie Emerson
Representative Cedric B. Glover
Representative Lance Harris
Representative Lowell C. "Chris" Hazel
Representative Valarie Hodges, vice chairman
Representative Barry Ivey
Representative Rodney Lyons
Representative James H. "Jim" Morris
Representative Clay Schexnayder
Representative Jerome "Zee" Zeringue

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Edmond Jordan
Representative Walt Leger, III
Representative James H. "Jim" Morris

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Glenn Fleming, legislative analyst
Karen Stephens, secretary

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Clarence Russ, sergeant at arms
Sharon Hewitt, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION

Representative Foil stated that the purpose of the meeting was to provide members and the public with a status update of the recovery efforts accomplished by various departments now that a little more than a year had passed since the Great Flood of 2016.

Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP)

Mr. James B. Waskom, Director, Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, 7667 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 925-7345, narrated a PowerPoint presentation, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records. He talked about the three phases of the sheltering plan, volunteers and donations, and the advantages and challenges of Louisiana's Shelter at Home program.

Ms. Kimberly Poorbaugh, Assistant Section Chief for Preparedness, Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, 7667 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA, 70806, (225) 922-2667, spoke about the establishment of a task force in order to educate and improve the level of cooperation and collaboration of public-private partnerships during any future disasters.

Mr. Casey Tingle, Deputy Director / Chief of Staff, Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, 7667 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA, 70806, (225) 925-7345, narrated a portion of the PowerPoint presentation, providing information on the watershed approaches to flood mitigation.

Mr. Waskom resumed narration of the remainder of the PowerPoint presentation until completion. He talked about GOHSEP activity since Hurricane Nate, a category one storm, which made landfall near the mouth of the Mississippi River just a few days ago on Saturday, October 8.

Louisiana National Guard

Brigadier General Lee. W. Hopkins, Director of the Joint Staff, Louisiana National Guard, 6400 St. Claude Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70117, (504) 278-8672, narrated a PowerPoint presentation, Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records. He said that 3,885 Louisiana guardsmen responded during and after the flood, providing search and rescue, evacuation transportation, government support, security for shelters, and distribution of commodities and sandbags, between other tasks and duties. General Hopkins stated that more than 20,000 people were rescued or evacuated after the storm.

Representative Hodges in the chair.

Department of Transportation and Development

Mr. Christopher Knotts, Department of Transportation and Development, 1201 Capitol Access Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 379-3000, discussed several slides contained in his PowerPoint presentation entitled "Amite River Basin Numerical Model Development - Update", which is included in the committee records as Exhibit C. He spoke about the goals of the modeling project and the future application of the information it provides. He also outlined the schedule of completion for each section: data collection, modeling, and deployment. Mr. Knotts said he expects the LSU Center for River Studies to receive the research in February 2019.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Restore Louisiana

Mr. Pat Forbes, Executive Director, Governor's Office of Community Development / Restore Louisiana, (no address provided), distributed copies of a letter date September 18, 2017, from Governor John Bel Edwards to President Trump, Exhibit D, and narrated a PowerPoint presentation, Exhibit E. Copies of each are included in the committee records. He provided the members with information relative to requested assistance, program funding, and the phases and funding of the Homeowner Assistance Program.

Representative Foil in the chair.

Mr. Forbes outlined recent developments, including expansion of the program to include homeowners with flood insurance, and extension of the reimbursement period for a full year, to September 8, 2018.

Cajun Navy

Mr. Jon Bridgers, Sr., Cajun Navy 2016, (no address provided), (833) 225-8616, spoke about the organization, mission, and vision of the Cajun Navy volunteers and their water rescue efforts during the Great Flood of 2016. He received thanks and appreciation from the committee members and was encouraged to share with staff any developing Cajun Navy needs and his plans for the future of the group that he founded. Mr. Bridgers distributed a pamphlet entitled "Cajun Navy 2016", which is included in the committee records as Exhibit F.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Franklin J. Foil
House Select Committee on Homeland Security

Date adopted: