

BOSSIER PARISH POLICE JURY
HEALTH, WATER SANITATION & SEWER DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
Mr. Glenn Benton, Chairman
August 7, 2024

The Health, Water Sanitation & Sewer District Committee of the Bossier Parish Police Jury met on this 7th day of August, 2024, at 10:15 a.m., in the Police Jury Conference Room, Bossier Parish Courthouse, Benton, Louisiana. Mr. Glenn Benton, Chairman, called the meeting to order, with the following members present:

Mr. Glenn Benton, Chairman, Mr. John Ed Jorden, Co-Chairman, Mr. Chris Marsiglia, Mr. Doug Rimmer, Mr. Philip Rodgers

Others present for the meeting:

Mr. Jimmy Cochran	Mr. Patrick Jackson
Ms. Kylie Colvin	Mr. Nguyen Kha
Ms. Ashley Ezell	Ms. Julianna Parks
Ms. Stacie Fernandez	Mr. Clinton Patrick
Mr. Jim Firth	Ms. Megan Ramos
Mr. Butch Ford	Mr. Tom Salzer
Ms. Julie Gill	Mr. Keith Sutton
Ms. Monica Grappe	Dr. Ken Ward
Mr. Eric Hudson	Mr. Rod White

Mr. Butch Ford, Parish Administrator, advised of a revolving loan program available through the Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Public Health, for emerging contaminants. He asked Mr. Clinton Patrick, Volkert, Inc., to present information regarding this program to the committee.

Mr. Patrick stated that the program is funded through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), through Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and the arm through the state is the Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund (DWRLF). He stated that the purpose of this program is for those projects that fall within the emerging contaminants category. He further stated that the design, legal, property acquisition, and construction are all included in this program, if the application is approved. Mr. Patrick recommended that the parish submit the application with several proposed projects, and once a project is selected by the EPA, the selected project moves forward.

Mr. Benton asked if the manganese removal project is included in the proposed projects. Mr. Patrick stated that the Manganese Filter Treatment System for Wells 12 and 13 at Bellevue Road Station/Adner EST Site does fall within the emerging contaminants category and is one of the projects proposed. He stated that other projects proposed are: Demolish Mimosa Garden Booster Station (Bud's Station), Plug and Abandon Well No. 14, and Drill a New Replacement

Well, Install Manganese Filter Treatment System for Wells 20 and 21 (at Hwy 58/Bellevue Pump Station, Rehab Hwy 528/Bellevue Booser Pump Station with new higher capacity pumps to allow for backwashing, and Drill a New Well needed for backwashing the new filter system, and Plug and Abandon Wells 3 and 4 (located at the Fillmore Booster Station), and Drill New Wells at other booster station. He further stated that the estimated cost of each project ranges from \$2,000,000 to \$3,800,000.

Mr. Ford stated that the police jury previously authorized Volkert to complete the preliminary work for this application, and this work is now complete. He stated that this is a loan forgiveness program, which will be an approximately \$6,000,000 loan. He further stated that this loan will be forgiven, but the parish must complete all steps in the process, including hiring bond counsel. Mr. Ford stated that this program has approximately \$15,000,000 in unused funds each year and advised that Mr. Patrick brought this program to the attention of the parish. He stated that he has already spoken with Foley & Judell, LLP, who has served as parish counsel for other bonds.

Mr. Rodgers asked what happens if none of the projects are selected for approval. Mr. Ford stated that if none of our projects are approved, we will not apply for the loan program. He stated that the application requires a study and business plan, and if the parish is not approved, we will not move forward with the loan. Mr. Ford stated that there is additional work to be done in preparation of the application, advising that proposals will be presented to the police jury for approval during the process. Mr. Rodgers asked if funding from the water district will be utilized to pay for these expenses. Mr. Ford stated that all costs associated with the loan program will be paid from the Consolidated Waterworks/Sewerage District No. 1 and Consolidated Waterworks/Sewerage District No. 2 funds. He stated that the process could take up to one year to complete, and he will keep the committee advised as to the status of the application.

Mr. Rodgers asked why the program is called a loan and not a grant. Mr. Ford stated that the program is designed as a loan, and the application must go through the loan process through the EPA for forgiveness. Mr. John Ed Jorden stated that the word loan is used so that if the funds are not used for the approved project, the money must be paid back. Mr. Benton stated that this has been reviewed by Mr. Patrick Jackson, Parish Attorney, to ensure that the parish is not tied to any additional federal rules in applying for this program.

Mr. Marsiglia clarified that any further work done by Volkert, in addition to what has already been approved, must come back to the police jury for approval. Mr. Ford stated that any

further work by Volkert for this application will be brought to the police jury for approval. He stated that a resolution may be needed for the application, and an item will be placed on the next agenda for consideration by the police jury.

Mr. Ford stated that after repairs to the St. Mary Water System were recently completed, the parish has been asked if it would consider taking over this water system. He stated that it is a small system with approximately 150 customers, located west of Plain Dealing. He further stated that the Town of Plain Dealing is also considering taking over the system. Mr. Ford stated that funding will be available soon through a new Water Sector Program. He stated that the system may be too far away for the parish to accept. He further stated that the Town of Plain Dealing is closer and may be eligible for consolidation funds in the new Water Sector Program. Mr. Ford stated that he and Mr. Jorden will be attending a meeting with representatives in two weeks. Mr. Jorden stated that there are concerns that the Town of Plain Dealing does not have funds available if there is a system failure. Mr. Ford stated that there have been other similar situations in the past and advised that he will update jurors following the meeting. He stated that nothing will be agreed upon without police jury approval, as well as parish attorney review and approval.

Mr. Rodgers clarified that the Water Sector Program provides funding to pay off a system's debt, purchase the system, and bring it to working order. Mr. Jorden stated that the system's debt is approximately \$3,000-\$4,000. Mr. Rodgers stated his concern is the cost to make necessary repairs. Mr. Ford stated that an evaluation of the system and determination of available funds must be completed before a decision is made by the police jury. He further stated that he will provide the jury with an update following the meeting on August 21, 2024.

Mr. Benton clarified that the St. Mary Water System asked the parish for this meeting and made the request for the parish to take over.

Mr. Ford stated that this would be a system the parish would own outright, as there is no way to tie it into our system. He stated that the Town of Plain Dealing is close enough that they could tie into this system. He further stated that there may be some issues due to repairs that may be necessary. Mr. Benton stated that you must consolidate to receive Water Sector Program funds. Mr. Marsiglia asked if the parish has the available funds to make repairs as they are needed. Mr. Ford stated that those issues happen daily in our systems.

Mr. Jorden asked for clarification on the location of the St. Mary Water System in

proximity to the parish jail water system. Mr. Ford stated that he will research that and report back, advising that the parish system stops at Abe Martin Road. Mr. Jordan stated that the St. Mary Water System is located all along the Dutch John Road. Mr. Ford stated that may present an option to apply for a Water Sector Program Grant to consolidate the systems.

Mr. Ford stated that it was the previous goal of the parish to take all of the Benton area sewer lines located down Palmetto Road, outside the Benton town limits, into the Consolidated Waterworks/Sewerage District. He stated that years ago, when loan funds were received, the parish offered to purchase those lines in the ground and take on approximately 1,300 customers. He further stated that at that time, the Town of Benton did not want to sell those lines to the parish. Mr. Ford stated that there is an oxidation pond near the Benton Methodist Church on Palmetto Road and earlier this summer, the Town of Benton was put on an EPA Administrative Order due to the need for cleanout of the pond. He further stated that the approximate cost for the cleanout is \$2,000,000.

Mr. Ford stated that the Town of Benton has now requested that the parish consider purchasing the lines and the customers in this area. He stated that the parish has the capacity, but it will cost approximately \$2,000,000 to route it to the parish's nearest lift station. Mr. Jackson asked if the cost to the parish is \$2,000,000 to clean up the pond and an additional \$2,000,000 to route the lines to the lift station. Mr. Ford stated that the pond can be reused if cleaned properly, or it can be closed and the lines rerouted to the lift station.

Mr. Ford stated that this matter will be considered at a meeting of the Benton Town Council scheduled on Monday, August 12, 2024. He stated that for the parish to receive a Water Sector Program grant, there must be an agreement in place which provides that the Town of Benton has asked the parish to purchase these lines. Mr. Ford stated that the Town of Benton has offered to sell the lines for approximately \$1,500,000 to \$1,600,000.

Mr. Ford stated that the Town of Benton has also requested that the parish take in the area along Kingston Road and consolidate those sewer lines into the parish system. He stated that it will most likely be funded through the Water Sector Program due to it being a consolidation project. He further stated that this is an approximately \$3,600,000 project, not including closing the pond.

Mr. Ford stated that the parish can apply for a Water Sector Program grant to complete this

project. He stated that if approved, the parish can proceed with this project. He further stated that if the grant application is not approved, the project will not proceed. Mr. Ford stated that if the grant application is not approved, the Town of Benton will have to proceed with closing the pond. He stated that he has had discussions with representatives of the Town of Benton regarding this matter. He further stated that he has also met with Senator Adam Bass concerning this potential project.

Mr. Ford stated that the grant application will be approved by the police jury prior to submission. He stated that this project will result in approximately \$850,000 in additional revenue to the system per year. He further stated this will add between 1,300 to 1,400 additional customers, and the system has the capacity to accept these additional customers.

Mr. Rodgers asked for clarification on the location of the lines. Mr. Ford stated these are lines located from Burt Boulevard traveling south down Palmetto Road. Mr. Rodgers stated that all lots in Woodlake Subdivision have individual lift stations. Mr. Ford stated that the subdivisions in this area are Palmetto Park, Woodlake South, Bay Hills, Country Lane, and Belmere Subdivisions. He further stated that these subdivisions currently utilize the oxidation pond.

Mr. Ford stated that the representatives of the Town of Benton advised him of this situation approximately a month ago, and asked if a Water Sector Program grant would be possible. He stated that he advised them that he would discuss the matter with the police jury. Mr. Ford stated that initially, the Town of Benton offered to donate these sewer lines, and they are now asking that the parish purchase the lines.

Mr. Rodgers asked for clarification as to why the parish would purchase the lines. Mr. Ford stated that if awarded, the grant will reimburse the parish for the purchase. He stated that if the parish purchases the lines, that will provide the Town of Benton with funding to close the pond. Mr. Marsiglia clarified that the total investment is approximately \$3,600,000, but only adds an additional \$850,000 in revenue per year. He stated that it will take four years to recuperate the total investment. Mr. Ford stated that this is a grant project, and the parish is only required to provide a small match in funding. Mr. Rodgers stated this is the same process we have completed with other systems.

Mr. Ford reminded the committee that there is a sewer meeting each Thursday at 1:30 p.m. if anyone is interested in attending. He stated that we have received a Water Sector Program grant previously, which was used to purchase Country Place Utilities and tie it in. He further stated that

we know the process as we have completed it already with that system.

Mr. Ford stated that the goal is to obtain all the federal funding possible, and he will keep the jurors updated as to the status of the grant applications.

This concluded the meeting of the Health, Water Sanitation & Sewer District Committee.

The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 10:35 a.m.

MEGAN C. RAMOS
INTERIM PARISH SECRETARY

GLENN BENTON, CHAIRMAN
BOSSIER PARISH POLICE JURY