

Capital Area Road and Bridge District Meeting Minutes

Time/Date: 2:00 p.m., June 30, 2025

Location: Louisiana State Capital
Senate Committee Room "E"

Members Present: Chairman, Mr. J. H. Campbell, Jr., Governor's Appointee
Mr. Fred Raiford (representing East BR Parish Mayor/President Sid Edwards)
Mr. Daniel Helms (representing Parish President Clint Cointment), Ascension Parish
Mr. Wally Avara (representing Parish President Randy Delatte), Livingston Parish
Parish President Jason Manola, West Baton Rouge
Mr. Joe Donahue, DOTD, representing Secretary of DOTD Glenn Ledet
Parish President Chris Daigle, Iberville Parish

Member Absent: None

❖ Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Minutes:

Minutes from the March 31, 2025, were approved, on motion made by Mr. Raiford and seconded by President Daigle.

Next on the Agenda, there was an update on the progress being made by DOTD and Atlas Technical Consultants, LLC., since the last meeting, on the Bridge Project, and its identified tasks and timelines.

- A. Introduction of Representative(s) of DOTD – Ms. Christina Brignac.
- B. Comments from Representative(s) of DOTD.
- C. Other Bridge Project updates from attending representatives of DOTD.
- D. Comparison of Timelines and Tasks to actual performance by Atlas.
- E. Further updates on the three remaining alternatives for potential Bridge location.
- F. Report on amount of funds expended/disbursed by DOTD to Atlas.
- G. Status of Phase II.

Reports available at www.mrbsouth.com

Christina Brignac, the Project Manager, of DOTD, and Ana Choudrie and Adam Davis of Atlas reported on the bridge project as follows:

1. Design and Conceptual Layout is an ongoing endeavor, and therefore the twelve (12) month NEPA process has not yet started.
2. Public meetings will be slated for Q3 or Q4 of 2025 and a public hearing on the preferred alternative some time in Q2 of 2026 so that the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) is available for the public hearing.

3. Anticipating a Finding of No Significant Environmental Impact in the Fall of 2026. If not, an Environmental Impact Statement could be required by FHWA which would require an additional 24 months of review.
4. The NEPA process would be commenced between July and September of 2025 with the FWHA given a 45-day response window.

It was again anticipated that the preferred alternative would be selected and public meetings held before the end of the calendar year 2025.

President Daigle inquired about the process for designing the tie ins to the Bridge.

President Manola urged DOTD and Atlas to avoid additional delays.

Chairman Campbell inquired about the process for officially starting the NEPA 12-month clock.

Mr. Donahue inquired about the delays caused by the line and grade submittals and was told that the comments by DOTD required the additional work.

President Daigle highlighted how DOTD stated NEPA would start in 2024 but that has been delayed further.

Mr. Donahue highlighted how the megaprojects' funding that was delayed, was not backfilled in the most recent legislative session.

Handouts and a PowerPoint presentation were provided by the presenters to each Commissioner.

It was discussed that, at the next CARB-D meeting, a report and update on the Public Private Partnership (PPP) being utilized for the I-10 Interstate Bridge project in Lake Charles area, would be provided by DOTD.

Under New Business:

Chair Campbell requested ratification of the action taken by the Chair for the payment made to Roedel Parsons Law Firm for the preparation of a response to a public records request in the amount of \$225. Motion by Helms, Seconded by Donahue and no objection.

Chair Campbell requested a reimbursement to a non-profit organization for the use (and sharing) by the CARB-D of its Post Office Box for the seven years and fully paid for by the non-profit entity in the amount of \$485 through May of 2026. Raiford moves favorably, Donahue seconded and no objection.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Chairman Campbell called for public comments. He reminded all in attendance that the **Capital Area Road and Bridge District (CARB-D)** does not make any decision about the actual location of the site where the Bridge would make its crossing. He reminded all in attendance that the CARB-D was created as a Taxing District, and the entities involved in the site selection process were the DOTD, and their Contract Consultant, Atlas Technical and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Campbell asked if there was any opposition to any of the proposed crossings other than **Location E-11-(IV)**.

All Public Comments were received only on **Location E-11-(IV)**, as follows:

Speaking in **Opposition** to **Location E-11-(IV)** were:

Clifford Comeau; Laura Comeau; Lydia Haydel; and Harvey Stern

Opposition views covered such areas as the impact on drainage and the Cypress Forest and its 300–400-year-old trees being removed or damaged. One concern was about saving Plaquemine Point, and the location of the bridge greatly affecting the lives of various species of animals.

All landowners wanted to receive notice of any and all meetings of the public. Again, it was noted that such Cypress trees are allegedly protected by state laws.

Sec. Ledet’s involvement with Neal – Schaffer was questioned. Complaints were made about alleged omissions of information provided by the residents in the area in certain filings. Claims were made alleging that in the December 2023 Planning Report certain documents were not included. This was disputed and proven to be erroneous by DOTD.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Campbell called for a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn was offered by President Daigle.

Without objection, the meeting was deemed adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Secretary of CARB-D

President Chris Daigle, Iberville Parish

Attest:

J.H. Campbell, Jr. Chairman of CARB-D