

Capital Area Road and Bridge District Meeting Minutes

Time/Date: 2:00 p.m., December 13, 2021

Location: Senate Committee Room E, State Capitol

Members Present: Chairman, Mr. J. H. Campbell, Jr., Governor's Appointee
Mr. Fred Raiford (representing Mayor-President Sharon Broome), E. B. R. Parish
Parish President Riley Berthelot, West Baton Rouge Parish
Mr. Shawn Wilson, Secretary, DOTD
Ms. Boesch (representing Parish President Mitch Ourso), Iberville Parish – non-voting.
Mr. John Diez (representing President Clint Cointment, Ascension Parish)

Member Absent: Parish President Layton Ricks, Livingston Parish

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

Minutes:

Minutes from the September ____, 2021 Meeting were approved, on motion made by Mr. Berthelot and seconded by Raiford.

Sec. Wilson of DOTD presented an overview of the federal infrastructure bill (IIJA), which had recently passed in the Congress.

1. 5-year, \$1 trillion infrastructure package, \$550 billion in new spending, nationally.
2. \$200 million annual in new formula spending, per year, for Louisiana.
3. Several large grant programs where megaprojects in Louisiana can compete for additional federal dollars.

Sec. Wilson expects the grant programs will reflect priorities of the current administration such as equity, climate change, and American made materials.

Mr. Campbell asked where the Mississippi River Bridge Project ranks as it relates to priorities and Sec. Wilson indicated that no priority list has been developed, pending the issuance of federal rules and guidelines.

President Berthelot asked about the current \$3.3 billion backlog on bridges, and Sec. Wilson indicated new bridges are not included in that bridge figure.

Mr. Raiford then asked when the federal rules would be issued and Sec. Wilson responded that he felt guidance would come early next year (2022) and rules would follow, where necessary.

Next on the Agenda, was the 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:

Paul Vaught – DOTD Project Manager

Kara Moree – Project Manager for Atlas Technical Consultants, LLC

- A. Introduction of Representative(s) of Atlas Technical Consultants, LLC.
- B. Comments from Representative(s) of Atlas Technical Consultants, LLC.
- C. Other Bridge Project updates from attending representatives of DOTD.
- D. Comparison of Timelines and Tasks to actual performance by Atlas.
- E. Report on amount of funds expended/disbursed by DOTD to Atlas.

Reports available at www.mrbsouth.com

Kara Moree (Atlas) and Paul Voight (DOTD) provided a PowerPoint presentation update on the project. Ms. Moree reviewed the project team, project objectives and project workflow. Previously, Round 1 screenings had reduced alternative locations or crossings to 17 with 15 alternatives being eliminated. However, three alternatives were added back to a total of twenty alternatives based on a reassessment of the required bridge length.

Commissioners asked many questions.

President Berthelot highlighted where two northernmost alternatives were eliminated in the LOOP study many years ago, but Mr. Vaught indicated they may very well be eliminated again but they should not have been eliminated based on bridge length.

Mr. Diez asked whether the total project cost is considered in the screenings, and Mr. Vaught indicated that the total project cost (from I-10 on the West side of the River to I-10 on the East side of the River) will be considered.

Dr. Kalivoda highlighted how this project review is limited to the bridge while the related connectors will be managed separately.

Mr. Raiford indicated the importance, from East Baton Rouge Parish's perspective, of the bridge and its connectors from the Interstate.

Round 2 Screening Tables have been drafted and will be presented at public meetings.

Public Meetings are targeted for Late Spring 2022. There will likely be six in-person meetings and also an online engagement tool.

President Berthelot expressed concern that twenty potential bridge locations would be too many to share with the public. Mr. Vaught indicated it is possible additional locations will be eliminated based on additional findings before the public meetings. Mr. Kalivoda cautioned it was important not to eliminate any crossings unless there is a valid reason for eliminating the crossing.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Chairman Campbell called for public comments.

Public Comment came from Dr. Marcel Hardy who asked about getting information to Atlas. Ms. Moree highlighted where the project website includes information on how to contact Atlas. Public Comment from Steve Yeager presented the interest and concerns of the Pointe Marie community in the project.

Public Comment from Ms. Landry representing the Baton Rouge Infrastructure Committee when she requested information about submitting public comments, dates of quarterly meetings, and the membership of the committee.

Public Comment from Coleman Brown who is supportive of the project.

Chairman Campbell commented on the limited scope of CARB-D which is charged only with supporting a bridge and its connectors between LA Hwy. 1 on the West side of the Mississippi River, and La. Hwy. 30 on the East side of the Mississippi River, in the Capital Region, and not any of the comments or questions which were related to other projects, construction, or other approved road or bridge matters.

Mr. Campbell again inquired about the completion of the Round 2 screenings and Mr. Voight indicated the Round 2 screenings would be completed before the public meetings.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Campbell called for a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn was offered by Mr. Raiford. Without objection, the meeting was deemed adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Secretary of CARB-D

Riley Berthelot, President of West Baton Rouge Parish

Attest:

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