



625 Texas Street, Suite 200 | Shreveport, LA 71101
318.841.5950 | F 318.841.5952 | www.nlcog.org

Board of Directors Meeting

MINUTES

Friday, April 21, 2023 (9:30 AM)

625 Texas Street, Suite 200
Shreveport, LA 71101

Members Present

Mr. Steven Brown – DeSoto Parish
Dr. Woodrow Wilson – Caddo Parish
Mr. Bruce Blanton, Chair – Webster Parish
Mr. Butch Ford – Bossier Parish
Mayor Tom Arceneaux – City of Shreveport

Members Absent

Mayor Tommy Chandler – City of Bossier City (Represented by Ms. Amanda Nottingham, but not in a voting capacity)
Mr. Charles Henington – Caddo Tax Assessor

Others Present

Mr. Kent Rogers – NLCOG
Mr. Chris Petro – NLCOG
Dr. Shelly Barrett - NLCOG
Ms. Rita Arnold – NLCOG
Ms. Heidi Stewart - NLCOG
Mr. Josh Chevallier – NLCOG Legal Council

Call to Order

Mr. Blanton called the meeting to order Mr. Rogers then began a roll call. A quorum was present.

Public Comments

Mr. Blanton called for public comments. Mr. Rogers stated we received three public comments.

Ms. Linda Biernacki stated she was respectfully requesting five and a half minutes for her public comment. Ms. Biernacki says she has been requested by Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser to respond to one of the agenda items, approval of budget amendment for Providence Engineering. Please see the attached letter that Ms. Biernacki read and then requested to be placed on record.

Mr. Eric Barkley was next to comment. He thanked the board for allowing him to speak and stated he is the current President of the Committee 100. Mr. Barkley said that he's pretty sure they're aware of his predecessors in his are all supportive in the completion of this project. He is just there to reiterate to them their interest in this project moving along for approval and ultimate completion because they feel that's the right thing to do.

Patrick Harrison states he's been a part of a lot of business organizations in Shreveport/Bossier over his career. Mr. Harrison says that every organization that he's been a part of, whether it be a manufacture's council, Chamber of Commerce, Committee 100, have all identified the importance of getting this project done. He says that eight years ago they met with Sherry LeBas and had huge meetings discussing this project and how important it was to them. Mr. Harrison states that at that time they were told timelines of two or three years before this was going to be done. He says the goal post has been kicked down, kicked further and further out continuously. Mr. Harrison stated they finally got to a point in 2016 where they were almost to the end. They had five routes to consider, five public hearings and the public spoke. He says that ninety-four percent of the public gave comments and spoke to support route one. Mr. Harrison says that the City Council, Caddo Parish Commission, this board here, NLCOG unanimously at one point passed a resolution to support route one. That was years ago and now they're about to consider a change order for two hundred seven thousand dollars of taxpayers' money to explore another route that was derived from the consulting firm and NLCOG. Mr. Harrison asks how many times we are going to keep doing this and how long is this going to on. He says the citizens of Allendale are frustrated and not sure what is going to happen. Mr. Harrison says the business community is frustrated as well. He states the North Market corridor is going to be absolutely destroyed if we don't do something about it now.

Mr. John Perkins states that five thousand friends from Allendale Strong from all over the city, new homeowners, had built their homes then were told they were building a highway through their neighborhood. He says how they started the meeting was getting interested in urban planning and engineering and called in experts to speak to them about it and to teach them about it. Urban planning is something Shreveport is not interested in and we're soaking in the results of that ignorance. Mr. Perkins says is already easy for him to get to Texarkana by looping around all the way to Lafayette non-stop. He says that 3132 is a mess and build alternative 5 is 3132, and we could all be happy if we spent the federal dollars available to fix 3132.

Financial – Fiscal Year 2024 Draft Budget – Introduction for Public Comments

Mr. Rogers stated that two meetings ago he brought forward to them the income portion of the budget and outlined some of the changes and differences happening with it. In relation to two things, one of them was some of the changes from the census data, in terms of urbanized area and the allocations of the federal PL funds and transit funds. The other portion was associated with the local funds and in terms again with the 2020 census data. Mr. Rogers reviewed the details of the financials for FY2024 as included in the packets. He stated they followed, if they recalled, at the last meeting they had some budget amendments for this fiscal year and used some of those refined adjustments and factored in some of those increases that they knew were going to happen for insurance etc. Also, as of April 1, they had one employee brought on to put in one of the vacant positions, the general overhead expenses remain roughly about the same with some slight increases due to inflation rates. Mr. Rogers said that included within work for the Regional Active Transportation Plan that was mentioned early during the MPO meeting, and they'll be using attributable funds for the great majority of that, and the match support will come from the reserve funds. He directed them to their packets where he had outlined some of the larger line items for the overhead with more detail. Mr. Rogers stated that again, this is for introduction public comment.

Mr. Blanton called for a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2024 Draft Budget for Public Comment. Dr. Wilson motioned, and Mr. Brown seconded. All approved and motion was passed.

Legal Report

NLCOG/CDC – Update and consideration of memorandum of understanding concerning NLCOG, CDC, and EDA pertaining to the EDA Grant

Mr. Chevallier stated that in addition to the legal report pertaining to the NLCOG and CDC issue, he wanted to reiterate what Mr. Rogers stated earlier and that they're in the process of investigating and responding to all the public comments and engagements they've received with respect to the contractual item that's on the agenda in the other business for Providence Engineering. One thing he thinks is going to be recommended that NLCOG support is given the time of Dr. Kalivoda's visit at the May 12, 2023 meeting, he is going to recommend the board postpone that amendment item until such time as having heard from Dr. Kalivoda. At which point they'll have the opportunity both for them to receive the response from NLCOG with the respect from comments previously received as well as those comments from Congressman Johnson's office from the prior meeting and those received from Lt. Governor Nungesser there this morning.

Mr. Chevallier stated with respect to NLCOG and CDC agenda item there's a draft of a letter prepared for Mr. Rogers signature, and he would ask for approval. He states this letter is addressed to the Economic Development Administration, which was the form of letter requested by EDA, for NLCOG to formally withdrawal as a secondary recipient on EDA award number 087905436 in the amount of one point six million dollars to fund the building in Bossier that was intended to house, when it was conceived of, the merge between NLCOG and CDC entity. Due to rising construction costs the feasibility and size of the building that could be constructed with that money is no longer sufficient to house a combined entity. Mr. Chevallier says for that reason, and with EDA's support and approval, we are going to withdrawal as a primary recipient and allow CDC to move forward to build the building. The federal dollar investment made in the community is still going to be made and we remain in support of that being done. Mr. Chevallier states that this letter will allow CDC to go forward as the sole and primary recipient.

Mr. Blanton called for a motion to approve the letter to EDA. Dr. Wilson motioned, and Mr. Brown seconded. All approved and motion was passed.

Other Business

1. Approval of Budget Amendment for Providence Engineering – Alternative 3A Feasibility

Dr. Wilson requested to have this approval taken off the table and moved to the next meeting on May 12, 2023. Mr. Blanton called for a motion for the Approval of Budget Amendment for Providence Engineering – Alternative 3A Feasibility, to be moved off the table until the May 12, 2023 meeting. Dr. Wilson motioned, and Mr. Ford seconded. All approved and motion was passed.

Mr. Harrison asked if there wasn't any progress being made on I-49 now. Mr. Chevallier stated the reason for his recommendation was that it's his understanding that there's sufficient funding still available for Providence to continue doing its work in the immediate terms. This table waiting till the May 12th meeting wouldn't cause any delay. Mr. Chevallier stated that action on the agenda item will need to be taken imminently at the next meeting and that's less than a month away, so that's his recommendation.

2. Approval of Minutes

The next item on the agenda was for approval of the minutes from the March 31, 2023 meeting.

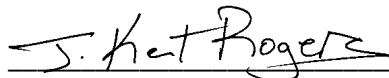
Mr. Blanton called for a motion to approve the minutes. Dr. Wilson motioned, and Mr. Brown seconded. All approved and motion was passed.

Announcements

Mr. Blanton wanted to remind the board of the next meeting on Friday, May 12, 2023. Mr. Rogers stated that for Mayor Arceneaux's benefit, Dr. Wilson asked Mr. England if they could house the next meeting at the Port knowing that Dr. Kalivoda will be present and a potential larger crowd. Mr. England said yes and that he would make that available. Mr. Rogers stated the next meeting will be at the Regional Commerce Center and Dr. Kalivoda will be present.

Adjourn

With no remaining agenda items, The Vice Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. Dr. Wilson was the first to motion, and Mr. Brown seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "J. Kent Rogers", is written over a horizontal line.

J. Kent Rogers, Secretary

PUBLIC COMMENT CARD

All cards must be returned to the Chair prior to the start of the meeting. Comments will not be accepted during the meeting. You will be called upon at the appropriate time to speak.

Please print:

Date: April 21, 2023

Name: Linda Biernacki

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: (318) 469-4335

I am representing: ☐ myself ☐ business ☐ organization

Name of business / organization: Lt Gov. Nungesser

Comment on: ☒ Agenda item ☐ Non-agenda item

Briefly describe your comment(s): @Board Mtg only

Support of 1-49 ICC Route 1+2
not supporting the 3A Alt Route

As a reminder, public comment is limited to three (3) minutes per speaker.

Comments relative to any issues that are in active litigation will not be heard in this meeting.

Speakers are to address the Chairman, not each other or the audience, and are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.

The use of abusive or profane language shall not be allowed. No debate or argument between speakers and/or members of the audience shall be permitted.

Office of the Lieutenant Governor
State of Louisiana

BILLY NUNGESSER
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



P.O. Box 44243
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70804-4243
(225) 342-7009

April 20, 2023

Dear NLCOG Board of Directors:

The history of planning the route of the I-49 Inner City Connector (ICC) in Shreveport is long and tortuous. It has been something of a battleground between the common good and groups, special interests, government agencies that either want to kill the project or make it unfeasible. During the period between the early 2000s and this year, the Northwest Louisiana Council of Governments, The Louisiana Department of Transportation, and extremely expensive consulting firms have:

- Held at least 12 public and stakeholder meetings.
- Identified four potential "build" routes.
- Delayed the overall project by adding a fifth "no build" route using LA 3132 and I-220 to create a wide loop around the west side of Shreveport.
- "Discovered" that Build Routes 3 and 4 would unnecessarily impact the Allendale neighborhood, which is in the early stages of being considered as a National Historic Neighborhood.
- Narrowed the list to Routes 1 and 2, which are very similar and do the least amount of damage to Allendale.
- Ignored the most feasible route, from which Routes 1 and 2 derived, running along city-owned former Texas and Pacific Railroad right-of-way.
- Finally, the design group (public and private) preferred introduced completely nonsensical route 3-A bridges Cross Bayou/Twelve Mile Bayou twice and destroys the viewshed of the McNeill Street Pump Station/Waterworks Museum. In addition, this route creates a flyover span directly above the property. McNeill is a triple National Register of Historic Places property and has been praised nationally for its Victorian Era machinery.

The I-49 Inner City Connector project has become a consultant's dream. At each level of adding routes, each route required extensive study under the authority of Federal and State regulations (FHWA, LADOTD, and SHPO), particularly Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. These included archaeological and broader cultural resource studies. The long-term effect was to utterly waste state resources, chasing three routes that would never work, ignoring the most logical route, and developing two (Routes 1 and 2) that are feasible with some issues (It is interesting that Routes 1 and 2 are literally the first two proposed), and then developing Alternative Route 3A, which guarantees a long, contentious battle. The

consultants reap steady work and are paid handsomely for it. At every change order, new tasks are added, new regulations are administered, and more state agencies' time is wasted.

The longest-lasting damage is to Shreveport neighborhoods and the people living there. Attitudes have soured. The Allendale neighborhood has been lied to and fed so much misinformation that they oppose a project from which they reap the most benefit. Routes 3 and 4 were (logically) designed to create this turmoil. Routes 1 and 2 skirts Allendale's eastern side, destroying very few buildings and will not harm the neighborhood's character. The St. Paul's Bottoms/Ledbetter Heights National Historic District is in the process of study to reduce its boundaries and remain viable. Route 3A would most likely kill this district.

Fortunes have been made on this much-needed project. Not one spade of earth has been turned. Local and state officials and agencies have made careers by practicing an old legal defense – Deny, Delay, then Defend. The efforts, thus far, are successful.

What should be done? Kill any future activity on Routes 3, 4, 5, and 3A. Force the issue by mainlining Routes 1 or 2. Investigate the whole process through the State Internal Auditor, particularly the actions of NLCOG, former activities of the Metropolitan Planning Commission, and the primary consultants and subcontractors.

The current situation raises concerns about the integrity of the project and its partnerships. It is crucial to act now and prevent further damage to the community. We hope that appropriate action will be taken to address these issues before it is too late.

If I can be of assistance to you in any way, please don't hesitate to call.

Sincerely,



Billy Nungesser
Lieutenant Governor

WHN

PUBLIC COMMENT CARD

All cards must be returned to the Chair prior to the start of the meeting. Comments will not be accepted during the meeting. You will be called upon at the appropriate time to speak.

Please print:

Date: 4/21/23

Name: Eric Barkley

Address: 112 Deerchase Pt

E-mail: ericbarkley11@gmail.com

Phone: (318) 286 7391

I am representing: ☐ myself ☐ business ☒ organization

Name of business / organization: Committee of 100

Comment on: ☐ Agenda item ☒ Non-agenda item

Briefly describe your comment(s):

I 49 ICC

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Please print:

Date: 4-21-23

Name: Patrick Harrison

Address: P.O. Box 7216

E-mail: pharrison@SVCSteel.com

Phone: (318) 218-9008

I am representing: ☐ myself ☒ business ☒ organization

Name of business / organization: _____

Comment on: ☒ Agenda item ☐ Non-agenda item

Briefly describe your comment(s):

I 49 FCC

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Name:

Address:

E-mail:

Phone: ()

I am representing:

☐ myself

☐ business

☐ organization

Name of business / organization:

Comment on:

☐ Agenda item

☐ Non-agenda item

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