



625 Texas Street, Suite 200 | Shreveport, LA 71101
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Board of Directors Meeting

MINUTES

Friday, December 8, 2023 (9:30 AM)

625 Texas Street, Suite 200
Shreveport, LA 71101

Members Present

Mayor Tom Arceneaux – City of Shreveport (Sitting in for Mayor Chandler as Chair)
Mrs. Erica Bryant – Caddo Parish
Mr. Butch Ford, Vice Chair – Bossier Parish
Mr. Michael Norton – DeSoto Parish
Mr. Charles Henington – Caddo Tax Assessor

Members Absent

Mr. Bruce Blanton – Webster Parish
Mayor Tommy Chandler, Chair – City of Bossier City

Others Present

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

Call to Order

Mayor Arceneaux called the meeting to order and asked everyone to stand while Mr. Ford did the invocation. Mrs. Bryant then led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Arceneaux asked Mr. Rogers to begin a roll call. Mr. Rogers began the roll call. A quorum was present.

Public Comments

Mayor Arceneaux stated they had one public comment, Mr. Hackney, then reminded him of the three-minute time frame for his comment.

Mr. David Hackney began reading his letter to the board. Please see attached letter for Mr. Hackney's public comment.

Financial – Approval of Updated Rates for Legal Representation

Mr. Rogers stated that as mentioned during the last meeting, Bradley Murchison would like to ask for a request to update their rate for legal representation. He said that they haven't done this since inception which is more than a decade ago.

Mr. Chevallier stated that when the firm started, at that time the primary partner was Jerry Jones. When he first started working with NLCOG the rates were set at a flat rate and all of their attorneys working for NLCOG, the flat rate was set at one hundred seventy-five dollars an hour. That's been the rate since that time and still that rate at this time today. Mr. Chevallier said that at that time it was the standard AG approved rate for municipal work that didn't require the AG to approve a special rate for specialized work for things that could be done. He stated that if they were involved in litigation, they may need specialized rates for the specialized work required to deal with those things. In standard representation, the AG for the public work, at the time, approved one hundred seventy-five dollars per hour. For quite a long time now that rate has been raised to two hundred twenty-five dollars an hour, but they have not adjusted their rates. This time they would like to go to the current AG standard rate of two hundred twenty-five dollars an hour going forward, for all of their attorneys whose standard rates are at two hundred twenty-five or greater. That really means their partners, himself, and Mr. Jones (when he still does work for NLCOG from Baton Rouge, and he'll only work with him). He looked at 2022 and 2023. In 2022, that change would have resulted in about a three-thousand-dollar difference. From ten thousand six hundred eighty-seven dollars to thirteen thousand eight hundred eighty-two dollars for the year 2022. In 2023 year to date, it would be from thirteen thousand two hundred thirty dollars to seventeen thousand ten dollars. Mr. Chevallier said that over the last few years, because the rates have been stagnant, frankly, almost all the work has been done by him because there's no benefit to NLCOG really in leverage to their younger attorneys who are at lower rates when it was all flat. If he could do it faster, a younger attorney could do it and it was all one rate, so he just did it. If the rate schedule is approved, they'll utilize younger attorneys at lower rates to offset some of that difference so he's not really worried that there's going to be a tremendous difference. The two hundred twenty-five-dollar rate remains a significant discount for the standard rate for the same partners.

Mr. Ford asked Mr. Rogers if NLCOG had the money in the budget. Mr. Rogers said that yes, it falls within the budget.

Mr. Ford moved to motion the Approval of Updated Rates for Legal Representation. Mr. Norton seconded. Mayor Arceneaux asked if there were any questions or comments. Having none, all approved and the motion was passed.

Legal Report

Mr. Chevallier stated there was no pending or threatened litigation at this time.

Other Business

1. Regional Active Transportation Plan – Approval of Contract with Alliance Transportation Group LLC

Mr. Rogers stated that this is the approval of, and was sent to them in the packets, the Regional Active Transportation Plan. The contract is not to exceed two hundred eighty thousand dollars. They're notice to proceed shortly, but the schedule will be adjusted. Mr. Rogers said he knows the schedule that was presented was based on the September timeframe. The schedule will be adjusted on the notice to proceed.

Mayor Arceneaux asked if there were any questions or comments. Having none, Mayor Arceneaux called for a motion to Approve the Contract with Alliance Transportation Group LLC. Mr. Norton motioned, and Mr. Henington seconded. All approved and motion was passed.

2. Approval of Minutes

The next item on the agenda was for approval of the minutes from the October 27, 2023, meeting. Mayor Arceneaux called for a motion to Approve the Minutes as provided. Mrs. Bryant motioned, and Mr. Ford seconded. All approved and motion was passed.

Announcements

Mayor Arceneaux stated that the next regular scheduled meeting for the Board of Directors will be next year on January 19, 2024.

Adjourn

With no remaining agenda items, The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Ford was the first to motion, and Mr. Norton seconded. The meeting was adjourned.



J. Kent Rogers, Secretary

PUBLIC COMMENT CARD

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.

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: Dec. 8, 2023

Name: David Hackney

Address: 9660 Railsback Ridge

E-mail: davehacknrx@gmail.com

Phone: (318) 210-1475

I am representing: ☒ myself ☐ business ☐ organization

Name of business / organization: _____

Comment on: ☐ Agenda item ☒ Non-agenda item

Briefly describe your comment(s):

Tim James, Inc CEA
see attached.

December 8, 2023

My name is Dave Hackney and I am a resident of Shreveport. I made a public comment at the February 17, 2023 NLCOG BOD meeting regarding the Tim James, Inc. (TJI) road and toll bridge project. I am here today to again speak on that same project. Specifically, I think the taxpayers of Caddo and Bossier would be better served if NLCOG was shepherding the TJI project.

I have communicated numerous times over the course of 2023 with my Caddo Parish Commissioner, John Adkins, as well as Caddo Assistant Attorney Henry Bernstein on the Caddo Parish CEA with Tim James, Inc. Quite frankly, not very much information is available or provided.

Let me be clear, I am not opposed to the Tim James, Inc toll bridge project. I just want to be sure we get the right results in the right way and that the project does no harm.

In my opinion, the CEA was flawed from the beginning. The two key terms and conditions, as stated by TJI, were privately funded at no cost to the taxpayers and the road would be built entirely on private property. The original road proposal, extending Hwy 3132 between Twelve Oaks and Esplanade Subdivisions crosses Caddo Levee District property. This is not private property.

In October, 2023, the TJI team approached the Caddo Bossier Port Commission, seeking assistance and a CEA to obtain a USDA subsidized loan. I believe this conflicts with the existing CEAs with Caddo and probably Bossier Parish.

On July 1, 2022, TJI purchased five residential lots in Esplanade subdivision for the purpose of the connector road. TJI has never met with the homeowners of Esplanade. A significant zoning change will be required to build an expressway on residential lots. Also, there is a matter of property tax. TJI purchased the five residential lots for \$510,000. The 2023 tax bill is \$43.71.

Lastly, if the TJI bridge is built one to two miles north of the Port, what impact will this have on obtaining funding for the future I-69 bridge, which runs right through the Port. The powers to be in Washington might look at Caddo Bossier, with its five or six bridges across the Red River and not view the I-69 bridge as a high priority. I-69 is the big prize, let's not lose sight of it.

David F. Hackney, P.E.