

**Action Summary**

**Acadiana Watershed District Board Meeting Minutes**



10am-12pm, Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
Rosa Parks Transportation Center  
101 Jefferson St.  
Lafayette, LA 70501



**AGENDA, NOTES AND DECISIONS**

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION
<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>	<p>The meeting was called to order at 10:08am by Rachel Godeaux, Vice Chair of the Acadiana Watershed District.</p> <p>Opening Statement:</p> <p><i>" Welcome to public meeting of the Acadiana Watershed District's Technical Advisory Committee Meeting. I am Rachel Godeaux, Vice Chair of the District.</i></p> <p><i>Agendas are available at the room's entrance and were made available through the AWD email distribution list and online at planacadiana.org. For our records to reflect your attendance, please sign-in at the table and any Board or TAC members online, please add your name to the chat box.</i></p> <p><i>The purpose of this public meeting is to consider items established by the agenda. Public input is welcome on these matters. For those wishing to speak in-person, please complete a speaker card and present it to the APC staff. Comments/questions will be read aloud during the public comment period. To ensure an orderly meeting, members of the public will speak at the time designated. Each organization may be permitted one representative to speak for 3 minutes on its behalf and individual public members are permitted 3 minutes. This will be strictly enforced. Thank you."</i></p>
<b>PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE</b>	<p>Rachel Godeaux led the Pledge of Allegiance, and all stood and recited the pledge.</p>
<b>ROLL CALL</b>	<p>Roll call was taken by Kelia Bingham. A quorum was not present as only 8 Board members were in attendance.</p>

<p><b>ACTION SUMMARIES APPROVAL</b></p>	<p>Board Meeting – August 28th TAC Meeting – October 16<sup>th</sup></p> <p>Because there was no quorum, action summaries approvals were deferred until next meeting on February 26<sup>th</sup>.</p>
<p><b>2026 MEETING DATES APPROVAL</b></p>	<p>Due to the meeting dates already being accepted by the Board and TAC members via calendar invite, the Board decided this could be deferred indefinitely.</p>
<p><b>REGIONAL WATERSHED PLAN UPDATE</b></p>	<p>Kelia Bingham stated that the draft is due to OCD in March, and the final plan is due in June.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan elements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Characterize regional flood risk and ground truth with stakeholders</li> <li>ii. Define role of watershed region in addressing flood risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Goals and Objectives of AWD</li> </ul> </li> <li>iii. Investigate implementation and funding resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Path to a sustainable funding source</li> </ul> </li> <li>iv. Build a prioritization framework based on regional concerns</li> <li>v. Use regional models to inform decision-making</li> <li>vi. Prioritize mitigation actions and plan for implementation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Include possible projects and how to model these projects</li> </ul>
<p><b>REGIONAL PROJECT CRITERIA</b></p>	<p>This was an action item, but due to no quorum a vote could not be taken. Board members Earl Garber and Chris Tauzin asked to defer this item to the next Board meeting on February 26<sup>th</sup>.</p>
<p><b>SOUTHWEST COASTAL LOUISIANA PROJECT – HOME ELEVATIONS</b></p>	<p>Allie Olsonoski, Project Manager for Coasts and Watersheds, with the Environmental Defense Fund presented on the Southwest Coastal Louisiana Project, a US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)-led initiative to elevate homes to mitigate flood risk. The project, which has secured over \$300 million for the first phase, will help elevate 800-1,000 structures at no cost to homeowners, though there are some requirements and potential costs for the homeowner. Allie shared insights from resident feedback, highlighting concerns about contractor trust, project understanding, and communication, which the Corps has been receptive to addressing. The project is seen</p>

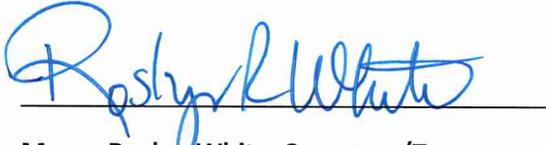
	<p>as a model for future similar initiatives across the country, with lessons learned being applied in real time.</p> <p>The group discussed replication of flood mitigation programs across parishes, with Matt Johns, Rapides Parish, inquiring about implementing similar FMA programs without match requirements. Allie explained that to get the USACE to conduct studies in new areas, parish officials need to request feasibility studies through their congressperson or CPRA, which would then evaluate structural and non-structural solutions through cost-benefit analyses. Rachel Godeaux mentioned that Congressman Higgins' office is working on the West of the Atchafalaya Basin authorization study (aka Alex to the Gulf), which was approved but not funded. Allie noted that while Southwest Coastal has funding for construction, other studies like South Central are waiting for funding or signed chief's reports, with approximately 1,000 eligible structures identified for non-structural interventions.</p> <p>The USACE's voluntary coastal elevation program for Calcasieu, Vermilion, and Cameron parishes is proceeding with a pilot group of 15 homes expected to be completed by 2026, followed by a larger batch of 320 homes that will be elevated once the design-build contract is awarded by summer. The funding for the project is strictly dedicated to Southwest Coastal and cannot be redirected to other areas, though there is some flexibility in the design-build contracts to be used for non-structural projects elsewhere if funding becomes available. The program is voluntary, with residents needing to apply for screening, and while the initial application rate was lower than expected, the USACE is taking an incremental approach to contracting to ensure efficient use of funds.</p>
<p><b>BYLAWS AMENDMENTS</b></p>	<p>This was an action item to be voted on, but due to no quorum a vote could not be taken. This item was deferred to the next Board meeting on February 26<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>Board members discussed the amendments, focusing on officer elections and board member attendance. They agreed to allow officers to serve up to two consecutive one-year terms, with provisions for mid-term replacements. For board member attendance, they decided to look more into Option 2, which allows for removal of members who miss at least two quarterly meetings without valid reasons, after a notification process. The board also considered allowing virtual meetings but decided to explore this option further with legal counsel.</p>
<p><b>DISTRICT FUNDING DISCUSSION</b></p>	<p>Kelia Bingham stated that the watershed regions have been granted by OCD a 1 year no-cost contract extension. The grant period will end on 12/31/26. It is of the utmost importance to find a revenue generating mechanism for the AWD to continue after 12/31/26.</p>

	<p>State surplus funds – “The Revenue Estimating Committee’s revenues came in higher than anticipated for 2026 (current fiscal year) and for 2027. Next year’s 2027 forecast increased by \$214 Million and the current year forecast (2026) was increased by \$217 million on top of the \$577 surplus they already had projected. If you are seeking revenue from the state – this is good news. Here is a breakdown of the numbers: <a href="#">PAR-Commentary-No-Budget-Grinches-This-Year.pdf</a>”</p> <p>Board members discussed funding options for the watershed district. Some Board members would like to move forward with a per capita annual funding model with a minimum threshold of \$1,000 per parish. This option would need more discussion and a formal vote by the entire Board. They agreed to hold a special meeting in February to address funding, attendance issues and to present potential projects for running through the LWI model with the remaining LWI Regional Capacity Building Grant funds.</p>
<b>AMENDING DISTRICT LEGISLATION</b>	<p>Board members agreed it was too late to submit any changes to the AWD legislation for the 2026 state legislative session. They discussed amending the district legislation next year to allow for alternates as well as addressing changes regarding the vote required for taxing authority for the District. These issues will be further discussed at the next Board meeting on February 26<sup>th</sup>.</p>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS UPDATES</b>	<p>The University of Louisiana at Lafayette HydroRISE Project (NSF funded and consists of five other universities) would like to host a Discovery Workshop Series – <i>A participatory ideation, modeling, and evaluation of flood mitigation projects</i>. More details will be available at the next Board meeting on February 26<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>TAC Member - Isaac Mudge is now the official nomination/appointment of the USACE to serve on the TAC.</p> <p>Board members annual ethics training must be up to date; Tier 2.1 forms are due May 15<sup>th</sup>.</p>
<b>PUBLIC COMMENT</b>	<p>Dave Dixon, Bayou Vermilion District, commented on the timeline for the LWI Projects. He said that these projects need to move forward so the money is not lost. There was a recent committee meeting of the Department of Government Efficiency and certain federal funds may be investigated and may be potentially at risk.</p>
<b>NEXT MEETING DATE</b>	<p>February 26<sup>th</sup> at 10am</p>
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	<p>The meeting was adjourned at 11:59am.</p>
<b>MEETING DETAILS</b>	

<p><b>CONTACT</b></p>	<p>Kelia Bingham, LWI Region 5 Watershed Coordinator  kbingham@planacadiana.org or (337) 446-0807</p>
<p><b>ADA/TITLE VI NOTICE</b></p>	<p>The Acadiana Planning Commission (APC) convenes public meetings in accessible locations. Meeting materials can be provided in accessible formats and in languages other than English upon request. If you would like accessibility or language accommodation, please contact the ADA/Title VI Coordinator via email at amoran@planacadiana.org: or by phone at 337-806-9364. If you wish to attend an APC function and require special accommodation, please provide at least 72 hours advanced notice.</p>
<p><b>ATTENDANCE RECORD</b></p>	
<p><b>ATTENDEES</b></p>	<p><b><u>Delegates Present:</u></b>  Acadia – Earl Garber  Allen – Tyler Tullier  Calcasieu – Terry Frelot  Cameron – Kara Bonsall  Lafayette – Rachel Godeaux  Rapides – Matt Johns  St. Landry – Van Reed  St. Martin – Chris Tauzin</p> <p><b><u>Others Present</u></b>  At-Large TAC Member – Jessica Cornay  TVFWD TAC Member – Donald Sagrera  CPRA TAC Member – Dion Broussard  DOTD TAC Member – Brent Domingue  CPRA – Ivy Thibodeaux  BVD – Stephen Broussard  BVD – Dave Dixon  BVD – Karen Hail  APC – Sara Gary  APC – Kelia Bingham  APC – Kade Jones  APC – Sean Reed</p> <p><b><u>Delegates Absent:</u></b>  Avoyelles – Jacob Coco  Evangeline – Dirk Deville  Iberia – Ben Langlinais  Iberville – John Clark  Jefferson Davis – Kori Myers  Pointe Coupee – Nathan Cobb</p>

<b>ABSENTEES</b>	St. Mary – Sam Jones Vermilion – Keith Roy House Committee Natl Resources & Env – Rep. Jacob Landry Senate Committee Natl Resources – Mayor White
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Minutes approved on 02/26/26 by the Acadiana Watershed District Board.



Mayor Roslyn White, Secretary/Treasurer  
Acadiana Watershed District