



## Ironton and Southeast Louisiana Committee Meeting

Wednesday, April 26, 2023 at 5:00 PM

**Belle Chasse Auditorium**

8398 HWY 23

Belle Chasse, LA 70037

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# Minutes

## I. CALL TO ORDER

Opening remarks from the Pastor

## II. ROLL CALL

|                                |         |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| Brian Lezina (CPRA)            | Present |
| Matthew Kegg (Tallgrass)       | Present |
| Audrey Trufant Salvant         | Present |
| Sandra Irons                   | Present |
| Andrew Jason III               | Present |
| Kornell Davis                  | Present |
| Wilkie Declouet                | Present |
| Pastor Haywood Johnson         | Present |
| Melissa Folse (Port)           | Absent  |
| Parish President Keith Hinkley | Present |

## III. PURPOSE AND NEED OF ISL

Mr. Lezina noted that the purpose of the meeting was to listen to community members, hear what needs to be done, and create a plan of action. Mr. Lezina expressed the need for a plan of action to be completed within the next year,



and that the board must effectively put funds to use.

#### IV. MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS

#### V. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Lezina to serve as Chair, no discussion

Mr. Wilkie was nominated to serve as vice chair, he declined.

Ms. Salvant was nominated as vice chair. It was seconded and approved.

Mr. Wilkie was nominated to serve as secretary. It was seconded and approved

#### VI. CURRENT STATUS OF COMMUNITY AND RESOURCE AVAILABILITY

Mr. Lezina asked where the committee currently was with the community in terms of funding. Mr. Lezina stated the goal is to utilize funds the funds in the community in an effective way. The state may be able to help secure additional recovery funds, but he emphasized the committee is committed to using funds for the community and will explore additional funding opportunities. Mr. Lezina also stated that the committee must understand who needs rebuilding and construction, and that the committee needs to figure out how to designate terms.

Pres. Hinkley described the challenges to making progress and taking the first step. He expressed that Restore and Rebuild programs are becoming expensive and that outreach and research are necessary to identify who owns properties, have owners of a property, and then to take the first step.

Ms. Salvant said that the IRAD has been working to set up a meeting with Southern University to help with succession and titles. She expressed that small business owners are frustrated that the Small Business Association may be out of funding for SBA loans by the time they are approved for the loan. Ms. Salvant stated that people are ready to build but cannot because funding sources have title rules.

Mr. Lezina went on to say the committee must identify the details of what exactly needs to be done for the public to replace and/or rebuild their property. He said not to only focus on big picture items, but specifically identify owners needs.



Pres. Hinkley said the right of entry was signed, and the Parish is working with FEMA to see if properties can be cleared and cleaned. He asked if members of the public who have signed off on their houses to be cleared or demolished to connect with Ms. Salvant so crews can be made aware.

Ms. Salvant said IRAD is working to secure additional funds from donors. Pres. Hinkley stated that the expensive nature of the project might require additional funding from other sources.

Mr. Lezina said the state is committed to funding as much of the project as possible, and that the needs of the program need to be accurately captured.

Mr. Declouet asked how many people have settled with insurance companies and if there was a list. Ms. Salvant said that no one has a list, and Mr. Declouet expressed the need for a list so there can be a starting point for the project.

Mr. Declouet said that members of the public must have property in their name, but many do not. He then posed a question, asking what the committee would do with \$3 million.

Mr. Lezina said that was the purpose of the meeting.

A member of the public spoke up, saying CPRA and Tallgrass have money which should be used for funding the elevation of homes.

Pres. Hinkley said the committee needs to contact HGA and inquire about that.

A member of the public said that HGA says to go to Restore and Restore says to go to FEMA. It is like being passed around.'



Pres. Hinkley recognized the person's frustration and said the committee was frustrated too.

Mr. Kegg said that with the committee together, they will get solutions.

Pres. Hinkley went on to say that while the committee is frustrated, they are working to find answers and solutions to create a definitive plan.

Mr. Lezina told the public to reach out to a board member he/she is comfortable with to have them represent them.

Mr. Davis explained the need to create a standard set of procedures and a listing of needs. With prices fluctuating, the need to nail down needs and pricing is paramount to move forward.

Mr. Declouet shared the idea of going door-to-door to understand community needs.

Mr. Lezina asked how to reach members of the public that are not in the community.

Ms. Salvant again expressed walking door-to-door, as it is something IRAD is working on.

Pres. Hinkley stated that before the committee leaves, they must know what the community needs and accomplish it before the next meeting. It would be ideal if progress could happen between meetings. The first thing is getting people back home and giving an estimate on how much home elevation would cost.

Mr. Declouet said that it costs between \$125,000 and \$200,000 to elevate homes. Elevators cost around \$25,000.



Mr. Lezina posed the idea of members of the team producing a survey and holding an outreach event in Ironton.

Mr. Davis said the committee could bid out together and save money.

Pres. Hinkley said that the process may take months, but it cannot take years. They are committed to “holding feet to the fire” and gaining momentum.

A member of the public said that while they have lived with hurricanes for years, this is the first time they are using rebuild information as it was not like this after Katrina.

Mr. Lezina said the committee will get a list of items needed from the survey.

Mr. Declouet stated that his home contains pipes that were wrapped with asbestos. He then asked the committee if there was funding allocated for these specific needs. Pres. Hinkley did not think so. Mr. Declouet then shared how a fire hydrant had been running for four months, and Pres. Hinkley said that it is common throughout the Parish.

Ms. Salvant said that members who want temporary housing must be represented in the survey. Mr. Lezina said it would be included, and they are committed to developing the survey and holding an outreach event before next week.

## VII. DISCUSSION OF FUTURE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Belle Chasse location is favorable.

## VIII. FUTURE MEETING DATES OF THE COMMITTEE

Third Wednesday of the month.



## IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

The public asked if the form would be available for the next committee meeting, Mr. Lezina assured the public it would be.

## X. ADJOURN