

Sept. 2, 2017

Subject: Levee Board meeting of Aug. 31, 2017 - Flood Protection Initiative

Dear Residents:

My personal assessment of the Aug 31, 2017, meeting is that the outcome is very positive in the fact that there is agreement across the board to move forward with our getting flood protection.

As neighbors we must join together by supporting Moonraker Island Civic Organization, a highly recognized group by all the entities that hold our future in their palms. We must keep vigilant by forming a small group within our MICO to attend levee board meetings to stay abreast of any changes or any "curves" thrown our way. This will take volunteers so if you feel you can attend a levee board meeting every couple of months, please let us know. Perhaps we can create an attendance committee on an alternating schedule. The first is scheduled Sept. 20, 2017, 6:00 P.M., Koop Dr. A special request was made to the Levee Board to attend its regular meetings and that the meetings always be announced. Note that three members of the Levee Board were present. Those three gave glowing reviews in our favor.

I am told that having reps from our neighborhood will keep the board on task. If we don't support the board, their support may dwindle. One interesting fact is the presentation from the parish, which monopolized the meeting, was cast into the "light of truth." Gina Campo initially stated the parish's support for us for years - the drainage issue that will help us, the raising of Hwy. 11, the evacuation route designed for us, on and on. Our people did not buy the prepared speech. After many questions, it remains that the parish has not been on our side, the drainage issue is caused by the Slidell Ring Levee which has nothing to do with us except add water to our neighborhoods. The drainage issue covers a great deal of money to keep Slidell dry.

The levee system that was built after Katrina was placed there to protect the City of Slidell. (Our project is presently designated as Project 1.0.) Hwy. 11 will not be raised, only the portion that completes the levee. No one understands where the money is that was appropriated for the raising of Hwy. 11 in the early 80's; that was before their time. The Slidell Ring Levee was built without a study, a cost-benefit ratio, or approval by ACOE. The ACOE was not involved in the project except to give a permit to build, as stated by ACOE officials at the meeting.

Because the neighborhoods were well represented, eyes were opened to the situation we face. There are some very, very smart people with tremendous expertise on board now. I welcome them. I depend on them to help us reach our goal; peace of mind, protection from flood, reasonable cost to maintain our properties, increased value of our properties.

I am extremely proud of the fact that the men who worked on this began 10 years ago. They never quit although the odds and common sense said, "Give it up." John Faust, Tom Thompson, Kort Hutchison have fought the fight. My hat is off to them and my prayer is that we, the people will not let this rest by the wayside. Complacency is the enemy.

We will be trying to create a huge meeting of all residents living in our affected areas from Oak Harbor neighborhoods down to us. If you want to know more, keep glued to our email for info. Pass info along to neighbors.

I welcome any questions you may have prior to that upcoming meeting. Call me at 985-646-0690. If I can answer them, I will. If not, perhaps I can direct you to someone who can.

We are in this together whether we like it or not. Join MICO. Support the effort. This cannot come true without unity.

Bonnie Peyroux

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Neighbors, I have good news, but the steps involved take time. Thanks to all government agencies, U.S. CONGRESSMAN STEVE SCALISE'S CHIEF OF STAFF AND NEW FLOOD ADMINISTER, CORPS OF ENGINEERS, CPRA, ST. TAMMANY LEVEE BRD., ST. TAMMANY PARISH GOVT., HOA PRESIDENTS OF MOONRAKER, CLIPPER, EDEN ISLES, MARINA, LAKEVIEW, GRAND CHAMPIONS, MASTERS POINT, CYPRESS LAKES, MOORINGS, MARINER'S COVE, FAIRWAYS AND INLETS.

- The process to get flood protection involves
1. Levee Brd. Request
  2. Parish concurs and includes project feasibility request, or parish disagrees
  3. CPRA backs feasibility study at parish request
  4. Army Corps of Engineers agrees with study or disagrees, ACOE seals the deal
  5. Federal funds are sought to support cost

The request has been supported by the Levee Brd., the Parish, and CPRA. The study has been put up for bids which closes on Sept. 8. Usually this process is given one year, but ours is 90 days. We have additional support from the ACOE via the "SILVER JACKET" program which assists with guidance to avoid application mistakes, duplication, and achieves goals which saves time and money.

The CPRA has backed our requests and has donated 2 million dollars for the study, applications, and cost-benefit ratio.

The cost - benefit ratio is a tool used by our federal government to assess worthiness for grants. Simply, the cost of the project must equal 2 1/2 x the benefit. EX: \$1,000,000 project must equal \$2.5 million in benefits. Benefits are measured in tax income, business income, number of people living and working in the area, and the value of the area. TO GET FUNDING FROM WASHINGTON, WE MUST PASS THE TEST. AS OF THE CENSUS IN 2010 OUR AREA WAS WORTH 800 MILLION DOLLARS. Steve Scalise is behind us and plans a visit when he can get home.

I will give you my personal observation in another email. I don't want to make this too very long.

In the mean time, our secretary-treasurer, Naomie Hess, has PROVIDED a reminder to send in your dues if you have not done so. Lunch with hamburgers costs more than \$20.00. Why would anyone not support an organization that is working so hard to help its residents get flood protection, keep insurance costs in line, increase the value of your homes? All government responds to one thing- NUMBERS. Be a part of this process. DEMAND FLOOD PROTECTION, and send in your dues.

MORE LATER...