

President's Report
Council Meeting of Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Good Evening Council Members, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I would like to ask that everyone keep the residents of St. John and St. James Parish in their thoughts and prayers. St. Bernard has reached out to St. John Parish President, Natalie Robottom and yesterday morning crews and equipment from our Road Department headed to St. John to provide assistance. They will be there the entire week.

February 29 - March 4, 2016 is Severe Weather Awareness Week. St. Bernard recently took part in the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) which is an internet-based resource that Federal, State and local authorities can use to issue critical public alerts and warnings. Additional information can be obtained at www.getagameplan.org.

We are pleased to announce that two major coastal restoration projects in St. Bernard Parish have been selected for further consideration under the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) program. The projects were chosen as part of a nomination and selection process administered by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Each project will now go through further feasibility and cost analysis evaluations by the Corps of Engineers and other federal agencies.

The first project is **The Bayou La Loutre Ridge Restoration Project** which was voted #1 overall in the Lake Pontchartrain Basin. This is a high priority project that would restore over 5 miles of historic ridge along Bayou La Loutre and directly benefit over 380 acres of marsh in St. Bernard Parish. The preliminary budget is approximately \$25 million.

The second project is **The North Shell Beach Marsh Creation Project**. It was selected #3 overall in the Lake Pontchartrain Basin. This project would create and nourish over 390 acres of marsh in St. Bernard Parish. The purpose of the project is to reestablish the landform between Lake Borgne and the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet. The preliminary budget is approximately \$25 million.

We are pleased to announce that **Torres Park** will be staffed on weekends. The restrooms will be opened from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. In addition the public can reserve one of four pavilions for their family events. Please call Chris Andry at (504) 258-1766 to reserve a pavilion.

The **40 Arpent Wetlands Observatory** located at 8265 Benjamin Street will be open on weekends starting next week. We aim to increase the awareness that St. Bernard Parish is a fun outdoor destination with water and nature activities which can be enjoyed by the entire family.

Eighteen Live Oak Trees were recently planted at the observatory. Funding for this project was made possible through a grant from The Meraux Foundation. I would like to thank The Meraux Foundation, the St. Bernard Wetlands Foundation and all of the volunteers for their efforts on this project.

LA Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) has started asphalt street repairs which will include single lane closure on St. Bernard Highway from **Monday, February 29, 2016 through Friday, March 4, 2016**. One lane of traffic will remain open at all times. No detour routes are required. Repairs are:

Eastbound LA46 (St. Bernard Highway) from Jean Lafitte Pkwy to Paris Road from 6:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Westbound LA46 (St. Bernard Highway) from Paris Road to Jean Lafitte Pkwy from 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

St. Bernard Transit Department has installed security cameras and a GPS tracking system in each of the new busses. The camera system was paid through a grant from the Federal Transit Administration. These new cameras will allow us to monitor all busses in order to provide safe transport of our passengers and drivers.

Last week the Regional Planning Commission in partnership with the LA Department of Transportation and Development hosted the second **Complete Streets Workshop**. The purpose of this second workshop was to bring everyone up-to-speed on Complete Streets and what it could help to accomplish in St. Bernard and to introduce parameters for drafting policy. We will begin to put together an advisory group to outline the process for development of a Complete Streets policy.

Administration is working with each department to write a CAO manual. The written manual will integrate the guidelines, rules, process, focus and principals of each department. We are developing these manuals for compliance, monitoring, risk assessment and internal controls.

There will be four cultural events going on this week.

The first is a contingent of 150 British soldiers that will be in St. Bernard Parish on **Sunday, March 6** to visit the Chalmette Battlefield and the De La Ronde Ruins. **The Daughters of the British Empire** will sponsor a reception for them at the St. Bernard Parish Courthouse.

Secondly, **The Redfish Captain's Dinner** will be held on **Thursday, March 3 at 5:30 p.m. at Docville**. The St. Bernard Tourist Commission and Meraux Foundation have partnered with Rudy's Texas Redfish Series for this event. The event will be held March 3-4 at Sweet Water Marina. There will be 40 teams participating with 2 anglers on each boat.

Third is **Sippin in the Sunset** which will be held on **March 3rd from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at the Aycock Barn in Old Arabi**. Please join us for delicious, local food, wine, live music, unique arts & crafts. The event is sponsored by the Old Arabi Neighborhood Association.

Last but not least, the big event this weekend is the **Los Islenos Heritage and Cultural Society** which **will celebrate its 41st annual Islenos Festival, March 5 & 6**, on the grounds of Los Islenos Museum Complex, on Bayou Road in St. Bernard Village. Each building and the surrounding grounds will be utilized for displays such as, alligator hunting, trapping, boat building, lace making plus much, much more. Information about Los Isleños Heritage & Cultural Society is available at <http://www.losislenos.org>

Guy McInnis
Parish President

