

## **President's Report Council Meeting of Tuesday, May 17, 2016**

Good Afternoon Council Members, Ladies & Gentlemen:

The Washington, D.C. trip last week was extremely productive. This past week Ronnie Alonzo, John Lane and I met with state delegation and their staff members. We had the opportunity to visit and spend time discussing topics ranging from Coastal projects, rural low interest loans for business and industry, the Clean Water Act and drainage to name a few. During our week in Washington, we met with Senator Steve Scalise and his Chief of Staff, Charles Henry, Senator Bill Cassidy, Senator David Vitter, Congressman Garret Graves, Congressman Charles Boutstany, Jr., former Congressman, Billy Tauzin, Charles Brittingham, II, Majority Senior Water Resources Policy Advisor and John Broussard, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture.

Congressman Steve Scalise hosted St. Bernard Parish in the Capitol Building and since our visit, St. Bernard Parish is highlighted on Congressman Scalise's homepage at [www.scalise.house.gov/our-district/interesting-first-district-facts](http://www.scalise.house.gov/our-district/interesting-first-district-facts) which reads "St. Bernard Parish proudly holds the title of "*Oyster Capital of the World*" and hosts the Violet Oyster Festival once a year."

Coastal projects were a major topic of discussion with all of the state delegation. As a result of our meetings, they will be submitting letters to the CWPPRA task force in support of our current coastal projects and initiatives. One project is the Bayou LaLoutre Ridge Restoration and Marsh Creation project (\$25 million budget) which is currently being considered for CWPPRA funding by the CWPPRA task force. This project would restore over 5 miles of historic ridge and oak/hackberry forest while also creating or nourishing nearly 400 acres or marsh.

The Delacroix Back Levee Ecological Restoration Project is another national competitive program. The funding source is through the Corp. of Engineers and we reached out to

our state delegation with regards to funding a \$100,000 feasibility study. The project will enhance the Delacroix back levee and help protect industry, camps and homes on Delacroix Highway.

Continuing Authorities Program, 206 (CAP 206), the Bayou Terre aux Beoufs Ridge Restoration was another project of discussion. St. Bernard has requested that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers allocate funds to conduct a feasibility study for this project. It is currently being considered for inclusion in the 2017 State Master Plan and we are working to discuss preliminary project scoping.

The Water Resources and Development Act of 2007 (WRDA 2007) was also discussed with regards to having the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet Ecosystem Restoration Plan completely implemented. This is a \$3m project and we discussed the process for helping to bring this project to a conclusion.

While meeting with USDA, John Broussard we discussed finding additional funding sources to help business and industry in St. Bernard Parish. We talked about the overall classification of St. Bernard Parish and how being classified as a rural Parish would help our community obtain the availability of low interest loans for business and industry. It will also open doors to additional funding to reach St. Bernard Parish.

We were informed today that St. Bernard Parish has received an \$800,000 Community Development Block Grant to be used for the water line system, booster pumps in the Eastern portion of St. Bernard Parish.

I can't say enough about how important this trip to Washington was to St. Bernard Parish. Meeting our state delegation face to face, establishing relationships and speaking with them and their staff was very instrumental in helping to move St. Bernard Parish forward with important issues and projects affecting our community.

Respectfully,

Guy McInnis  
Parish President