

PARISH RESOLUTION NO. PR-009-2023

A RESOLUTION OF THE LAFAYETTE PARISH COUNCIL REQUESTING THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, THE TECHE VERMILION FRESHWATER DISTRICT, AND THE ST. MARTIN PARISH GOVERNMENT TO ACCOMMODATE DRAINAGE AND RETENTION IN PREPARATION FOR EXCESSIVE RAINFALL IN THE TECHE-VERMILION WATERSHED

BE IT RESOLVED by the Lafayette Parish Council, that:

WHEREAS, the Teche-Vermilion Watershed is occasionally threatened by significant rain events caused by tropical weather systems, stalled frontal passages, and other weather systems that may be impacted by inadequate drainage and retention that could result in potential flooding impacts to a significant part of the Teche-Vermilion Watershed; and

WHEREAS, the negative impact of these weather systems may be increased by inadequate drainage and retention issues that result in flooding events that are detrimental to the public affecting residential, businesses, agriculture, and governmental entities, and even may threaten the lives of our citizens; and

WHEREAS, the National Weather Service (NWS) usually issues an accurate forecast for these sorts of events usually at a minimum of 72 hours or greater in advance; and

WHEREAS, the drainage out of Bayou Courtableau is limited by the following issues:

- (a) The West Atchafalaya West Guide levee flood gates for Bayou Courtableau that have insufficient flow capabilities as identified by a report to the Mississippi River Commission by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in 2007 and operation of these gates are dependent on Lake Pelba water levels; and
- (b) The undersized and obsolete flood gate south of the Butte La Rose Bridge on the inside of Borrow Pit Canal; and
- (c) Two five-hundred-foot overflow weirs with an elevation set at 18.0 feet, which empty into Bayou-Amy, Lake Catahoula, and the Lake Fausse Point System; and
- (d) Levels in Lake Pelba occasionally prohibit use of the Bayou Courtableau floodgates on the West Atchafalaya West Guide levee for drainage of the Bayou and the Northern and Central Areas of the watershed; and
- (e) The Bayou Teche's drainage capability is restricted by a dam at Keystone in St. Martin Parish; and
- (f) The Vermilion River as shown by May 2017 and August 2019 USACE depth surveys indicating severe shoaling that inhibits drainage for the river for most of Lafayette Parish and portions of Vermilion Parish; and

WHEREAS, the flood of August 2016 brought great loss of homes, business, and agricultural crops, equipment, and structures in the entire Teche-Vermilion Watershed; and

WHEREAS, active management of drainage control structures and systems as stated herein prior to a significant weather system as defined herein will accommodate additional drainage and retention resulting therefrom; and

WHEREAS, all actions proposed herein would occur while all water levels in the Teche-Vermilion Watershed are at or below their defined flood stages; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Lafayette Parish Council, that:

SECTION 1: All of the aforementioned “Whereas” clauses are adopted as part of this resolution.

SECTION 2: The Lafayette Parish Council hereby requests that the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, the Teche-Vermilion Fresh Water District (TVFD), and the St. Martin Parish Government proactively and immediately address a threat of a forecast by the National Weather Service of a rain event of five (5) inches or greater across any significant area of the Teche-Vermilion Watershed by lowering the pool stage of Bayou Courtableau at the West Atchafalaya West Guide levee flood gates to 15.65 through the following actions:

- (a) Ceasing any pumping operations by TVFD when pool stages exceed 15.65;
- (b) Open gates that drain Bayou Courtableau into the West Atchafalaya Floodway by the USACE if basin levels allow;
- (c) Open gates that drain Lake Henderson by the St. Martin Parish Government; and
- (d) Open gates that drain Bayou Teche into Lake Fausse Pointe by TVFD if lake levels allow.

The objective of lowering pool stages in Bayou Courtableau to 15.65’, which is the operational pool stage during the month of December, would allow the Bayou Courtableau watershed to store some of the anticipated rainfall accommodating anticipated drainage needs from the weather event and potentially reducing flooding threats. We request that these drainage accommodation operations begin at a minimum of 72 hours or immediately after the forecast by the National Weather Service has been issued or if river flooding causes the level in Lake Pelba to exceed 17.5 feet. A similar pool stage lowering operation was undertaken when Hurricane Barry struck the area in July 2019 which resulted in success in minimizing flood impacts.

SECTION 3: The Lafayette Parish Council requests the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, the Teche-Vermilion Fresh Water District, and St. Martin Parish immediately adopt these drainage accommodation operations.

SECTION 4: That this resolution be sent to each parish government that will be affected by this request for their consideration and support and that this resolution be sent to the Louisiana Congressional Delegation seeking their support and their intervention with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, the Teche-Vermilion Fresh Water District, and St Martin Parish in causing these operational guidelines to be adopted promptly.

SECTION 5: That certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Executive Director of the Police Jury Association, Governor John Bel Edwards, CPRA, and any other persons, firms, or entities as deemed fit and proper.

SECTION 6: All resolutions, or parts thereof, in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

This resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote on behalf of the Lafayette Parish Council thereon was as follows:

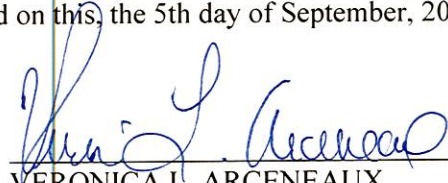
YEAS: Tabor, Naquin, Carlson, Guilbeau, Rubin

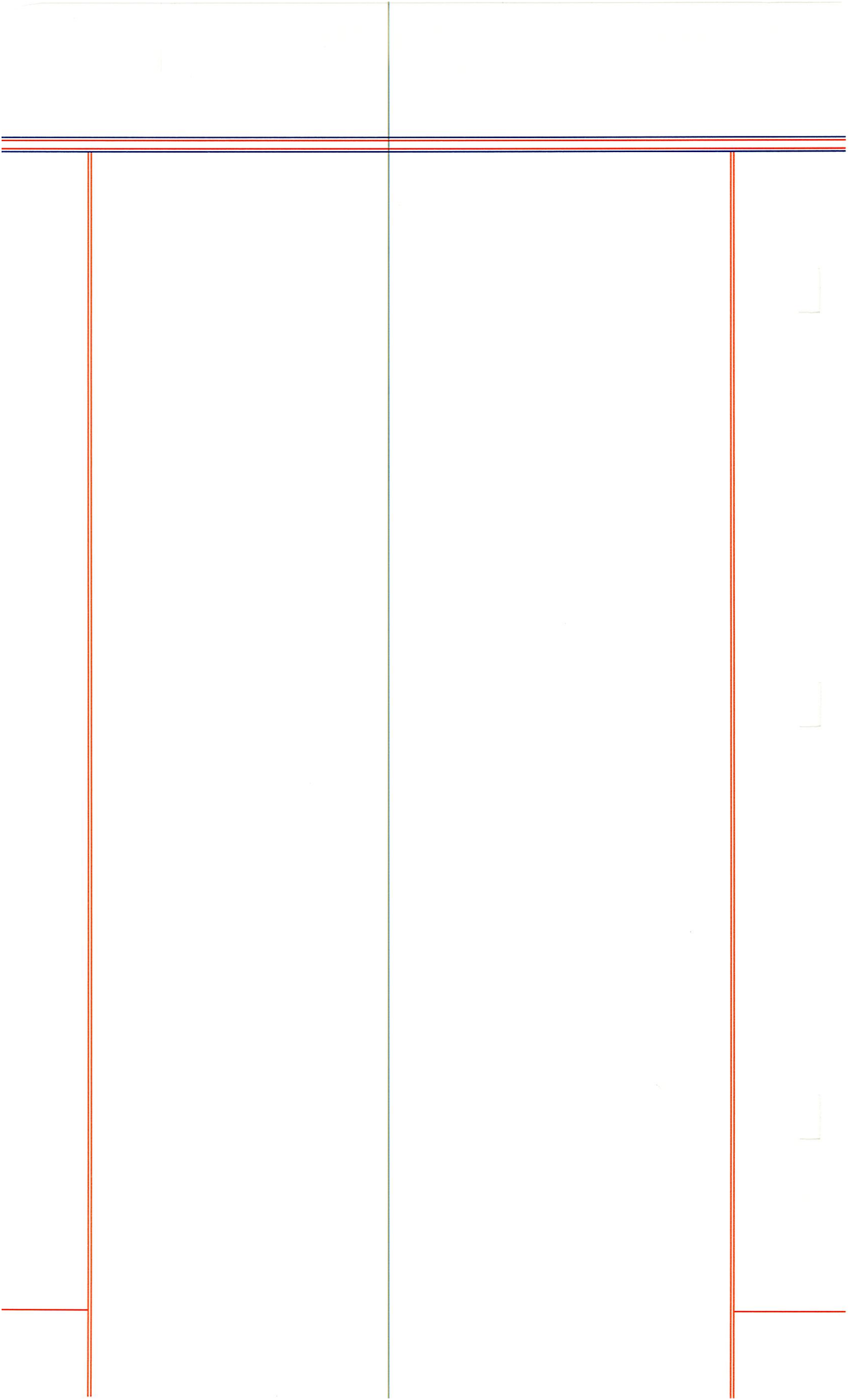
NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

AND the resolution was declared adopted on this, the 5th day of September, 2023.


VERONICA L. ARCENEUX
LAFAYETTE CLERK OF THE COUNCIL





Internal Memorandum

Legal Department

TO: Veronica L. Arceneaux, Clerk of the Councils
CC: Brian Tabor, Parish Councilman, District 1
FROM: Paul D. Escott, Assistant City-Parish Attorney
SUBJECT: Parish Council Agenda Item – Resolution
September 5, 2023 Meeting – Adoption
DATE: August 15, 2023

Vee,

At the request and on behalf of Parish Councilman Brian Tabor, I submit the following, to wit:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE LAFAYETTE PARISH COUNCIL
REQUESTING THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, THE TECHE VERMILION
FRESHWATER DISTRICT, AND THE ST. MARTIN PARISH GOVERNMENT TO
ACCOMMODATE DRAINAGE AND RETENTION IN PREPARATION FOR
EXCESSIVE RAINFALL IN THE TECHE-VERMILION WATERSHED**

On his behalf, I respectfully request that this Parish Resolution be placed on the September 5, 2023 Parish Meeting Agenda for consideration and adoption by the Parish Council.


Paul D. Escott
Assistant City-Parish Attorney

LAFAYETTE CITY COUNCIL AND LAFAYETTE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING(S)

AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL FORM

1) JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUEST: A Resolution Of The Lafayette Parish Council Requesting The U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers, The Teche Vermilion Freshwater District, And The St. Martin Parish Government To Accommodate Drainage And Retention In Preparation For Excessive Rainfall In The Teche-Vermilion Watershed

2) ACTION REQUESTED: Adoption of Parish Resolution

3) COUNCIL DISTRICT(S) (if applicable): ALL

4) REQUESTED ACTION OF COUNCIL:

A) INTRODUCTION: September 5, 2023

B) FINAL ADOPTION: September 5, 2023

5) DOCUMENTATION INCLUDED WITH THIS REQUEST:

A) Cover Memo (1 page)

B) Parish Resolution (3 pages)

C) Agenda Item Submittal Form (1 page)

6) FISCAL IMPACT:


 Fiscal Impact

 X No Fiscal Impact

AUTHORED BY:

Brian Tabor
Parish Councilman, District 1

SUBMITTED BY:



Paul D. Escott
Assistant City-Parish Attorney