

**Laffites Cove Nature Society
Board of Directors Meeting
June 30, 2012**

The Laffites Cove Nature Society held a Board meeting on June 30, 2012 at the Galveston Country Club. Gary Poltorak, President called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A quorum was established by the attendance of Gary Poltorak, Jim Murphy, Morton Voller, and Scott Weaver.

The minutes were reviewed. Upon motion duly made by Scott Weaver and seconded by Mort Voller, the following resolution was adopted by unanimous vote. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approved the minutes of May 19, 2012 as presented.

The financial report was reviewed and presented. A question was asked whether a credit still existed on the water invoice for Jibstay. Discussion was held on water quality testing with at least three tests. Each test cost \$400 with a total cost of \$1200. The tests are to be completed by the Galveston Bay Foundation. Upon motion duly made by Gary Poltorak and seconded by Jim Murphy, the following resolution was adopted by unanimous vote. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approved to allocate \$1,200 for water testing so as to be in compliance with TECQ.

Preserves - Update on Preserve Maintenance

Morton Voller stated rain this year has helped the growth. It will need some clean up, routine maintenance along the walkway, and the debris needs to be cleaned up. Later in the summer will do a big mow of prairie area and along fence line. Chinaberries were cut and we painted the stumps, these have not come back. We will continue to take them out so as to maintain control.

Other maintenance areas: The Wern Cemetery is being maintained, along Binnacle and Eckert the rope on the bollards has been out. The rope rots, next time rope will be ordered from a different source.

Replacement for Directors was discussed. So far six property owners have shown an interest. Upon motion duly made by Jim Murphy and seconded by Mort Voller, the following resolution was adopted by unanimous vote. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approved the appointment of Jim Walters as a Director.

The Board will decide the next meeting date. The meeting was adjourned.

March Grass Project Community Meeting

June 30, 2012

Gary Poltorak welcomed approximately thirty property owners attending the meeting. The Board of Directors introduced themselves to the members. Gary Poltorak introduced guests: Anna R. Armitage, Ph.D. (Assistant Professor, Department of Marine Biology and Ecosystem Science and Management, Texas A&M University), Lee Anne Wilde, (Special Projects Coordinator, Galveston Bay Foundation), Mark Lancaster, (Horizon Marine Construction), AJ Benyz (A J's Landscaping), and Chris Benson – Waterfowl Coordinator.

Gary Poltorak gave a presentation on the Corp of Engineering design.

- Over view of property
- Design Criteria for LCNS Marsh Grass Project (2) figures one showing property the 2nd Ht of bay wall relating to the remaining shelf supporting grass growth.
- Shown were pictures of the erosion where some area have grass and others do not.
- Shown were picture o before planting grass and after planting grass – sprigs of grass was planted.
- Alonso property was also shown on the approved project before and after.

Anna R. Armitage is Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Department of Marine Biology and Ecosystem Science and Management, with Galveston Texas A & M University.

What is the worth of coastal marsh? They provide:

- Sustenance – they provide food and are the regulars of the environment.
- Economic benefit – financial gain – oysters, fish, etc.
- Aesthetics - improvement of quality of life

What are the values of coasted marshes?

Plants

- Fallen pollutants, recycle nutrients improves and maintain quality of water and air regulates and maintains our environment
- Buffer wave, storm and surge impacts, control erosion and reduce storm damage.

Animals

- Nursery habitat – food → fishing (shrimp), commercial and recreational use
- Unique and diverse animals – bird, recreation, bird watching, fishing, hunting

What is happening to coastal wetlands? How do you balance the needs between present and commercial need. Industry involvement in restoration, creating restoration projects using dredge material.

What is value of different grasses? Some grasses grow better at height or con elevator. We are only referring to use of sportion, which is better adapted at Corr elevations. It is easy to transplant and easy to grow.

Can you use other natural materials other than sand bags? For biological island for grass it does not matter. Plants are sensitive to herbicides as they are toxic to plants. If it does not hurt yard grass why does it hurt the Spartan – application is important.

Laffites Cove canals are wider than other canals subdivisions on the island. Mitchell was required to build the wetlands to compensate for the development of Laffites Cove.

Galveston Bay Foundation – [www.galveston bay.org](http://www.galvestonbay.org)

Lee Anne Wilde – Special Projects Coordinator, Galveston Bay Foundation and Mathew Abernathy – Conservation Programs Outreach Specialist made a presentation and answered questions.

Who and what is Galveston Bay Foundation? The mission of the Galveston Bay Foundation is to preserve, protect and enhance the natural resources of the Galveston Bay estuarine system and its tributaries for present users and for posterity. To accomplish this mission the Foundation has targeted four goals:

Project review (Past, Present, Future)

There are Four Targets – Advocacy, Conservation, Education, and Research. Since 1991 they have actively restored habitats. Provide assistance with project design, matter selection, plant and construction.

The Past: prior fill and planting which no retaining wall – Continues to erode from water action. Eventual bulkhead failure requiring expense repairs to bulkhead

Now: concrete bags stacked, fresh fill brought it. Breakwater installed stills water to the landward side of the Breakwater allowing plants to establish, will help with storms and jet ski/boat action.

Herbicide application should not adversely affect marsh grass, however

- Do not apply herbicide to directly to cordgrass
- Do not water herbicides into the yard unless specified by directions
- Do not apply if there is a chance of rain
- Look for and discuss with yard service alternatives to treating weeds
- Don't use atrazine
- Some weed/feed treatments advise against using atrazine.
- Alternatives – use Green Light – wipe out granular
- Not large weed problem – use liquid spot treatment
- Doubling dose does not increase kill rate.
- For Broadleaf questions go to: www.ktrh.com/pages/gardenline2.html
- Birding – Laffites Cove Nature Preserve already has great habitat
- Continued Habitat improvement – marsh grass provides nursery and protection for small fish, shellfish and crabs

- Fishing – Big fish eat little fish –
- Oysters – concrete walls can provide attachment points for oysters or their materials. More oysters = cleaner water! Each oyster can filter 50 gallons of water per day.

Galveston Bay Foundation will continue to work with Laffites Cove Nature Society and the Laffites Cove residents to ensure successful implementation of this restoration project for the benefits of residents and the Galveston Bay system.

The bags of sacrete were chosen due to cost. The cost of the Alonso project on three (3) contiguous lots was approximately \$30,000.

The estimated cost per lot is \$2,500 for 50' of bulkhead – no profit calculated. The Galveston Bay Foundation may be able to help with labor for planting.

Discussion was held concerning who has the obligations of the project. The property owners have the obligation of maintaining the marsh lateral shelf and the Laffites Cove Nature Society has the responsibility of upholding the Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions. The Attorney representing the Laffites Cove Nature Society is Hulse Wagner.

Objections were raised as to whether the LCNS Board had the right to force the members to pay for this project. The Board has been actively involved in this project since 2005. The restrictions require that the owners maintain the shelf and plantings.

Can an individual do their own project using different materials? The permit can be amended to change the material. Can LCNS use the PPOA dredge project spoil for this project? The PPOA dredge material is already being used to create wetlands.

Oysters are currently on some bulkheads, will they need to be relocated if this project is installed. Is there evidence of a change in elevation that has caused our problems? Perhaps we can use something other than sandbag Phil Glass did a study and yes we lost grass because of loss of elevation. Sheet pile wall placed 1:1 above grade and below grade.

We can buy into the current permit, modify to use other materials or do nothing.

Owners have the responsibility of maintenance. The LCNS is willing to change the permit to accommodate owner if they want to use other material. Other materials might be sand bag, sheet bags, or riprap.

Since there were a lot of questions Gary Poltorak recommended another meeting be set allowing time to look at other material options.

Installed cost per linear feet:

\$12 - \$16

125 – 200 rock

125 – 200-vinyl sheet

Would a surge move the wall? Bags will not move and vinyl sheets – rock you would need enough to not move.

Gary Poltorak stressed that the Board members do not want to fight with the members. We are members in Laffites Cove too and only want to help. Discussion held on obtaining a vote of members and reducing the 15' to 7-8' for boat safety and access.

Some of the objections have been appearance, cost and availability.

The meeting was adjourned at _____.

Susan Gonzales

Recording Secretary