

Port Receives Federal Grant for Peters Rd. Bridge

By Justin Walton
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In a press release sent out on Monday, June 24, U.S. Senator for Louisiana Bill Cassidy announced that the Plaquemines Parish Port Harbor & Terminal District (PPHTD) will be receiving around \$7.4 million to continue the preliminary design of the Peters Road Bridge.

The money comes from what is known as a RAISE grant and is funded through the federal Infra-

structure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The grant PPHTD received will specifically "provide federal funding for the preliminary design activities for phase III of the Peters Road Bridge and extension."

The Peters Road Bridge, as parish residents well know, has been a project waiting for further funding and development for several decades at this point. Despite the fact that residents and local officials have always highlighted the Peters Road Bridge as an essential project for the parish's infrastruc-

ture, the lack of state and federal funding for the project has kept it from being developed.

However, due to the latest major economic developments being pursued in Plaquemines (primarily the Venture Global LNG Project), there has been a renewed push from both local and state officials to finally develop the Peters Road Bridge.

"As you know, the port received

BRIDGE – PAGE 2

Council Approves Ad-Valorem Tax Exemption for First Responders

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The Plaquemines Parish council approved an ordinance that will extend an ad-valorem tax exemption for various "first-responders" in the parish during their June 27 meeting. The ordinance, which passed unanimously, was introduced by District 6 Council Member Ronnie Newsom.

Newsom explained that this was a program "done through the state legislature back in 2023 at the end of the session." However, in order for the exception to go into effect, the council has to pass an ordinance implementing it. Once implemented, qualified first responders will receive a \$2,500 tax exemption on their ad-valorem taxes.

Prior to the vote on the ordinance, there were some questions over who actually qualified for the exemption as it was not explicitly outlined in the ordinance. According to District 3 Council Member Chris Schulz it covers first responders such as police officers, fire fighters (including volunteer firefighters), emergency response personnel, and others.

In other news:

- Multiple council members will be holding public town hall meetings for their districts in early July. Districts 6 and 8 will be holding a joint public meeting on July 9 in the Belle Chasse Middle School at 6 p.m. And District 3 will be holding a meeting on July 10 in the Belle Chasse Library at 6:30 p.m.

- The council passed a resolution urging parish president Keith Hinkley to hire a new Director of the Coastal Resource and Planning Department—a position which has been vacant for several months.

Port Extends Law Firm Contract After Lengthy Discussion

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The June 27 Plaquemines Port Harbor & Terminal District (PPHTD) meeting was the first meeting the port had without former Deputy Director and Executive Counsel Melissa Folse, and it was clear that her absence was causing issues over how the port handles various contracts, agreements, and land acquisitions.

The resolution that revealed these issues was one that allowed Executive Director Charles Tiltonson to extend a contract with law firm Dwyer, Cambre, and Suffern by six months to assist with land acquisitions and other legal services. Though it would ultimately pass by a unanimous vote, there was a significant amount of discussion over how the law firm would actually assist the port, why the port should extend the contract, and whether or not it was actually needed.

And beyond just showing that the port is temporarily struggling with handling all the legal responsibilities without the person that served as their primary legal counsel, the discussion of this resolution showed a growing split between the port administration and commissioners.

"This contract is for six months [to allow the law firm] to continue working on everything they're working on right now. That includes land

PORT – PAGE 3

Open Houses for New LNG Project Scheduled for Late July

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A company seeking to develop yet another LNG plant in Plaquemines Parish has set aside two days in late July to hold open houses so residents can learn and ask questions about the project. Specifically, the LNG terminal is being developed by Gulfstream LNG. It should be noted that the project is still in its early phases of development, and Gulfstream LNG has only started "the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ('FERC') pre-filing process."

The open houses will be held on July 22 at the Belle Chasse Auditorium and on July 23 at the Port Sulphur Community Center respectively. The open houses will be held from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. There will be representatives from both Gulfstream LNG and FERC in attendance.

According to a letter sent out by engineering consultants Waldemar S Nelson & Company on the open houses, the Gulfstream LNG project will produce around four million tons of LNG per year—around 80 percent smaller than the Venture Global LNG project currently under construction. It will be located on a 418-acre site located "down river" of West Pointe a La Hache, known in the area as the "Magnolia Plantation" property.

Currently, it is expected that construction on the project will begin in 2027, "after the peak of the current construction activities in the parish." The project will "consist of two modular gas treatment trains, three modular liquefaction trains, two berths, one LNG storage tank, and onsite power generation."

Woodlands Conservancy Announces New Partnership for Forest Restoration

Woodlands Conservancy is pleased to announce a partnership with Louisiana Conservation Corps, a program of American Youth Works. Louisiana Conservation Corps (LaCC) is an AmeriCorps program that empowers young people through conservation, education, service, and job training. Participants engage in hands-on projects on public lands, coastal regions, and disaster areas throughout the natural landscapes of Louisiana and surrounding states.

For the past couple of years, Louisiana Conservation Corps members have completed some of their training at Woodlands Preserve. The Corps members assisted after Hurricane Ida by coming to Woodlands Preserve for their chain saw training which assisted Woodlands Conservancy in much needed clean-up. The Corps members returned recently to assist with chain sawing



Louisiana Conservation Corps members pictured, from left: Alexis Cape, Brandon Roberts, Morgan Elburn and Owen Lejune.

RESTORATION – PAGE 2

PPSO Makes Three Arrests in Connection to Boothville-Venice Burglaries

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According to Plaquemines Parish Sheriff's Office (PPSO) Public Information Officer Chaun Domingue, the Boothville-Venice region experienced a string of burglaries over the course of two days. However, those involved would not remain at large for long as PPSO was able to identify and track the suspects within days of the burglary spree.

From Tuesday, June 18 through Wednesday, June 19, Domingue stated that there were 11 burglaries that took place in Boothville-Venice. However, suspects 19-year-old Brandon Buckley of Boothville, 18-year-old Demond Williams of Sunrise, and 17-year-old Jyren Jones of Buras were quickly arrested on June 20.

Buckley, the oldest of the three suspects, was arrested on 10 counts of Simple Burglary, two counts of Possession of Stolen Property, and two counts of Possession of Stolen Firearms.

Williams was arrested on 10 counts of Simple Burglary, one count of Possession of Stolen Property, and one count of Possession of Stolen Firearm.

Jones was arrested on one count of Simple Burglary.

Speaking in an interview, Sheriff Jerry Turlich stated that he was proud of the work PPSO patrol and investigation teams put in to identify the suspects, obtain warrants, and make arrests quickly.

"You know, our community is so safe that we of-

BURGLARIES – PAGE 7