

LOUISIANA ENGINEERING SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTION MEETING

November 10, 2023

Baton Rouge, LA

1. The meeting of the Louisiana Engineering Society (LES) Board of Direction was held on Friday, November 10, 2023, in Baton Rouge, LA. A quorum was established, and the meeting was called to order by President Jim Ellingburg at 11:17 AM.

Board Members Present

Jim Ellingburg, President
Melanie Caillouet, 1st Vice President
Gavin Gautreau, 2nd Vice President
Clinton Patrick, Secretary-Treasurer
Tyler Comeaux, NSPE Representative
Chad Bacas, Past President
Rachel Kenney, State Director
Taylor Goldman, State Director
Kimberly McDaniel, State Director
Gregory Trahan, State Director
TJ Stokes, Baton Rouge Chapter President
Kevin DeZarn, Bayou Chapter President
Kalyn Partin, Lake Charles Chapter President
Morgan McCallister, Monroe Chapter President
John Jackson, New Orleans Chapter President
Linsey Olivier, Shreveport Chapter President
Stan Whitney, PEC Chair
Jeffrey Pike, PEE Chair
Alan Krouse, PEPP Chair
Mary Claire Ruckert, Executive Director

Board Members Absent

Oliver Neal, Young Engineer Representative
Kory Moss, Alexandria Chapter President
Justin Schexnayder, Lafayette Chapter President
Ali Mustapha, PEG Chair
Jennifer Gemar, PEI Chair

Guests Present

Barker Dirmann, ACEC/L President & CEO

2. **The Invocation was given by Jeffrey Pike.**
3. **The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**
4. **LES Vision & Mission Statement was read by Melanie Caillouet.**
5. **Acceptance of the Agenda –**

A motion was brought forth by Jim Ellingburg to accept the agenda with the amendments that the board will go into an Executive session to discuss Christmas gifts, LES staffing changes, and a potential remote work policy. Additional changes to the agenda were to clarify that there will be an additional item (8-b-1) pertaining to actions resulting from the Executive session and an additional item (11r) to discuss adding the N. Dakota Hill Outstanding Chapter President Award. **Melanie Caillouet made the motion to accept the agenda with the referenced changes. The motion was seconded by TJ Stokes. The motion passed unanimously.**

6. Acceptance of September 2023 meeting minutes -

A motion was made by Kalyn Partin to accept the amended September 2023 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Chad Bacas. The motion passed unanimously.

7. President's Report

President Jim Ellingburg reported that LES will face some upcoming challenges. As Legislative Session approaches, LES needs to be aware of possible threats to professional licensure. The LES board will work together to ensure that we continue to do what is best for the engineering profession in Louisiana throughout these challenges.

8. Secretary/Treasurer's Report –

a. Financial Reports as of 10/31/2023 –

1. LES P&L Statement (see attached) – The LES Profit and Loss statement was reviewed and discussed.

Some highlights are:

- a. CPD Day cleared over \$13,000.
- b. We are beginning to see incoming revenue coming from the JESC.
- c. The office equipment category is a little high due to purchasing a new copy machine for the LES office.
- d. Postage is high due to having to purchase a new postage machine because the old meter was becoming obsolete.
- e. A new software expense was the purchase of QuickBooks Online, because the QuickBooks Desktop software that the office was using is becoming obsolete. QuickBooks Online now gives access to the Secretary-Treasurer to see financial information.

2. LES Balance Sheet (see attached) – The LES Balance Sheet was reviewed and discussed.

- a. As of this meeting, the LES balance sheet does not reflect the \$48,000 loan to LEF. We are currently working to get that to reflect on the balance sheet.

A motion was made by TJ Stokes to accept the P&L Statement and the Balance Sheet as of 10/31/23. The motion was seconded by Gavin Gautreau. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Executive Session - A motion was made by Kevin DeZarn to go into Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Kimberly McDaniel. Motion passed unanimously. A motion was made to come out of Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Kimberly McDaniel. The motion passed unanimously.

1. The results of the Executive Session are as follows:

- a. The Executive Director will present options to the Executive Committee for outsourcing bookkeeping due to the current LES/LEF bookkeeper leaving at the end of November. Additionally, the ExCom would like to know if payroll could be included in the bookkeeping tasks that are outsourced.
- b. **A motion was made by Melanie Caillouet to accept a remote work leave policy that states that remote work is available to full time employees, subject to approval by the Executive Director or the Executive Committee, in the event of a medical or life-changing event.** During this remote work period, employees are still responsible for full completion of their assigned tasks. In the event of a major medical or life event, sick and annual leave can be used if the employee would like to take time off from work. If the employee runs out of sick or annual leave, but is not yet able to return to work, he/she will receive 60% of their salary for up to 6 weeks, or until they are able to return to work remotely or in person, whichever occurs first. **The motion was seconded by Kevin DeZarn. The motion passed unanimously.**
- c. **A motion was made by Melanie Caillouet to distribute Christmas gifts to the LES office staff in the amount totaling \$2,550, which will be distributed along with the next payroll. The motion was seconded by Clinton Patrick. The motion passed with one member abstaining.**
- d. **A motion was made by Melanie Caillouet that the LES ExCom will make the final decision regarding LES outsourcing the Bookkeeping position once more information is provided. The**

motion was seconded by Jeffrey Pike. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Executive Directors Report – (see attached report)

- a. LES held a CPD Day where Life Safety Code, ADA and Ethics presentations were offered. This event was a success with a total of 73 virtual attendees and 29 in-person attendees. The overall LES profit after cost-sharing was \$13,084.01.
- b. All speaking opportunities have been filled on the JESC agenda. We have sold 32 exhibitor booths, 10 sponsorships and 41 registrations as of November 7.
- c. Mary Claire Ruckert invited President & CEO of ACEC/L to assist in updating the LES Board on the Architecture – Engineering Joint Task Force. The Architecture – Engineering Task Force is a combination of volunteers from ACEC/L, AIA, LAPELS, LES and LSBAE to address the issue of the civil exemption that is currently in place and to come up with a solution or compromise that is suitable for both architects and engineers. As of right now, the architects would like to sunset the exemption completely, making it impossible for future civil engineers to perform work that is necessary to their profession. ACEC/L and LES are presenting a compromise to the architects with updated definitions and thresholds that they can still operate within that will be presented at the next Task Force meeting (see attached for a copy of that proposal). If no compromise or solution can be decided upon in the Task Force, this issue will likely be brought to this year's Legislative Session where it is expected that engineers will have to fight against the architects on this matter. Though there were no civil engineers on the board affected by this exemption to give their opinions on this matter, it is the general consensus that engineers should not be allowed to do buildings such as schools, hospitals and churches, but the ability for civil engineers to work on storage, factory, industrial, and other facilities needs to be protected.
- d. Mary Claire Ruckert gave a presentation on the new LES MembershipWorks database. The LES office can now see our membership in much more detail, such as recurring revenue, types of membership, free memberships, etc. During this presentation, an issue was brought to the board's attention that the number of members paying voluntary dues are decreasing. The membership committee has met and discussed different options to try and get members to donate again. It has been discussed that the state office will send a campaign to our members, whether they are currently paying voluntary dues or not, requesting donations.

10. Old Business -

- a. **NSPE Update** – At the monthly call, NSPE representative Tyler Comeaux mentioned that LES hosted a Gubernatorial Luncheon and other participants on the call were interested in this idea and might do the same for their state.

11. New Business –

- a. **Report from Honors & Awards Committee** – The Honors & Awards Committee met on November 10 and have voted to award the following:
 - **F. Hugh Coughlin Young Engineer Award** – N. Dakota Hill, PE
 - **Leo M. Odom Award for Services to the Profession** – John J. Plaisance, PE
 - **Charles M. Kerr Public Relations Award** – Miles B. Williams, PE
 - **A.B. Paterson Medal for an Engineer in Management** – Gregory P. Sepeda, PE
 - **James M. Todd Technological Accomplishment Medal** – Brett McMann, PE
 - **Andrew M. Lockett Award** – Michael D'Angelo, PE

Additionally, Anne Trappey, PE has been selected to receive the Waldemar S. Nelson Award. This award is chosen by LES Past Presidents.

Jim Ellingburg proposed a new award to honor N. Dakota Hill called the N. Dakota Hill Outstanding Chapter President Award. This award will be selected by the LES staff to be given to the chapter president that has the most enthusiasm in the beginning of their term and works hard to advance the wellbeing of their chapter. A discussion took place about why the award is given before the chapter president has finished their term. The reasoning behind this is that when N. Dakota Hill became president of the Monroe Chapter, he did so without knowing what

it entailed, but jumped in with enthusiasm and determination.

Kimberly McDaniel made a motion to accept the new award with the amendment that we include the information about why it is to be given halfway through a president's term. The motion was seconded by Clinton Patrick. The motion passed unanimously.

- b. **Vote on Lifetime Achievement Nominations** – The board voted unanimously to award Christopher Knotts, PE with the Lifetime Achievement award.
- c. **Report from Membership Committee/Voluntary Dues** – This report was given in conjunction with the Executive Director's report. See item 9d for more information.
- d. **Update on JESC** – This report was given in conjunction with the Executive Director's report. See item 9b for more information.
- e. **Alexandria Chapter Report** – Report was given – Currently has 95 members. The Alexandria Chapter held their second meeting on October 3 with Mr. TJ Stokes as the presenter. The next meeting will be on November 14 at the Community Center near the Alexandria International Airport and will feature Cyndi Glascock with Gainey's as the presenter. Lastly, Cleco Power has donated to the Alexandria Chapter to provide equipment for Mathcounts. (see attached report)
- f. **Baton Rouge Chapter Report** – Report was given - Currently has 563 members. The Baton Rouge Chapter held their September meeting at Mike Anderson's with presenter Jay Hardman from the Port of Greater Baton Rouge. This meeting was very well attended. In October, Roger Husser with LA Facility Planning and Control presented at Juban's for the chapter's monthly luncheon. On October 6, the chapter held their annual Clay Shoot that had a good turnout of over 80 shooters in attendance. The Baton Rouge Chapter has also chosen their Honors & Awards winners: Greg Sepeda, PE – A.B. Paterson Medal for an Engineer in Management; Connie Betts, PE – Andrew Lockett Award for Civic Activities; Miles Williams, PE – Charles M. Kerr Public Relations Award; Gabriel Rice, PE – F. Hugh Coughlin Young Engineer Award; Brett McMann, PE – James M. Todd Technological Accomplishment Award; Lynn Roussel – Leo M. Odom Award for Services to the Profession. The December chapter luncheon will include a presentation by Chad Winchester. The chapter also plans to choose and award the Baton Rouge Chapter STEM grant winners. (see attached report)
- g. **Bayou Chapter Report** – Report was given - Currently has 80 members. The Bayou Chapter is currently holding steady with membership as well as chapter participation at chapter meetings. The chapter meetings will start being held at different locations within the chapter each month to attempt to limit travel time for members. There will be no November or December monthly meetings, though the chapter is currently planning a Christmas social for December. (see attached report)
- h. **Lafayette Chapter Report** – Report was given – Currently has 383 members. The Lafayette Chapter is currently having difficulties locating speakers for their monthly meetings. A Christmas lunch is being planned for the week of December 11, 2023, but no speaker has been scheduled yet. (see attached report)
- i. **Lake Charles Chapter Report** – Report was given – Currently has 113 members. The Lake Charles chapter held a luncheon for their October meeting that featured the mayor of Lake Charles as the speaker. The chapter is currently very low on funds. A meeting within the chapter is scheduled to discuss resolving this issue. As of right now, the chapter is in the early stages of planning for Mathcounts, but funds are very low so sponsors will have to be found. (see attached report)
- j. **Monroe Chapter Report** – Report was given – Currently has 115 members. The Monroe Chapter held a meeting in September featuring presenter Matt Mixon, a meeting in October featuring presenter Tom Malmay and a November meeting featuring speaker Jeff Pike. Chapter meetings have been well attended this far and are planned and scheduled until May of 2024. The chapter has also received more income in their advertising budget than expected. (see attached report)
- k. **New Orleans Chapter Report** – Report was given – Currently has 529 members. The New Orleans Chapter held a

meeting in September featuring Brandon Frierson as well as an October meeting featuring Ryan Haynie. The chapter just held their annual LES New Orleans Golf Tournament which is expected to bring in record-breaking numbers. The New Orleans chapter also held a joint professional society social with ten other professional societies related to engineering, architecture and urban planning which turned out to be very successful with over 300 attendees. The next chapter meeting will be held at the University of New Orleans and will feature the Chief Nuclear Officer of Entergy. Lastly, in December the chapter will be holding their monthly meeting at the Southern Yacht Club and will feature a speaker from NASA. (see attached report)

- l. **Shreveport Chapter Report** – Report was given – Currently has 132 members. The Shreveport Chapter held a meeting in September featuring speaker Gabe Landry. Their October meeting featured Barbara Featherson as the presenter. These meetings have been well attended. The last meeting of the year was held on November 1 and featured Juley Gilley as a speaker. The next Chapter event will be the joint Christmas party with ASCE that will be held at Flying Heart Brewery. (see attached report)

- m. **PEC Report** – No report given.

- n. **PEE Report** – No report given.

- o. **PEG Report** – No report given.

- p. **PEI Report** –The following four names have been selected to submit to the governor’s office for the LAPELS board vacancy:
 - a. Frank P. Betts, PE
 - b. Craig M. Borel, PE
 - c. Clarence B. “Bart” Kemper, III, PE
 - d. Alex Lawler, PE

A discussion took place about an initial hesitation around one of the nominees and a personal relationships to a current LAPELS Board member. It was decided that since the nominee was qualified and submitted a nomination, LES feels any potential conflicts of interest between LAPELS Board members would have already been reviewed by the nominee. Therefore, LES decided to submit all four nominations to the Office of the Governor.

TJ Stokes made a motion to submit the following four names to the governor’s office for the LAPELS PEI vacancy: Frank P. Betts, PE, Craig M. Borel, PE, Clarence B. “Bart” Kemper, III, PE, and Alex Lawler, PE. The motion was seconded by Jeff Pike. Motion passed unanimously.

- q. **PEPP Report** – No report given.
12. **Announcements** -
- a. The next Board of Direction Meeting is scheduled for February 27, 2024, in Lafayette in conjunction with the JESC.
 - b. Melanie Caillouet has been working on restructuring the LES Handbook. She will be sending out the updated draft of the LES Handbook. She requested that the board looks over the draft and to come to the next meeting with any comments or changes.
13. **Adjournment** - **A motion was made to adjourn by Melanie Caillouet. The motion was seconded by Jeff Pike. The motion passed unanimously.** Meeting was adjourned at 1:45 PM.