

BOSSIER PARISH POLICE JURY
ROAD/SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES

Mr. Philip Rodgers, Chairman
Mr. Bob Brotherton, Co-Chairman
July 3, 2024

The Road/Subdivision Regulations Committee of the Bossier Parish Police Jury met on this 3rd day of July, 2024, at 1:00 p.m., in the Police Jury Conference Room, Bossier Parish Courthouse, Benton, Louisiana. Mr. Philip Rodgers, Chairman, called the meeting to order, with the following members present:

Mr. Philip Rodgers, Chairman, Mr. Glenn Benton, Ms. Pam Glorioso, Mr. John Ed Jorden, Ms. Julianna Parks, Mr. Doug Rimmer.

Others present for the meeting:

Ms. Carlotta Askew-Brown
Ms. Carolina Blunck
Ms. Shanna Boykin
Mr. Barry Butler
Mr. Jimmy Cochran
Mr. Julian Darby
Ms. Ashley Ezell
Ms. Stacie Fernandez
Mr. Butch Ford
Ms. Julie Gill
Ms. Monica Grappe

Ms. Rachael Graves
Mr. Eric Hudson
Mr. Patrick Jackson
Mr. Sam Marsiglia
Ms. Megan Ramos
Mr. Matt Redmon
Mr. Tom Salzer
Mr. Keith Sutton
Dr. Ken Ward
Mr. Rod White

Mr. Eric Hudson, Parish Engineer, stated that during the early 2000's timeframe, the parish experienced problems with groundwater and street issues in the river-bottom areas of the parish. He stated that sewer and street construction ordinances were developed, but since the Covid-19 pandemic, costs for all materials have increased, including rock, asphalt and concrete prices. Mr. Hudson stated that his office receives many requests for approval of modifications to current material requirements for the construction of streets in subdivisions. He stated that the general rule has always been six inches of concrete over six inches of rock, or eight inches of concrete over eight inches of rock. Mr. Hudson stated that paving specifications found in current parish ordinances are based on what will last, but as the requirements are written, there is no latitude for allowing any variance of current regulations. He stated that he and Mr. Matt Redmon may present some modification requests to the jury for consideration, if the committee is agreeable.

Mr. Jimmy Cochran suggested that a change may be necessary to bond requirements. Mr. Hudson stated that he does not disagree with that suggestion, but in high-density subdivisions, a concrete pavement section will last longer than asphalt. He stated that although the parish cannot work on concrete, the life of concrete pavement is longer, and it requires less maintenance. Mr.

Hudson stated that an aggregate base is required under concrete pavement because in high groundwater areas, the rock provides a drainable base which increases the life of the concrete. He further stated that while the rock base is necessary in these areas, he is also sympathetic to the high costs of all materials.

Mr. Glenn Benton stated that the parish won a lawsuit against the Federal Emergency Management Agency because of the rock requirements in place. Mr. Philip Rodgers stated that as he understands the current ordinances, the parish does not accept anything outside of these requirements. He further stated that if a developer can build a better concrete road in a different way, Mr. Hudson cannot administratively approve that deviation. Mr. Tom Salzer stated that while he does not have a problem with alternative engineering, he does not want that to hinder the parish's ability to repair a road once it has been accepted into the parish road system. He further stated that engineering may provide a more cost-effective way to build a road, but if it costs the parish more on the back end, he will not be in favor of allowing a variance of current regulations.

Mr. Hudson stated that he does not have an issue with reducing the rock base requirement from six inches to five inches of rock base, advising that this will still perform better than asphalt. Ms. Pam Glorioso asked if current parish standards are still based on the industry standards that were effective at the time the ordinances were written. Mr. Hudson stated that they are the industry standard and general rule. Ms. Glorioso stated that if that industry standard remains unchanged, she will not be in favor of changing the parish requirements. Mr. Hudson stated that this is acceptable to him, but he is asking for guidance as to whether the parish might consider giving some latitude to enable his office to review these requests on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. Rodgers stated that some developers believe that the parish does not build roads to its own standards. There was discussion regarding several road projects throughout the parish, and the type of soil used in the construction of those projects. Mr. Patrick Jackson, Parish Attorney, stated that all we are addressing today is the river-bottom areas of the parish. Mr. Hudson advised that his office reviews every street design plan very carefully to ensure that the road proposed by the developer is suitable for the number and weight of all vehicles traveling on the road.

Mr. Salzer stated that the parish engineers are the professionals in this situation, and we recognize that just as the type of building materials once used has become antiquated, the same can be said for road materials. He further stated that his main concern is ensuring that even if it is cheaper on the front end for developers, it will not cost the parish more to maintain later.

The jurors discussed several road projects statewide and the materials used in different areas. Mr. Butch Ford, Parish Administrator, stated that there are always new ways of building roads and there is a continual testing of new materials and new construction designs. Mr. Rodgers stated that a decision on whether a lesser amount of rock is acceptable in certain situations should be made by the parish engineer, due to the industry changes over time. Ms. Julianna Parks asked if there would be some type of document that states why certain changes will be allowed and others will not. She further stated that her hesitation is at some point in the future, someone might say that certain developers are allowed to make changes while others are not. Mr. Jackson stated that he is an advocate for no discretion in these matters, because there will always be an engineer who can be hired to say that a variance will meet the requirements of the ordinance, while the parish says that it will not. Ms. Glorioso stated that if we set the standard, we should require adherence to the requirements.

Ms. Carlotta Askew-Brown, Bossier City-Parish MPC Executive Director and Benton MPC Executive Director, stated that after the pandemic, our society has become more distribution-based with grocery delivery, online ordering, and other delivery services utilized. She further stated that this increase in delivery services creates more than standard residential and commercial traffic, including more axles on the roads daily.

Mr. Jackson asked the committee for guidance as to whether the engineers should have any discretion for road requirements. Mr. John Ed Jordan stated that he believes the standards for roads constructed in the river-bottom areas of the parish should be consistent for every proposed street construction in those areas, with no variances given. Ms. Askew-Brown stated that the City of Bossier does not allow any asphalt streets in subdivisions.

Mr. Doug Rimmer stated that when the parish learned of the issues in the areas which have higher water tables, requirements changed for better road construction and maintenance in those areas. He stated that he believes Mr. Hudson should bring new information to the jury if a change to current requirements is needed based on learned information.

Mr. Hudson stated he is agreeable to requiring concrete streets in all subdivisions in the river-bottom areas if the jury is inclined, but development will slow down due to economics. Mr. Glenn Benton stated that he believes everyone should be held to the standards set in place, with no variances.

Mr. Rodgers stated that the use of asphalt in the construction of roads is cheaper for

developers, but the use of concrete is a better option and utilizes less road base than currently required. He stated that a concrete road is better than an asphalt road, but there are no provisions in the current ordinance which allow the engineering department to approve that change. Ms. Parks asked if an amendment to current regulations could be considered to include 'meet or exceed' the standard. Mr. Hudson stated that a computer program will show that a concrete road with no base is better, but the parish is aware that roads in these river-bottom areas require the rock base for drainage and for the life of the concrete. He further stated that he wanted to make members of the committee aware of this matter because jurors will be contacted when a developer wishes to build a concrete road that does not meet parish requirements, but is instead required to construct an asphalt road.

Mr. Hudson stated that even though a computer program states that a concrete road with no base is a better road, the type of land underneath must be considered, as well as the requirements for drainage. He stated that he will continue to study this issue and bring any additional information back to the committee for further review.

Mr. Jackson stated that a similar issue is currently being reviewed involving another parish department and like this discussion, the resulting problems will not surface for many years to come. He stated that the issues presented today will cost taxpayers later. Mr. Hudson stated that developers know that they can come before the police jury to discuss these requests.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:41 p.m. by the Chairman.

MEGAN C. RAMOS
INTERIM PARISH SECRETARY

PHILIP RODGERS, CHAIRMAN
BOSSIER PARISH POLICE JURY