

GREATER LAFOURCHE PORT COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2020 at 10:55AM
Administration Office • 16829 East Main St • Cut Off, LA 70345
(Posted: May 22, 2020 at 3:50PM)

- I. Call to Order
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Roll Call
- IV. Public Comment
- V. Consider making offer to purchase (including appropriate relocation benefits) the Martin properties
- VI. Adjournment

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OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE GREATER LAFOURCHE PORT COMMISSION
May 27, 2020

The Board of Commissioners of the Greater Lafourche Port Commission met in special session on Wednesday, May 27, 2020 at 10:55AM at the Administration Office 16829 East Main Street Cut Off, LA 70345.

President Cheramie called the meeting to order and Secretary M. Callais called roll.

ATTENDED: Harris Cheramie, Jr., Rodney R. Gisclair, Jimmy Lafont, Rodney J. Gisclair, Sr., Curtis Pierce, Larry Griffin, John Melancon Jr., Mike Callais, and Kris Callais

ABSENT: None

President Cheramie opened the floor for any public comment, being none, he presented for the board's consideration to make offer to purchase the Martin properties. Bryce Autin explained the different properties are Mr. Martin's house, Ace Martin's office building on the bayou side, the Estate of Elda Martin's house and warehouse, and the Rhonda M. Comeaux property to LA 3235. Because Mr. Andrew Martin's house and the Ace Martin office building are required for the Airport Corridor project, we followed DOTD's procedures for appraisers. The procedure calls for 2 appraisers and a certain, very comprehensive appraisal report format. Those reports were sent to a third appraiser who is the review appraiser to look at them. The third appraiser did not make any changes regarding price or the fair market value. He only made changes or asked questions regarding the backup information that DOTD would normally ask for. Once those questions were addressed, it went to DOTD's chief appraiser who looked at it and had some questions/comments that needed to be resolved. The questions did not deal with the market value. They generally dealt with the format of the appraisal report and certain backup information and justification. Basically, the appraisals for the Ace Martin property and Andrew Martin property were performed by 2 certified general appraisers, reviewed by a third certified general appraiser and approved by the chief appraiser for DOTD.

For the Elda Martin and Rhonda Comeaux properties, we followed the same process with the same 2 appraisers who issued the reports. We did not need to send to the third appraiser or DOTD. It was not required.

The housing relocation benefits for Mr. Andrew Martin also had to be put together by a relocation expert and approved by DOTD's relocation officer. Autin stated all those amounts are on the sheet in your folder. We are asking your approval to make this offer to Mr. Martin and the Martin Family. Executive Director Chett Chiasson stated we have a meeting scheduled with Mr. Martin and his attorney this afternoon. The relocation specialist will be attending as well as part of the process to deliver the information for the relocation benefits which are \$180,975. Not necessarily a check will be made for this there are steps that need to be taken to receive these funds.

Melancon stated these are low numbers. Pierce stated it is the fair market value. He stated he can attest to property that he sold which was similar property to Hwy 3235 a 400' x 1000' section at fair market value for \$350,000. Melancon stated this property has houses and buildings. Pierce agreed his property sold had no buildings.

Chiasson stated we understand that he may not accept this offer, but this is the process we have to follow. We anticipate that he will want to do his own appraisal which will need to be a certified general appraiser for commercial property and not a residential appraiser. This is what we will discuss with him this afternoon. There is some authority that we have to negotiate between 2 appraisers. We have that capability. It needs to be proper appraisals. R. Gisclair Sr. stated they will have to meet certain qualifications and certifications, which Chiasson replied yes. Griffin asked if Mr. Martin had an idea of

the amount of the offer. Cheramie stated no it had to come to the board first before they make the offer this afternoon. Cheramie stated the reason he is doing this is for the betterment of our community. K. Callais questioned moving forward how long can he prolong this process and delay us from purchasing the property? Chiasson stated there are other actions to take to make this happen. K. Callais stated we don't need him to prolong this process and put us behind and lose out on the project. The community needs this to move forward and we don't need one individual stopping us. M. Callais questioned if we will be meeting with the rest of the Martin Family, which Chiasson stated Mr. Martin and his attorney are representing the family at this time. Melancon stated our main focus is getting the Martin section first for the road and we can deal with the additional properties later if the discussion is not getting anywhere please don't let that stop the project. The main focus is the road, Chiasson stated that is an option.

K. Callais stated if Mr. Martin can get his own appraiser how long of a timeframe he has, which Autin stated that is up to us the only guidance we have is DOTD's policy which allows 30 days to make a counteroffer which should be backed by an appraisal but not required before they move forward with acquiring the property by other means. A reasonable timeframe would be 30 days to submit a counteroffer. K. Callais stated he can submit a counteroffer without an appraisal backing it up? Autin stated DOTD allows him to submit a counteroffer without backing it up. Operating as DOTD operates, however, the counteroffer would need to be justified by something which should be a proper appraisal. Again, that is the way DOTD operates. Some say we need to operate in a certain way and others say we have more leniency on how we can operate. If we use their policy as a guide, we are good. Cheramie stated these are the numbers that have been approved by DOTD, the board needs to approve the amount and make the offer. We then wait to hear what he has to say. This starts the process. K. Callais stated that he feels we are all thinking about the same outcome for today's meeting with Mr. Martin. Autin stated we are prepared for any response Mr. Martin might have. Pierce stated when he talked earlier about the property that he sold it was close by and it was in 2015. Cheramie stated the economy is not the same now. Cheramie stated his property was appraised 2 years ago and it is different than today. Pierce stated we are thinking it is a low number, but it is fair market value. Chiasson stated we looked at your property and the per acre cost is in the ballpark of what you sold at.

R. Gisclair Sr. stated let's not forget all this property is critical to the airport corridor. He is not saying that we pay whatever he asks. We have to go through proper procedures, but don't forget it is important to get this property to complete the project. Let's not let personal opinions get in the way and do what is right for the project to move forward. K. Callais questioned if this offer gets rejected and he makes a counteroffer how we go about moving if his offer is above and beyond or if his offer is good how we justify paying that amount? Autin stated every appraiser has a professional opinion. If you can get an appraiser who is qualified whether it be the appraisers we used or another qualified appraiser that he may use that we feel comfortable with, if their qualified professional opinion can justify a number that we are comfortable with that is what needs to happen to make an amicable sale work. K. Callais stated that if he comes back with a number and we don't agree because he doesn't have an appraisal to back it up, so he gets an appraiser and comes up with an amount and we agree. Why do we have to go through all this process if we end up paying a different amount that a private appraiser came up with? Is it just because we have to follow the DOTD guidelines, which Autin replied yes. Cheramie stated he is putting all personal feelings aside and doing this for the betterment of our community. Pierce said we went through the process and we are offering a fair price. Griffin stated this is a government entity and we cannot pay more than an appraisal amount.

Upon motion by Melancon to make the offer to Mr. Martin for the properties and relocation benefits, which was second by Lafont, with no public comment, the board unanimously approved to make offer.

Upon motion by Pierce second by Lafont, the board adjourned the special meeting at 11:14AM.

ATTEST:



Harris J. Cherie, Jr., President



Charles M. "Mike" Callais, Secretary