

House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works

Minutes of Meeting
2024-2025 Interim
July 10, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Ryan Bourriaque, chair of the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. in Room 3, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Ryan Bourriaque, chair
Representative Chad Michael Boyer
Representative Jacob Braud
Representative Kellee Hennessy Dickerson
Representative Bryan Fontenot, vice chair
Representative Steven Jackson
Representative Tammy T. Phelps
Representative Rodney Wayne Schamerhorn
Representative Joy Walters
Representative Jeffrey Fons "Jeff" Wiley

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Tehmi Jahi Chassion
Representative C. Travis Johnson
Representative Patricia "Pat" Moore
Representative Phillip Eric Tarver

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Allison Williams, attorney
Jennifer Winkler, legislative analyst
Darcas Deverteuil, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms

III. BUSINESS

To receive information regarding the Louisiana Transportation Infrastructure Funds from the 2024 Regular Session

Chair Bourriaque echoed the excitement that members of the legislature and citizens of the communities across Louisiana feel about the supplemental 7.5 million dollars in surplus that was appropriated by the legislature in Regular Session 2024 and given to each DOTD district to fund road maintenance projects across the state. He also clarified that there are other funding sources other than the Louisiana Transportation Infrastructure Funds.

Joe Donahue, DOTD, 1201 Capitol Access Rd., spoke for information only and elaborated that there are funds that were appropriated and that not all of those funds went to DOTD and explained how the extra money DOTD received will be tracked and spent on preservation and maintenance projects.

Barry Keeling, DOTD, 1201 Capitol Access Rd., spoke for information only and provided a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Secretary Donahue and Mr. Keeling answered questions from members of the committee as well as a few representatives that are not members on the Transportation Committee that the Chair allowed to participate in the discussion. The questions asked were related to how the surplus dollars would be spent and the guidelines for what qualified as a road transfer project under the DOTD District criteria.

Connie Porter Betts, DOTD, 1201 Capitol Access Rd., spoke for information only and answered questions from Representative Fontenot about the qualifying state highway miles that could potentially be given back to local government authorities for maintenance. She answered that she does not have that information with her at the moment but would be able to have that answer for him by the end of the meeting.

Chair Bourriaque highlighted that there were multiple ways that the supplemental funding could have been spent by the districts and suggested that a quarterly update on how the projects are moving through the process would be helpful for the committee and all members of the legislature to see the progress.

To discuss the Statewide Transportation Infrastructure Survey with the Department of Transportation and Development

Chair Bourriaque explained that this agenda item was in relation to the Transportation Infrastructure Survey that was sent by DOTD on July 3, 2025, to all members of the legislature. He asked Secretary Donahue to explain to members the purpose of the survey, what it entailed, and what members can expect as a result of the survey. The Secretary explained that the survey is a part of

the Statewide Transportation Plan that is conducted throughout the years and the answers are compared to the responses throughout the years. He then deferred to Connie Betts.

Connie Betts stated that the purpose is to gauge the legislatures' opinions on the future of the transportation network in the state. She explained that they have a 20 year horizon and clarified that the survey is conducted every 10 years and the answers from those surveys help with how the department plans for the future.

Representatives were open to highlight specific issues that they are dealing with in their districts and allowed the chance to ask the secretary/department questions. A few members both from the committee and representatives who chose to participate in the discussion took advantage of the opportunity to cover many different issues.

Jacques Berry, DOTD, no address provided, spoke for information only and answered a few questions from Representative Fontenot about grass cutting contracts in his district. To which Mr. Berry, Secretary Donahue, and Mr. Keeling all gave input on how the state deals with contractors for maintenance jobs.

Representative Fontenot suggested that the department create a portal for the public to be able to enter complaints and issues that they see in their districts and expressed his detestation for the current complaint system the department utilizes. Secretary Donahue explained that in August there should be a dashboard online that would work in the capacity of what Representative Fontenot is asking for.

A few other representatives took moments to elaborate on the issues they are facing in their districts and problems they are having with the department mainly due to the lack of communication from the department.

Chair Bourriaque expressed to Secretary Donahue that at a later time he would like to know how often the department looks at procurement for engineering and design services, and materials for projects. He expressed to the department that by doing this it could potentially help alleviate some of the cost issues and project turn-around times that members and the public have complaints about. He also suggested that it may be helpful to have a subcommittee or bridge 101 training via Zoom meeting or Teams meeting to help understand the maintenance, procurement of equipment, storing of equipment, etc. of the bridge maintenance process, to which Secretary Donahue agreed and welcomed the opportunity if they are able to make that happen.

Haylee Brown, LA DOTD, 1201 Capitol Access, spoke for information only to explain how and why the DOTD districts are labeled as they are.

Chair Bourriaque informed the department about the survey that the House Transportation staff conducted at the request of himself and Representative Fontenot, and shared the top complaints that

staff received from the House representatives that participated. He expressed his appreciation to the department for their time and openness to hear the concerns.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Schamerhorn offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 7 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bourriaque, Braud, Dickerson, Phelps, Schamerhorn, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Ryan Bourriaque
House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works

Date adopted: