

STATE OF LOUISIANA
LOUISIANA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

LOUISIANA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING,
HELD IN HOUSE COMMITTEE ROOM 2, LOUISIANA STATE
CAPITOL, 900 NORTH THIRD STREET, BATON ROUGE,
LOUISIANA, 70802 ON THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026 AT
10:30AM.

REPORTED BY:

CARLEY RACHAL MORGAN, CCR
CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER
CERTIFICATE NO. 2024012

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1 APPEARANCES:

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3 PRESENT BOARD MEMBERS:

4 CHAIRMAN - REP. RYAN BOURRIAQUE

5 SECRETARY TREASURER - SEC. GLENN P. LEDET, JR.

6 SEN. MARK ABRAHAM

7 REP. JACK MCFARLAND

8 MR. CHALIN O. "COP" PEREZ, JR.

9 SEN. JEREMY STINE

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11 PRESENT BOARD STAFF:

12 BOARD SECRETARY - CHRISTINA LEWIS, DOTD

13 BOARD ATTORNEY - MORGAN KELLEY, DOTD

14 FERRY ENGINEER - STEVEN SIBLEY, DOTD

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1 LTA Board Meeting did proceed as follows:

2 (Meeting commencing at 10:30AM.)

3 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

4 Today is Thursday, March 26th.

5 This is a meeting of the Louisiana

6 Transportation Authority. Madame

7 Secretary, please call the roll.

8 SEC. LEWIS:

9 Chairman Bourriaque.

10 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

11 Here.

12 SEC. LEWIS:

13 Senator Abraham.

14 SEN. ABRAHAM:

15 Here.

16 SEC. LEWIS:

17 Commissioner Bourriaque.

18 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

19 (No verbal response.)

20 SEC. LEWIS:

21 Mr. Johns.

22 (No verbal response.)

23 SEC. LEWIS:

24 Secretary Ledet.

25 SEC. LEDET:

1 Here.

2 SEC. LEWIS:

3 Representative McFarland.

4 REP. MCFARLAND:

5 Here.

6 SEC. LEWIS:

7 Mr. Perez.

8 SEC. PEREZ:

9 Here.

10 SEC. LEWIS:

11 Senator Stine.

12 SEN. STINE:

13 Here.

14 SEC. LEWIS:

15 Mr. Tepper.

16 (No verbal response.)

17 SEC. LEWIS:

18 With six present, we have a quorum.

19 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

20 Thank you, ma'am. Okay. We're

21 going to go ahead and get started.

22 First, I'll entertain a motion to

23 dismiss with a reading of the minutes

24 and approve from the September 10th,

25 2025 meeting. Senator Abraham has moved

1 to approve those minutes. Are there any
2 objections? Seeing none. Those minutes
3 stand approved.

4 Item number four, vote on whether
5 the Cameron Ferry Privatization
6 Proposal, from LabMar Ferry Services,
7 serves a public purpose. Please
8 introduce yourself for the record.

9 MS. KELLEY:

10 Sure. My name is Morgan Kelley,
11 I'm an innovative procurement attorney
12 for the Department of Transportation and
13 Development.

14 MR. SIBLEY:

15 I'm Steven Sibley, Ferry system
16 engineer for Louisiana Department of
17 Transportation and Development.

18 MS. KELLEY:

19 All right. Good morning. Last
20 time we met, there was an unsolicited
21 proposal from LabMar Ferry Services, LLC
22 September 10th, 2025. LTA had voted to
23 do a competitive solicitation, so we're
24 just going to fo through, like, a little
25 history, and then we'll move into the --

1 the votes and kind of next steps --
2 where we are.

3 One note -- and I know I've pushed
4 this a lot, but you guys have received
5 the proposal, both the public proposal
6 and the full proposal, and we are only
7 at liberty to discuss the public
8 proposal in this meeting.

9 Just as a note, with the purpose if
10 LTA -- can we put the slides up?

11 MR. SIBLEY:

12 Next one?

13 MS. KELLEY:

14 Yeah. Thank you. So LTA was
15 formed to promote development,
16 construction, improvement, expansion,
17 and maintenance of an efficient, safe,
18 and well-maintained intermodal
19 transportation system for Louisiana's
20 economic growth and the ability of
21 business and industry to compete in
22 regional, national, and global markets.

23 The legislature made a finding when
24 they enacted the statutes related to LTA
25 that contracting with private entities

1 for the development or operation of
2 transportation facilities, could provide
3 significant public benefit for the
4 citizens of Louisiana.

5 So that's just kind of our guiding
6 principles. Next slide?

7 MR. SIBLEY:

8 The Cameron Parish Service at
9 Calcasieu Ship Channel is currently
10 operated by the public owner, DOTD. It
11 currently operates with one end-loading
12 vessel that was built in 1964. That
13 vessel's name is The Cameron No. II.

14 While operating the Cameron No. II,
15 the ferry service has faced operation
16 challenges with reliability, and
17 consistent service, due to required
18 maintenance and dry docking of the
19 vessel, also lack of an available
20 end-loading spare boat and single
21 terminal pair as well -- as well as
22 staffing challenges.

23 MS. KELLEY:

24 Next slide. So as I mentioned,
25 last time we met, the department had

1 received an unsolicited proposal for
2 operations and maintenance of the
3 service on August 26th -- excuse me,
4 25th, 2025.

5 LTA voted to proceed with a
6 competitive solicitation. And -- we can
7 go to the next slide, I guess -- at that
8 point, DOTD did advertise on behalf of
9 LTA for a little over 90 days, actually,
10 and the solicitation period did end on
11 December 29th, 2025.

12 We did place several notices,
13 regionally and nationally, for potential
14 proposals. We've advertised -- and you
15 can look at this list -- but the
16 Register, the Cameron Pilot, St. Tammany
17 Farmer, the Baton Rouge and New Orleans
18 Advocate, and Foghorn, which is a trade
19 publication nationally.

20 We did receive two letters of
21 interest; one was from LabMar Ferry
22 Services, the unsolicited proposer, and
23 one was from an advisor, it wasn't an
24 operator. In the end, by December 29th,
25 2025, we did have just the single

1 proposer, LabMar Ferry Services, who had
2 submitted an updated proposal.

3 I will mention that LabMar -- they
4 are here today, their president and
5 their operator, so in the event you have
6 questions, they are more than willing to
7 come up.

8 They are the operator of the New
9 Orleans Ferries and they did provide
10 some statistics last September, when we
11 met, so this is just kind of a recap of
12 that. Steven, do you want to talk
13 through that one?

14 MR. SIBLEY:

15 I can. So currently, LabMar
16 operates two ferry routes in New Orleans
17 area; one between Algiers Point and
18 Canal Street, and the other between
19 Lower Algiers and Chalmette. They
20 operate three ferry vessels to operate
21 those two crossings. Two of them are
22 passenger only ferries. One is a
23 car-carrying ferry.

24 They do provide surge service, in
25 addition to their normal operating

1 service during Mardi Gras and Festivals,
2 such as Gretna Fest. They've managed
3 over 99% up time and prior to that one,
4 those vessels were operated by CCCD and
5 the prior operator, I believe, was
6 (unintelligible.)

7 It was around 80%, so they -- they
8 generally average around, almost 45,000
9 trips per year, with a little over a
10 million riders per year. And I think
11 that the number of riders since they
12 began operation, has now surpassed, I
13 think, five million.

14 MS. KELLEY:

15 Yeah. So these stats are into '24.
16 They now have their '25 stats in. Okay.
17 So what has happened since we received
18 the proposal? In January, an evaluation
19 committee of DOTD's Ferry Operations and
20 Innovative Procurement Staff did
21 evaluate the proposal against the
22 request for a competitive solicitation,
23 and we determined that it did meet, you
24 know, the requirements of selecting
25 LabMar as our preferred proposer.

1 In February, we notified LabMar
2 that it was selected as the preferred
3 proposer, which meant we could begin
4 negotiations. We did solicit input from
5 the Cameron Parish Police Jury and the
6 Cameron Port Harbor and Terminal
7 District.

8 So on February 25th, the Cameron
9 Parish Police Jury did send a letter of
10 no objection, after they had a public
11 meeting, saying that it did fit into
12 their transportation plan and there were
13 no conflicts.

14 February 26th, Steven and Anna
15 Hanks and I visited Cameron Port for
16 their board meeting where they did vote
17 to provide their mutual written
18 agreement to the idea of privatization
19 if it does go forward. And we do have
20 copies of those resolutions and letters
21 if you guys need them.

22 March 2nd, the department -- the
23 ferry staff, Op staff, innovative
24 procurement, and legal did meet as a
25 kickoff -- a formal kickoff with the

1 secretary, with LabMar, just to kind of
2 start negotiations formally.

3 On March 3rd, Secretary Ledet did
4 present at the Joint Transportation
5 Committee about Cameron Ferry and just
6 updates about the project.

7 On March 5th, Secretary Ledet did
8 visit Cameron and talk to staff, you
9 know, about the potential for
10 privatization of the service, since it
11 would affect them.

12 And then, on the 17th and 18th, the
13 House Transportation Committee and the
14 Senate Transportation Committee did hold
15 open for public comment on the potential
16 privatization of the service.

17 No public comments were received,
18 either at the Port meeting, or at the
19 House and Senate Transportation
20 Committee meetings. Next one. Okay.
21 Thank you.

22 So where are we procedurally? So
23 right now, LabMar has been sending their
24 vendors out, and their staff out, to
25 both the shipyard -- to look at our new

1 hybrid ferry boats that are coming
2 online soon -- and out to the Cameron
3 Ferry site to inspect the equipment, the
4 boat, and everything else.

5 So we're still doing final scoping
6 of, you know, LabMar responsibilities,
7 versus DOTD responsibilities, and still
8 developing cost estimates. We are
9 holding weekly internal meetings with
10 Ernst & Young, who is our financial
11 advisor, so that we can determine that
12 it is feasible or not.

13 And they are very involved with
14 LabMar in our weekly contract meetings
15 as well, which began last week. DOTD HR
16 does have a role in this because, you
17 know, they're conferring with civil
18 service for the potential, if we did
19 have to do any kind of adjustments with
20 the staffing. And that's it.

21 Okay. So this -- unless there are
22 any questions, you want me to pause for
23 a minute, because I know I ramble --

24 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

25 Before we move to the action items,

1 I, again, want to put on the record that
2 throughout this entire process, I want
3 to thank the secretary and the
4 department for bringing themselves and
5 making themselves available to the staff
6 in Cameron, who had been charged with
7 maintaining this thing for -- for quite
8 some time now, and we have a great team
9 of individuals who have been dedicated
10 to this infrastructure.

11 Residents, they -- they are from
12 there, and -- so this entire process,
13 from day one, for me, has not been an
14 indication of a lack of performance
15 on -- on their part, in any way, shape,
16 form, or fashion. It's -- it's -- we're
17 getting to a point where reliability has
18 become a problem and we have, you know,
19 just not a lot of alternative options
20 for a two and a half hour alternate
21 route, when there is a -- when there is
22 a closure.

23 So I just wanted to put that on the
24 record. I appreciate seeing the
25 closures -- the percentages from 99, you

1 know, at 99.6% -- I don't even know how
2 that's possible. Somebody's got to
3 sleep at some point. Apparently, y'all
4 don't. Congrats.

5 But -- but to see those data
6 points, I think have been critically
7 important to us. We referenced the HR,
8 I know staff was present in Cameron when
9 we met back in March, and -- so I think,
10 you know, throughout this process, as
11 things are being negotiated, I want us
12 to be cognizant of the fact that these
13 individuals have put, in some instances,
14 thirty years worth of effort, blood,
15 sweat, and tears into this service to
16 the parish and to the region.

17 Senator Abraham?

18 SEN. ABRAHAM:

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just
20 have a couple of, I guess, procedural
21 questions, you might say. So was the
22 department wanting to do a solicited
23 proposal before LabMar sent their
24 unsolicited proposal?

25 MS. KELLEY:

1 I think the department knew that
2 they -- you know, that there were some
3 reliability issues and that that would
4 be worth exploring. I don't know that
5 we affirmatively or definitively were
6 planing that --

7 SEN. ABRAHAM:

8 I'm just wondering if the
9 unsolicited proposal triggered the
10 department to have a regular proposal, I
11 guess is my --

12 MR. SIBLEY:

13 That is correct.

14 SEN. ABRAHAM:

15 Okay. Was the unsolicited proposal
16 any different than the one that was
17 solicited?

18 MS. KELLEY:

19 The one that LabMar submitted as
20 its amended proposal was really the same
21 proposal, it just had an addendum that
22 said if we needed to do a fixed-price
23 agreement, they would be willing to do
24 that.

25 SEN. ABRAHAM:

1 Okay.

2 MS. KELLEY:

3 So essentially, it was the same --

4 SEN. ABRAHAM:

5 And I guess, could the state have
6 accepted and unsolicited proposal
7 without going to the next step of
8 soliciting? Just out of curiosity,
9 could we have done that?

10 MS. KELLEY:

11 So the department itself can't
12 accept unsolicited proposals, LTA can.
13 But in the statute for LTA, we are
14 obligated to do a 90-day competitive
15 period before we make a selection, after
16 which, we do have some flexibility with
17 negotiating.

18 SEN. ABRAHAM:

19 Yeah. Okay. I don't know -- it's
20 a good deal. I'm just trying to
21 understand how it all came about.
22 Usually, and I'm not an expert on
23 proposals, but unsolicited proposals a
24 lot of times come -- come in when they
25 solicit because they didn't get invited

1 and -- and so they've put in there, but
2 to do it ahead of time, I -- that was
3 kind of -- that was kind of interesting
4 how that came about. Okay. Thank you,
5 Mr. Chairman.

6 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

7 Thank you, Senator Abraham. And --
8 and to provide a little color to -- to
9 your question, in a previous life, before
10 the legislature, we -- I dealt with this
11 issue on -- on a very personal level.
12 And I believe it was 2012 or '13 where
13 we had a significant amount of closure.
14 We had one vessel dry -- No. II was dry
15 docked, and we couldn't find -- what we
16 have now is the Acadia and the
17 St. Francisville, I believe. Are those
18 the two? Or the Plaquemine Ferry --
19 there was an effort to identify and move
20 a temporary ferry.

21 So there was a period of time where
22 there was no vessel at all, traversing
23 the ship channel. In 2017, the parish
24 pursued a BUILD grant to try to identify
25 some grant funds -- federal grant funds

1 -- to assist with the offset and cost of
2 a new vessel. We were not fortunate to
3 -- receive any funding through that
4 process, but through the legislative
5 process, we used the same BUILD grant
6 application -- it was 20 something pages
7 -- and we handed it over to members at
8 the time who were moving infrastructure
9 bills through the process, and we were
10 fortunate enough to get some funding.

11 And -- so to me, we -- we have
12 spent some time working through this
13 issue and trying to identify the best
14 way to move forward.

15 Secretary Ledet?

16 SEC. LEDET:

17 Yes, thank you, Chairman. Yeah, I
18 wanted to really echo the chairman's
19 comments and commend the staff for all
20 their hard work over the last several
21 years. I know we had a chance to meet
22 with them twice since I've been here.
23 Really good dialogue with them and the
24 challenges that they're going through
25 and certainly, the service challenges

1 with the equipment that they have, it's
2 certainly evident, but they've done a
3 phenomenal job just as you indicated.

4 Just also want to commend the
5 staff; Ms. Morgan, Mr. Sibley, the folks
6 that are here from DOTD have done a
7 great job working through this process
8 as we received that unsolicited
9 proposal, going through that competitive
10 solicitation, and making sure that all
11 of the various aspects of this were done
12 properly. And -- so thank you for those
13 efforts.

14 And then finally, we did have good
15 dialogue with LabMar when we had our
16 kickoff, and -- so -- excited to
17 continue those discussions.

18 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

19 Thank you, sir. Okay. The board
20 is clear. What's the pleasure of the
21 committee?

22 SEN. ABRAHAM:

23 Make a motion.

24 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

25 Senator Abraham has moved to --

1 MS. KELLEY:

2 I don't think we're ready for a
3 vote just yet.

4 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

5 Oh, we're not?

6 MS. KELLEY:

7 Not -- we're going to --

8 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

9 Oh.

10 MS. KELLEY:

11 -- for the action items for -- for
12 you next. We can, but if you want --

13 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

14 Okay. Go ahead.

15 MS. KELLEY:

16 -- an explanation -- okay. So the
17 first agenda item that is ready for a
18 vote would be the discussion of whether
19 or not this privatization would serve a
20 public purpose. We are required by the
21 LTA statutes to make that determination
22 and there are four factors. Before I
23 get into that, Steven's kind of going to
24 give a rundown of what our expectation,
25 as to the scope of this would be, should

1 we have an agreement executed.

2 MR. SIBLEY:

3 Yes. Thank you, Morgan. So should
4 we execute an agreement with LabMar
5 operations for the Cameron Ferry
6 Service, subject to final terms of an
7 executed agreement, we generally expect
8 to be -- them to be responsible for the
9 full scope of ferry operations and
10 associated functions necessary to
11 support the continuous service to the
12 traveling public.

13 Some of those specific things are,
14 but are not limited to vessel operations
15 and crew management, maintenance, and
16 oversight of facilities, grounds,
17 subleases, and associated
18 infrastructure, inspection, maintenance
19 and repair of the landings and aprons,
20 coordination of communications,
21 including press releases and service
22 notifications, coordination of the dry
23 docking -- this is for the vessels and
24 other certifications required of the
25 vessels to operate, whether that be

1 through the department or USCG or other
2 marine contractors -- management of any
3 operational maintenance or emergency
4 activity required to assure reliable
5 service.

6 MS. KELLEY:

7 Yeah. So just a broad overview, of
8 what the -- the contract would involve.
9 Like I mentioned, our LTA statutes do
10 require that the board find that this
11 would serve a public purpose. So we
12 know that the transportation facility
13 itself, because it's currently in
14 service, does serve a public purpose.

15 So our question is, does the
16 privatization -- would it serve a public
17 purpose? So there are four factors in
18 the LTA statutes that -- that can be
19 considered. None of them is fatal if
20 they're not found, but we wanted to go
21 through all four.

22 So it says, "The authorities shall
23 consider the following factors to
24 determine if a private entity proposal
25 serves a public service."

1 One, there is a public need for a
2 transportation facility of the type that
3 the private entity proposes to develop
4 or operate, as a transportation
5 facility.

6 Two, the transportation facility
7 and the proposed interconnections with
8 existing transportation facilities are
9 reasonable and not incompatible with the
10 state's transportation plan, or with the
11 local government entities comprehensive
12 plan.

13 As I mentioned, we did get a letter
14 of no objection for Cameron Parish
15 Police Jury saying that there was no
16 conflict there.

17 The third factor is, estimated cost
18 of the transportation facilities is
19 reasonable in relation to other similar
20 facilities. And four, the private
21 entity's proposal will result in the
22 timely development or more efficient
23 operation of the transportation
24 facility.

25 Last slide on this little section,

1 I just wanted to, kind of, give a quick
2 statement that LabMar included in their
3 proposal, and gave me permission to
4 share, on the public purpose of the
5 ferry service.

6 It says, "This ferry crossing
7 serves to connect the towns of Cameron
8 to Holly Beach and will provide a vital
9 link to the citizens of the area.

10 Furthermore, essential parish services
11 play a vital role in executing civic
12 functions" -- I know it's tiny, I'm
13 sorry. We didn't have a word document,
14 but I can read it.

15 -- "executing civic functions as
16 needed, and may require use of the ferry
17 system. The rapid growth of industry in
18 the area has blossomed in recent years
19 and further demonstrates the need for a
20 reliable transportation system to serve
21 the citizens and the industry. It is
22 our goal to achieve a best-in-class
23 reliability greater than 99% uptime of
24 this ferry service to serve the people
25 in Cameron Parish. Cameron, Louisiana

1 is one of the capitals of LNG
2 infrastructure in the United States."

3 Liquified Natural Gas. "The route
4 is vital to these energy development
5 programs, which supply the world with
6 natural gas from the United States. In
7 addition, the route plays a vital role
8 in allowing emergency services to work
9 timely in and around the area. Industry
10 deserves a reliable service, given the
11 impact it has on the surrounding area
12 and our country. LabMar Ferry Services
13 is a Louisiana owned and operated
14 company. We are 100% invested in the
15 success of our Louisiana residents and
16 business owners. This route serves to
17 assist residents and workers with a
18 vital hurricane evacuation route, and
19 post-hurricane recovery efforts."

20 So I just wanted to include that
21 because it was a good statement about
22 public purpose.

23 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

24 So -- so I would also add that this
25 crossing is -- finds itself in the

1 middle of the creole nature trail, which
2 is a nature base in ecotourism --
3 attraction for the region, the state,
4 and the country for that matter.

5 We also have seen in weather events
6 in the past, when interstate-10 has been
7 closed due to flooding of I-10. We
8 actually redirected folks to utilize
9 Highway 27, 82, and the Cameron Ferry to
10 get from Houston to Fourchon Parish and
11 New Orleans. And -- so we have -- I
12 know it doesn't make sense, but the
13 Cameron ferry has been a natural
14 disaster evacuation route already.

15 Senator Abraham?

16 SEN. ABRAHAM:

17 Yes, so I guess I can remake my
18 motion. So I guess what I'm seeing here
19 is, we have to vote on that language on
20 section ten, as public purpose?

21 MS. KELLEY:

22 Yes, sir. Basically, the totality
23 of all four of those factors. Do you
24 find the privatization would serve a
25 public purpose?

1 SEN. ABRAHAM:

2 But it has to reference what you
3 just read a while ago; is that correct
4 or no?

5 MS. KELLEY:

6 Those are factors you shall
7 consider, you can certainly consider
8 other factors.

9 SEN. ABRAHAM:

10 Okay. I didn't know if that had to
11 be as -- what we were voting on. I know
12 we were voting on public purpose, but --

13 MS. KELLEY:

14 Yes, sir.

15 SEN. ABRAHAM:

16 -- I didn't know if that particular
17 language had to be the language that
18 we're voting on.

19 MS. KELLEY:

20 Oh, no.

21 SEN. ABRAHAM:

22 Yeah, on the motions. I don't
23 know. Okay.

24 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

25 Okay. Thank you, sir. Senator

1 Abraham has moved to certify, accept
2 that the privatization proposal does
3 serve a public purpose. Is that --

4 SEC. LEDET:

5 I second that.

6 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

7 Seconded by Secretary Ledet. Are
8 there any objections? Seeing none, that
9 motion stands adopted. Next item.

10 MS. KELLEY:

11 So the next agenda item that we'll
12 eventually -- do we need to hold this
13 open for public comment before the vote,
14 Christina? The vote just now?

15 SEC. LEWIS:

16 (No verbal response.)

17 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

18 Just to make sure anyone in the
19 public -- just fill out a comment card
20 if you do.

21 MS. KELLEY:

22 Thank you. So the next agenda item
23 that will be for a vote and discussion
24 is, whether or not the board would vote
25 to approve the proposal to privatize the

1 service.

2 This would not be -- mean that we
3 were definitely going to have an
4 agreement that gets executed. It is the
5 board saying, "Yes, we approve the idea
6 of the proposal, contingent upon the
7 department signing an executed agreement
8 with the proposer."

9 So I'll kind of go through that on
10 these next few slides. So this is
11 straight from the statute. It says,
12 "Prior to the award of an agreement, and
13 execution of the agreement with LabMar,
14 LTA must consider, hold public comment,
15 and vote on whether to approve the
16 proposal contingent on execution of the
17 agreement."

18 I'll just go ahead and read the
19 quick little sentence. "Approval by the
20 authority shall be subject to the
21 private entities entering into a
22 comprehensive agreement with the
23 authority."

24 So we can take the vote. You would
25 have the option, if you wanted it, for

1 us to come back, but while we have a
2 final version of the agreement, so that
3 you can vote on that. That is not
4 legally required. All that's required,
5 legally, is that you take this
6 particular vote to approve the proposal,
7 subject to execution of the agreement.

8 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

9 Okay. So -- I'm just going to go
10 back in my notes instead of turning the
11 PowerPoint back. The slide with the
12 public purpose, where it referenced what
13 would be potentially included in the
14 agreement; the operations, the crew,
15 facilities, the grounds, communication
16 of downtime -- or lack thereof,
17 apparently.

18 I would like to see communication
19 of 99.6% running rate. To me, it's just
20 my opinion, even though it's not legally
21 required, it seems like this firm has
22 proven that they are very efficient at
23 handling their business.

24 I think we have items that we all,
25 collectively, have been focused on.

1 When it comes to terms of the agreement,
2 you know, positions and staffing, and
3 fare rates, and what do we do with
4 No. II, and what are our -- what are our
5 evacuation plans.

6 Things of that sort that I have
7 full confidence in the department and
8 LabMar to negotiate those terms, I don't
9 necessarily think it hurts us to -- to
10 have a meeting, when it's timely, to
11 walk through those items. I think -- I
12 think that's fair for everybody
13 involved. That's just my opinion,
14 though. Mr. Secretary?

15 SEC. LEDET:

16 Yes, Mr. Chairman, we would agree;
17 we would be happy to obviously come back
18 and share that draft -- the draft final
19 agreement with the LTA board, prior to
20 execution.

21 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

22 Thank you, sir.

23 MS. KELLEY:

24 Okay. So do we need to hold
25 public --

1 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

2 Do we have any public comment on
3 this item?

4 (No comments.)

5 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

6 Okay. Do we have a Motion?

7 SEN. ABRAHAM:

8 Yeah. I'll make a motion to
9 approve the proposal on the condition
10 that we would come back with final
11 numbers. Oh, I guess I can't -- I
12 wasn't -- so I'll make a motion that we
13 approve the proposal, based on the
14 condition that they will come back with
15 final numbers.

16 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

17 Senator has moved to approve the
18 proposal, contingent on the
19 comprehensive agreement. Are there any
20 objections? Seeing none, that stands
21 approved.

22 MS. KELLEY:

23 And I will point out that the
24 resolution that we have for you to sign
25 does, specifically, reserve the right

1 for LTA.

2 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

3 Thank you.

4 MS. KELLEY:

5 So then we're going to discuss next
6 steps after this meeting.

7 MR. SIBLEY:

8 All right. So some of the next
9 steps, over the course of the summer of
10 this year, DOTD anticipates that
11 contract negotiation will continue
12 through spring and the early summer and
13 that a transition period would occur
14 through the summer of '26, and that full
15 operations by LabMar would begin in late
16 summer, should an agreement be reached
17 and sufficient funding be secured.

18 The two new hybrid boats that are
19 currently under construction -- the
20 Motor Vessel, Holly Beach and the Motor
21 Vessel, Cameron are projected to be
22 delivered. The first one, the Holly
23 Beach, in May, and the second one in
24 August.

25 The temporary dock space that we've

1 secured -- excuse me -- is located about
2 1200 yards north of the Cameron landing
3 on the east bank. And we have
4 sufficient dock space there to dock two
5 of the vessels.

6 The department's currently -- is
7 also currently in discussions with Port
8 of Cameron to try to secure additional
9 alternate storage sites nearby to the
10 landing, to utilize during or after the
11 Venture Global lease ends. The site
12 improvements are currently being
13 executed to include things like security
14 fencing, installation of shore power to
15 power the vessels while they're docked
16 there.

17 The east terminal apron span was
18 recently replaced in 2025, along with
19 entirely new fender systems, both on the
20 east bank and the west bank, leading
21 into the slips. The training on the
22 vessels is included in the project and
23 in that project delivery timeline, as
24 well. And the department is working to
25 include LabMar staff in those training

1 sessions, so that they can -- their
2 crews can also be familiar with those
3 systems.

4 So the -- the department also
5 recently completed a stage zero
6 feasibility study for expansion of the
7 terminal facilities. You may recall
8 earlier, one of the issues was
9 reliability that we have experienced
10 over time. It's that single pair of
11 terminals giving us just a single place
12 to dock.

13 So if the terminal structure breaks
14 down for some reason, then no number of
15 end-loading ferry boats will service the
16 crossing. So in this feasibility study,
17 we looked at adding two new landing
18 slips and updating the current landing
19 slips for storage of vessels and to
20 provide back-up slips, should we have a
21 problem with one of the others.

22 Three alternatives were provided in
23 that feasibility study and those cost
24 estimates for construction on those
25 ranged between 30 and \$50 million.

1 Currently, the DOTD ferry program, both
2 state and federal sources of funding are
3 not sufficiently -- are not sufficient
4 to support that scale of a project.

5 The -- I think we already have
6 mentioned that Secretary Ledet has met
7 twice with our staff to keep them
8 updated on the current status of this
9 proposal and potential contracts, and
10 the timeline that that would follow
11 along. And we have both headquarters
12 and district staff who are keeping crews
13 up to date and responding to any
14 questions that they may come up with.

15 LabMar has committed to
16 transitioning current DOTD staff at a
17 competitive market rate, should the
18 privatization take place. And DOTD is
19 closely following the project's progress
20 and conferring with civil service on an
21 ongoing basis. A tentative staff plan
22 is expected to be presented to the Civil
23 Service Commission at their May 6,
24 meeting.

25 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

1 Thank you for that. The Holly
2 Beach, when is that one -- is that the
3 first one --

4 MR. SIBLEY:

5 Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

7 -- scheduled? And that's going to
8 be delivered --

9 MR. SIBLEY:

10 In -- what did I say?

11 MS. KELLEY:

12 May.

13 MR. SIBLEY:

14 May.

15 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

16 I just wanted to hear it one more
17 time. Of 2026?

18 MR. SIBLEY:

19 2026, yeah.

20 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

21 Let me clarify. May of 2026?

22 MR. SIBLEY:

23 Yes, sir.

24 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

25 Okay.

1 MS. KELLEY:

2 The picture on your questions --

3 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

4 I hope the court reporter got that.
5 Also, the -- we're fortunate enough to
6 have the -- the chairman of house
7 appropriations here, so it's interesting
8 that we mentioned "not funded
9 sufficiently." But -- but what we'll do
10 is -- he has been gracious enough to
11 this point, so this is not an ask or
12 trying to put an undue burden, but to
13 help me and -- and Senator Abraham
14 develop a good justification to, at
15 least, maybe schedule some of these
16 expenditures.

17 If we could -- if we could get an
18 idea -- I know we don't need 30 million
19 today, but if we could get an idea of
20 what scopes of work could be pursued, in
21 what fiscal year, no matter if it takes
22 six, seven fiscal years -- whatever it
23 is.

24 If we could get a plan of action
25 on, you know, the scope and the budget

1 needs for this activity, I would be very
2 interested in -- in understanding that.
3 I think it would be helpful. Because we
4 don't want to ask for more than what we
5 can spend, most certainly. Okay. Any
6 other questions?

7 Chairman McFarland?

8 REP. MCFARLAND:

9 No.

10 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

11 Okay. Thank you. I took some
12 notes for you. Okay. Any other
13 discussion?

14 SEN. ABRAHAM:

15 I've got one more question.

16 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

17 Senator.

18 SEN. ABRAHAM:

19 On y'all's next steps talking about
20 the money with y'all's alternatives,
21 when -- when do you think that would be
22 needed? Did they -- did they comment on
23 that, the timeframe of that?

24 MR. SIBLEY:

25 They're going to get us -- they're

1 going to get back with us on all that.

2 SEN. ABRAHAM:

3 But just ballparking right now,
4 what do you -- I know they're going to
5 get back, but I'm just kind of curious
6 on what you think.

7 MR. SIBLEY:

8 My estimate is that design, once
9 that's started, would probably take, at
10 least, a year and a half to two years.
11 For a ferry landing, particularly
12 dealing with permitting, you would have
13 to dredge new slips, so some of the
14 permitting may take some time.

15 SEN. ABRAHAM:

16 Yeah. Yeah. I figured it'd be a
17 few years. I just --

18 MR. SIBLEY:

19 Yeah. The construction timeline --
20 that -- those were included in the
21 estimates, and I'm sorry, I didn't bring
22 that with me.

23 SEN. ABRAHAM:

24 That's all. I just wanted a
25 general idea, that was it. Okay. Thank

1 you. Appreciate it.

2 MR. SIBLEY:

3 We will follow up with a more
4 detailed plan of action.

5 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

6 Chairman McFarland?

7 REP. MCFARLAND:

8 And would you be able to spend that
9 much in one year?

10 MR. SIBLEY:

11 No.

12 REP. MCFARLAND:

13 Okay. So it would be a multi-year
14 phasing of the construction? Okay.

15 That's it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 CHAIRMAN BOURRIAQUE:

17 Okay. The board is clear. Any
18 other comments? That's not required,
19 but if anyone from the board would have
20 anything to add -- they waive. Smart
21 move. I move that we adjourn. Thank
22 you. Thank you, staff.

23 (Meeting adjourned at 11:07AM.)

24 * * * * *

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