

**PABI General Membership Luncheon
November 20, 2013
Woodland Plantation**

The November 2013 PABI General Membership Luncheon was held at Woodland Plantation. The keynote speaker was Mr. Jeff Roesel, Deputy Director of the Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Roesel spoke on the roles of the RPC as well as the progress of local projects. The RPC is a six parish board with thirty one members. Transportation is the primary goal. The RPC prioritizes projects and works together to discuss regional issues. Mr. Roesel stated that the RPC works closely with LA DOTD. Ongoing projects being handled by the RPC are the Plaquemines Parish ferry system, Westbank railroad relocation, and the Brownfield project which involves Jefferson Lake Canal and Freeport McMoRan. Mr. Roesel mentioned the the RPC has obligated funds to the raising of Hwy 23 varying from 6" to 2' in Myrtle Grove as well as the emergency dredging of the locks at Empire. Current efforts include Peters Road Phase 1 to be completed in early 2014, widening of Hwy 23 between LaPalco Blvd. and Engineers Road which is 100% funded with final plans to be given to DOTD by July 2014 with completion in 18 months following, widening of the roadway at Hwy 23 and Woodland Hwy in which a draft of an environmental assessment has been given to DOTD and is two to three years out depending on funding and another one to two years of construction, and the Belle Chasse Tunnel/Bridge project in which the idea is to abandon the tunnel and replace both with a 100' fixed bridge or 60' or 70' movable bridge. Mr. Roesel commented that they are also considering the idea of a 73' fixed bridge. The project is six months away from final environmental assessment. There would be four to six years of pre-construction and two to three years of construction.



Photos by Zu Carpenter Photography