

BOSSIER PARISH POLICE JURY
POLICY AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
Mr. Doug Rimmer, Chairman
April 3, 2024

The Policy and Procedures Committee of the Bossier Parish Police Jury met on this 3rd day of April, 2024, at 12:00 p.m., in the Police Jury Conference Room, Bossier Parish Courthouse, Benton, Louisiana. Mr. Doug Rimmer, Chairman, called the meeting to order, with the following members present:

Mr. Doug Rimmer, Chairman, Mr. Glenn Benton, Mr. Bob Brotherton, Mr. Jimmy Cochran, Mr. Julian Darby, Ms. Pam Glorioso, Mr. John Ed Jorden, Mr. Chris Marsiglia, Ms. Julianna Parks, Mr. Philip Rodgers, Mr. Tom Salzer, and Mr. Keith Sutton

Others present for the meeting:

Mr. Bobby Edmiston
Ms. Ashley Ezell
Ms. Stacie Fernandez
Mr. Butch Ford
Ms. Julie Gill
Ms. Monica Grappe
Ms. Rachal Graves

Mr. Eric Hudson
Mr. Patrick Jackson
Mr. Sam Marsiglia
Ms. Megan Ramos
Mr. Scott Stephens
Mr. Rod White
Ms. Lisa Wilson

Mr. Doug Rimmer, Chairman, called the meeting to order. Mr. Butch Ford, Parish Administrator, stated that Mr. Bobby Edmiston, Bossier Parish Tax Assessor, is present today with information about Act 179. He stated that the parish has received requests from the public concerning eligibility and status of the first responder tax exemption provided in Act 179. Mr. Edmiston provided documents relating to Act 179, current exemptions in the state of Louisiana, and gave an explanation on how property tax millages are determined and collected. He further stated that Act 179 defines two separate Qualified First Responders, being volunteer firefighters and first responders, and provides for specific conditions which must be met for each to qualify for this new tax exemption if approved by the police jury. Mr. Edmiston stated that any tax exemption given to a certain group does not mean that the taxes are not collected but would instead be transferred to the remaining taxpayers to make up the difference. He further stated that property tax millages establish the amount that each taxing entity needs to operate, and that amount must be collected in total, regardless of what exemptions are claimed by taxpayers. Mr. Edmiston stated that during reassessment years, the millage rates may increase or decrease to collect the same amount of money necessary for operation. Mr. Philip Rodgers clarified that if the police jury

authorizes this exemption, the parish would not be taking that money out of its budget, but instead collecting the difference from the remaining taxpayers. Mr. Edmiston stated that is exactly what would happen, the difference would have to come from the remaining property owners in the parish who do not qualify for the exemption.

Mr. Jackson stated that many jurors have called him to discuss this potential exemption. He further stated that Bossier Parish voters approved this exemption in the election, and some of the jurors have felt pressure to approve this exemption for the first responders because of that. Mr. Jackson asked Mr. Edmiston to explain to the jurors that a possible result of approving this exemption could lead to an argument that the police jury is increasing taxes on the rest of the taxpaying citizens of the parish. Mr. Edmiston stated that the parish would absolutely be increasing the taxes on every other taxpayer, because the total amount received does not change regardless of exemptions given. Mr. Tom Salzer stated that he feels if the voters had been made aware of how property tax millages and exemptions operate, they would not have voted for this exemption. He further stated that some may have the opinion that if the parish does not approve this exemption they are going against the will of the people. Mr. Salzer stated that part of a juror's duty is to help educate constituents on the details of how Act 179 will affect them.

There was discussion of having the Policy and Procedures Committee further review this matter next month, and placing Mr. Bobby Edmiston, Tax Assessor, on the regular meeting agenda for discussion and further explanation of the outcomes of adopting the exemption provided by Act 179.

Mr. Ford provided copies of a proposed ordinance providing for the observation of Juneteenth on the parish calendar. He stated that during budget discussions when the holiday was granted, it was adopted as June 19th. Mr. Ford further stated that this is a moving date each year, and the draft ordinance presented today adopts the state of Louisiana language which designates the holiday as the third Saturday of June. He stated that the proposed ordinance provides that the holiday will be observed by the parish on the third Friday of June each year. Mr. Jackson stated that the parish is the authority on closing the courthouse for holidays; however, if a parish holiday is observed on a date separate from the state, it can result in multiple closures of offices located in the courthouse. He further stated that this will allow the parish to match the state's language going forward to avoid any double closings of offices for the Juneteenth holiday.

Mr. Jackson stated that there are separate rules for Sunday sales of beer and spirits in the parish, each pertaining to a certain type of business whether it's a restaurant, bar, marina and package sales. He further stated that these rules apply in the unincorporated areas of the parish, and outside of wards with existing regulations in place. There was discussion of what is allowed for the sale of beer and spirits on Sunday, and on the matter of special event permits approved by the police jury in the past which allow a bar to operate on a Sunday for things such as super bowl parties. The committee discussed putting this matter back on the committee agenda for a May meeting to discuss it further and make a recommendation.

This concluded the meeting of the Policy and Procedures Committee Meeting. The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 12:44 p.m.

MEGAN C. RAMOS
INTERIM PARISH SECRETARY

DOUG RIMMER, CHAIRMAN
BOSSIER PARISH POLICE JURY