

House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs

Minutes of Meeting
2025 Regular Session
June 4, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Foy Bryan Gadberry, chair of the House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs, called the meeting to order at 9:14 a.m. in Room 6, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Foy Bryan Gadberry, chair
Representative Michael Robert "Mike" Bayham, Jr.
Representative Beth Anne Billings
Representative Kim Carver
Representative Vincent E. Cox, III
Representative Jessica Domangue
Representative Les Farnum
Representative Barbara Reich Freiberg, vice chair
Representative Steven Jackson
Representative Alonzo L. Knox
Representative Rodney Lyons
Representative C. Denise Marcelle
Representative Patricia "Pat" Moore
Representative Candace N. Newell
Representative Joseph A. Stagni
Representative Matthew Willard

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Bryan Fontenot
Representative Charles Anthony Owen
Representative Rashid Armand Young

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tina Righteous, attorney
Blake Byrom, legislative analyst
Natayveon Howard-Williams, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Frank Meyer IV, clerk
Ralph Palmer, sergeant at arms
Janet Anthony, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION

Senate Bill No. 191 by Senator Edmonds

Senator Edmonds presented Senate Bill No. 191, which provides for the composition of the board of commissioners of the St. George Fire Protection District.

Representative Marcelle offered amendments to:

1. Reduce the number of commissioners appointed by the St. George City Council to the St. George Fire Protection District from three to two.
2. Increase the number of commissioners appointed by the East Baton Rouge Metropolitan Council to the St. George Fire Protection District from one to two.
3. Require all members of the St. George Fire Protection District to reside within the boundaries of the district and require the member appointed by the St. George City Council to also reside within the city of St. George.

Representative Marcelle offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments, to which Representative Bayham objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the amendments were adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 3 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Newell, and Willard voted yea. Representatives Bayham, Farnum, and Stagni voted nay.

Representative Lyons offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 191 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 191 was reported with amendments by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Newell, Stagni, and Willard voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 4 in support, and 6 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 236 by Senator Edmonds

Senator Edmonds presented Senate Bill No. 236, which provides for the demolition or removal of dilapidated and dangerous buildings or structures by the governing authority of a parish or municipality.

Charlie Davis, Office of Mayor President Sid Edwards, 222 Saint Louis Street, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 236 and provided two handouts entitled "Clearing Baton Rouge's Blight Bottleneck", which is included as Exhibit A in the committee records, and "Condemnation Process", which is included as Exhibit B in the committee records.

Dario Scalco, Baton Rouge Area Chamber, 564 Laurel Street, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 236.

Rachael Lambert, City Parish of East Baton Rouge/Department of Development, 222 Saint Louis Street, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 236.

Representative Gadberry offered amendments to:

1. Grant parishes and municipalities the authority to empower hearing officers in administrative procedures to condemn property determined to be blighted or abandoned and authorize the parish or municipality to demolish the blighted or abandoned property.
2. Remove provisions that, in the city of Baton Rouge, parish of East Baton Rouge, the governing authority shall be the administrative court established by ordinance and instead provide that the hearing officer appointed pursuant to present law (R.S. 13:2575 and 2576) shall determine condemnations.

Representative Gadberry offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Willard voted yea.

Vice Chair Freiberg in the chair.

Representative Newell offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 236 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 236 was reported with amendments by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Willard voted yeas.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 6 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 113 by Senator Seabaugh

Senator Seabaugh presented Senate Bill No. 113, which provides for term limits and qualifications for the DeSoto Parish Police Jury.

Chance McNeely, Desoto Parish Police Jury, 415 Texas Street, Shreveport, LA 71101, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 113.

Guy Cormier, Police Jury Association of Louisiana, 707 North 7th Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 113.

Representative Farnum offered amendments that remove specified election date and provided that the limit on the number of terms a police juror in DeSoto Parish may serve shall be subject to approval by a majority of electors voting at an election held for that purpose in accordance with the Louisiana Election Code.

Representative Farnum offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, and Stagni voted yeas.

Representative Farnum offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 113 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 113 was reported with amendments by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, and Stagni voted yeas.

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 62 by Senator Barrow

On behalf of Senator Barrow, Representative Marcelle presented Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 62, which creates a statewide task force to study and make recommendations on implementing a comprehensive plan to address property blight within the state.

Representative Jackson offered a motion to report Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 62 favorably. Without objection, Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 62 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, and Stagni voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 2 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 164 by Senator Womack

Senator Womack presented Senate Bill No. 164, which provides for training of elected officials of municipalities and certain municipal employees relative to public contracts.

Representative Jackson offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 164 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 164 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, and Stagni voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 4 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 204 by Senator Carter

Senator Carter presented Senate Bill No. 204, which provides for the board of commissioners of the Algiers Development District.

Representative Knox offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 204 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 204 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, and Stagni voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 2 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 220 by Senator Cathey

Senator Cathey presented Senate Bill No. 220, which provides for the revision of statutes relating to local agencies.

Debbie Henton, Police Jury Association of Louisiana, 707 North 7th Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 220.

Representative Newell offered amendments that provided that the revenue generated within Orleans Parish outside of a school zone shall only be used for the purposes of stormwater drainage infrastructure, maintenance, and improvements.

Representative Newell offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, and Stagni voted yea.

Representative Cox offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 220 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 220 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, and Stagni voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 5 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 212 by Senator McMath

On behalf of Senator McMath, Representative Carver presented Senate Bill No. 212, which provides for energy efficiency contracts.

Representative Carver provided a handout entitled "Energy Savings Performance Contracting (ESPC)", which is included as Exhibit C in the committee records.

Representative Knox offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 212 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 212 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, and Stagni voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 3 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 239 by Senator McMath

On behalf of Senator McMath, Representative Carver presented Senate Bill No. 239, which provides for the St. Tammany Parish Development District.

Chris Masingill, Saint Tammany Economic Development Corporation, 1001 Highway 190 East Service Road, Livingston, LA 70433, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 239.

Representative Carver offered amendments that:

1. Added a member to the nominating committee who is a member of the St. Tammany Parish Council selected by the council chairman.
2. Prohibited the regional board or commission member and the selected council member from serving for more than two consecutive years.

Representative Carver offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Lyons, Moore, Newell, and Stagni voted yea.

Representative Domangue offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 239 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 239 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, and Stagni voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 2 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 189 by Senator Jenkins

Senator Jenkins presented Senate Bill No. 189, which provides for creation of the State Land Banking Authority Act.

Representative Jackson offered amendments to make technical changes.

Representative Jackson offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, and Stagni voted yea.

Representative Jackson offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 189 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 189 was reported with amendments by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Cox, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, and Stagni voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 3 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 195 by Senator Harris

On behalf of Senator Harris, Representative Knox presented Senate Bill No. 195, which provides for the French Quarter Management District.

Representative Newell offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 195 favorably. No vote was taken.

Representative Knox offered amendments that:

1. Authorized the district to enter into an emergency contract for sanitation services if the city is not able to provide services at a level reasonably commensurate with historic practices.
2. Required the city to reimburse the district for sanitation services pursuant to an intergovernmental transfer of funds, provided that the reimbursement is authorized and allocated by a budget ordinance adopted by the governing authority of Orleans Parish.

Representative Knox offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Cox, Domangue, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Willard voted yea.

Representative Newell withdrew her motion to report Senate Bill No. 195 favorably.

Representative Newell offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 195 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 195 was reported with amendments by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Cox, Domangue, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Willard voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 7 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 203 by Senator Harris

On behalf of Senator Harris, Representative Knox presented Senate Bill No. 203, which provides for the levy of hotel assessments in Orleans Parish.

Kevin Ferguson, New Orleans and Company, 2020 Saint Charles Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70130, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 203.

Representative Newell offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 203 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 203 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Cox, Domangue, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Willard voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 5 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 143 by Senator Hensgens

On behalf of Senator Hensgens, Representative Stagni presented Senate Bill No. 143, which provides for the terms of office for certain members of the Vermilion Parish Hospital Service Districts No. 1 and No. 2.

Representative Willard offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 143 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 143 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Cox, Domangue, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Willard voted yea.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billings, Cox, Domangue, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Willard voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Foy Bryan Gadberry
House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs

Date adopted: