

House Committee on Appropriations

Minutes of Meeting
2016-2017 Interim Session
December 6, 2016

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Cameron Henry, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, called the meeting to order at 9:19 a.m. in Room 5, in the State Capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The secretary called the roll.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Cameron Henry, Chairman
Representative Mark Abraham
Representative Beryl A. Amedée
Representative James K. Armes, III
Representative Tony Bacala
Representative Lawrence A. "Larry" Bagley
Representative John A. Berthelot
Representative Robert E. Billiot
Representative Gary M. Carter, Jr.
Representative Charles R. Chaney
Representative Rick Edmonds
Representative Franklin J. Foil
Representative Lance Harris
Representative Bob Hensgens
Representative Valarie Hodges
Representative Walt Leger, III
Representative Jack G. McFarland
Representative Blake Miguez
Representative Dustin Miller
Representative Steve E. Pylant
Representative John M. Schroder, Sr.
Representative Patricia Haynes Smith
Representative Jerome "Zee" Zeringue

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Katrina R. Jackson
Representative Jerome Richard
Representative Scott M. Simon
Representative Julie Stokes

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Katie Andress, Secretary
Ms. Penny B. Bouquet, Administrative Secretary
Mr. Peter G. E. Conroy, Legislative Analyst
Ms. Nancy Keaton, Legislative Analyst

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

None

III. DISCUSSION

Commissioner Jay Dardenne, Division of Administration, 1201 North Third Street, Suite 7-210, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7000, discussed the budgeting process for the FY17-18 Executive Budget. He also discussed the department's plan to prepare for a budget shortfall in FY16-17 with Representatives Henry and Pylant.

Ms. Desireé Honoré Thomas, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Administration, 1201 North Third Street, Suite 7-210, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7000, discussed the purchase of new vehicles for the Governor's Office.

Mr. Patrick Goldsmith, Director of the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA, 70804, (225) 342-8568, presented the organizational portion of the meeting.

House Bill No. 1 by Representative Henry

The following agencies contained in House Bill No. 1 were presented and discussed:

Executive Department**Executive Office of the Governor**

Mr. Chris Henry, Budget Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, 11th Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-1394, presented an overview and discussed the agency's FY17-18 budget request.

Mr. Ben Nevers, Chief of Staff for the Governor's Office, P.O. Box 94004, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-7015, discussed the department's FY17-18 budget request.

Division of Administration

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the division's FY17-18 budget request, and Ms. Thomas also discussed the impact of budget reductions reflected in the FY17-18 budget.

Ms. Thomas and Commissioner Dardenne provided information regarding the division's FY17-18 budget request.

Mr. Richard Howze, Chief Information Officer, Office of Technology Services, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7105, discussed the functions of the Office of Technology Services. (See Exhibit A)

Mr. Neal Underwood, Deputy Chief Information Officer, Office of Technology Services, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 235-7939, discussed the impact of under staffing on the agency's customer service efforts with Representative Leger.

Office of the Lieutenant Governor and Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

Mr. Mark Antoon, Budget Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-2412, presented an overview and discussed the department's FY17-18 budget request.

Lt. Governor William "Billy" Nungesser, 1051 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7009, discussed the department's efforts to prepare for FY17-18 budget reductions.

Department of State

Mr. Blake Ruiz, Budget Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA, 70804, (225) 342-0474, presented an overview and discussed the department's budget request for FY17-18.

Secretary Tom Schedler, Department of State, 8585 Archives Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, (225) 922-2880, discussed the efficiencies that have been implemented in preparation for FY17-18 budget reductions.

Executive Department

Louisiana Stadium and Exposition District

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the board's FY17-18 budget request.

Mr. Evan Holmes, Director of Business Operations, and Ms. Hilary Landry, member of the Louisiana Stadium and Exposition District (LSED) Board, 1500 Girod Street, New Orleans, LA 70113, (504) 587-3850, discussed the board's functions and the sources of funding for the district.

Office of the Inspector General

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the agency's budget request for FY17-18.

Mr. Stephen B. Street, Jr., State Inspector General, 602 North Fifth Street, Suite 621, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-4262, discussed the functions of the agency and the impact of a budget reduction on his office in the FY17-18 budget.

Mental Health Advocacy Service

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the agency's FY17-18 budget request.

Mr. Joseph Seyler, Director of the Louisiana Mental Health Advocacy Service (MHAS), 627 North Fourth Street, Suite 1-322, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-6678, discussed the services provided by the agency and the FY17-18 budget request.

Louisiana Tax Commission

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the commission's FY17-18 budget request.

Department of Insurance

Mr. Peter Conroy, Legislative Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-6292, presented an overview of the department and discussed the budget request for FY17-18.

Secretary Jim Donelon, Department of Insurance, 1702 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7275, discussed the functions of the department and the FY17-18 budget request. He also discussed the driving forces for Louisiana's high insurance premiums with Representative Smith.

Executive Department

Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority (CPRA)

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the agency's budget request for FY17-18.

Mr. Michael Ellis, Executive Director of CPRA, 150 Terrace Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7764, discussed the primary functions and the employee makeup of the agency.

Ms. Janice Lansing, Chief Financial Officer for CPRA, 150 Terrace Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-4698, discussed the professional and consulting contracts awarded to Louisiana businesses compared to those awarded to out of state businesses with Representative Billiot.

Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP)

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the FY17-18 budget request for the office.

Mr. James Waskom, Director, and Ms. Christina Dayries, Assistant Deputy Director of Grants and Administration, GOHSEP, 7667 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 925-7501, discussed the office's FY17-18 budget.

Department of Military Affairs

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the FY17-18 budget request for the department.

Major General Glenn H. Curtis, Adjutant General, Louisiana National Guard, 304 F Street, Pineville, LA 71360, (318) 641-5600, discussed the department's mission and the impact of potential budget reductions on the department in FY17-18.

Louisiana Public Defender Board

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the board's budget request for FY17-18.

Mr. James T. Dixon, Jr., State Public Defender, 301 Main Street, Suite 700, Baton Rouge, LA 70825, (225) 216-9305, discussed the major components of the board's FY17-18 budget request. He also discussed the impact of the August 2016 flooding on local funding for certain local public defender districts with Representative Bacala.

Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the commission's FY17-18 budget request.

Mr. Jim Craft, Executive Director of the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement, 602 North Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-1500, discussed the impact of the reduction of federal funds on certain services provided by the commission with Representative Smith.

Office of Elderly Affairs

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the FY17-18 budget request for the agency.

Ms. Danielle Stafford, Financial Director for the Office of Elderly Affairs, 525 Florida Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7100, discussed the major increases in the agency's FY17-18 budget.

Louisiana State Racing Commission

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the commission's budget request for FY17-18.

Mr. Charles A. Gardiner, III, Executive Director of the Louisiana State Racing Commission, 320 North Carrollton Avenue, Suite 2-B, New Orleans, LA 70119, (504) 483-4000, discussed the effects of budget reductions on the commission.

Office of Financial Institutions (OFI)

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the FY17-18 budget request for the agency.

Ms. Christine Kirkland, Deputy Commissioner for OFI, 8660 United Plaza Boulevard, Suite 200, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, (225) 922-0632, discussed the department's turn-over rate with Representative Pylant.

Department of Veterans Affairs

Mr. Chas Nichols, Budget Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-2444, presented an overview and discussed the department's FY17-18 budget request.

Mr. Joey Strickland, Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, 602 North Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 219-5000, discussed the significant adjustments to the department's FY17-18 budget. He and Mr. Homer Rodgers, Undersecretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, 602 North Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 219-5000 also discussed implementing a premium pay rate for employees with Representative Henry.

Department of Agriculture and Forestry

Mr. Nichols presented an overview and discussed the FY17-18 budget request for the department.

Mr. Dane Morgan, Assistant Commissioner of Management and Finance, Department of Agriculture and Forestry, 5825 Florida Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, discussed the department's efforts to prepare for a budget reduction in FY17-18. He also discussed professional services contracts and the department's ability to fight forest fires in Louisiana with Representative Henry.

Department of Justice

Mr. Peter Conroy, Legislative Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-7477, presented an overview and discussed the department's FY17-18 budget request.

Mr. Michael Larisey, Director of Administrative Services, and Ms. Edessa Lawson, Department of Justice, 1885 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 326-6079, discussed the department's efforts to produce cost savings through efficiencies, and to prepare for FY17-18 budget reductions.

Public Service Commission

Mr. Ruiz presented an overview and discussed the department's FY17-18 budget request.

Ms. Eve Gonzalez, Executive Secretary of the Public Service Commission, 602 North Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, (225) 342-4404, discussed employee merit increases with Representative Henry.

Department of Public Safety and Corrections

Public Safety Services

Mr. Antoon presented an overview and discussed the department's FY17-18 budget request. He also discussed increases in the agency's FY17-18 budget with Representatives Amedée and Harris.

Colonel Michael D. Edmonson, Deputy Secretary of Public Safety & Corrections and Superintendent of Louisiana State Police, 7919 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 925-6006, discussed the progress of the backlog of concealed carry permit applications with Representative Bagley.

Commissioner Karen St. Germain, Office of Motor Vehicles, 7979 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 925-6161, discussed the issues with the agency's technological services with Representative Henry.

Youth Services

Mr. Antoon presented an overview of the department and discussed the budget request for FY17-18.

Dr. James Bueche, Deputy Secretary of the Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ), 7919 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 287-7900, discussed certain items within the agency's FY17-18 budget request, and discussed the benefits of opening the Acadiana Facility (located in Bunkie) with Representative McFarland.

Department of Transportation and Development

Mr. Daniel Waguespack, Budget Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-7477, presented an overview and discussed the department's FY17-18 budget request.

Dr. Shawn Wilson, Secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), 1201 Capitol Access Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 379-1200, discussed the impact of budget reductions on the department.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative McFarland offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 23 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Henry, Abraham, Amedée, Armes, Bacala, Bagley, Berthelot, Billiot, Carter, Chaney, Edmonds, Foil, Harris, Hensgens, Hodges, Leger, McFarland, Miguez, Miller, Pylant, Schroder, Smith, and Zeringue voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Cameron Henry
House Committee on Appropriations