

**House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on General Government**

Minutes of Meeting
2017 Regular Session
April 11, 2017

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Blake Miguez, Chairman of the Subcommittee on General Government, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. in Room 5, in the State Capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The secretary called the roll.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Blake Miguez, Chairman
Representative Beryl A. Amedée
Representative Lawrence A. "Larry" Bagley

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative James K. Armes, III
Representative Valarie Hodges

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Katie Andress, Secretary
Mr. Chas Nichols, Budget Analyst

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Representative Mark Abraham
Representative Tony Bacala
Representative John A. Berthelot
Representative Charles R. Chaney
Representative Rick Edmonds
Representative Franklin J. Foil
Representative Lance Harris
Representative Walt Leger, III
Representative Jack G. McFarland
Representative Jerome Richard
Representative John M. Schroder, Sr.
Representative Patricia Haynes Smith

Ms. Faye Talbot, Sergeant at Arms
Ms. Vivian Hurst, Sergeant at Arms

III. DISCUSSION

House Bill No. 1 by Representative Henry

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

Lieutenant Governor and Department 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 budgets. He also discussed the Tourism Promotion District Tax with Representative Miguez.

Lt. Governor William "Billy" Nungesser, 1051 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7009, discussed the Office of Tourism's 2016 Annual Report and the impact of budget reductions to the department. (See Exhibit A)

Mr. Antoon discussed the changes to the department's means of finance breakdown before and after the 2017 First Extraordinary Session with Representatives Miguez, Abraham, and Leger. Lt. Governor Nungesser also discussed the impact of FY17-18 budget reductions with Representative Leger.

Lt. Governor Nungesser discussed the overall benefit of keeping state parks and historical sites open, his view of a standstill budget, and promoting tourism in the Acadiana area with Representative Miguez. He and Mr. Rennie Buras II, Deputy Secretary, Lieutenant Governor's Office, 1051 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7009, discussed Senate Bill No. 143 of the 2017 Regular Session, the rate increase for cabin rentals, and the status for repairs on cabins damaged by the 2016 floods with Representative Miguez.

Lt. Governor Nungesser and Mr. Robert Barham, Director of State Parks, 1051 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-8186, discussed repairs at Tickfaw State Park, the maintenance backlog at Hodges Gardens, and using inmates to maintain state parks with Representative Berthelot.

Lt. Governor Nungesser discussed the department's employee diversity with Representative Smith. He also discussed the possibility of partnering with the Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program (D.A.R.E.) to incorporate litter awareness, the return on investment from statutorily dedicated funds from the Seafood Marketing and Promotion Board, and promoting the use of Louisiana shrimp versus imported shrimp with Representative Amedée.

Mr. Antoon discussed the budget reduction to the Office of State Parks, and Mr. Barham discussed the fee increase at state parks, with Representative McFarland.

Lt. Governor Nungesser discussed potential increases in entrance and rental fees for state museums and the proposal to the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority for statutory dedications to help with the operation of state parks with Representative Abraham.

Mr. Antoon discussed the department's projected attrition rate, salary adjustments, and expenditure reductions in FY17-18, and Mr. Buras also discussed the reduction of vacant Table of Organization (T.O.) positions within the department, with Representative Leger.

Lt. Governor Nungesser discussed the continued use of the Federal Historic Preservation Tax credit program with Representative Leger. He and Mr. Buras also discussed the Scenic Byways and Atchafalaya National Heritage Program with Representative Bacala.

Mr. Antoon discussed the increase in the department's "Other Charges" expenditure category with Representative Bacala.

Mr. Barry Dussé, Director of the Office of Planning and Budget, 1201 North Third Street, Suite 7-150, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7005, discussed the process to approve moving funds from one expenditure category to another and the department's expenditure budget report with Representative Bacala.

Lt. Governor Nungesser discussed the department's procurement process with Representative Schroder.

Department of Revenue

Mr. Chas Nichols, Budget Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-4222, presented an overview of the department and discussed the FY17-18 budget.

Secretary Kimberly L. Robinson, Department of Revenue, 617 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 219-2717, presented an overview of the department's functions and mission. (See Exhibit B)

Secretary Robinson discussed the impact of FY17-18 budget reductions to the department, the status of Amazon.com, Inc. tax collections, and the department's efforts to collect delinquent debt with Representative Leger. She also discussed net tax collections in Louisiana compared to other states and corporate income tax collections with Representative Bacala, and the Solar Tax Program with Representative Foil.

Secretary Robinson discussed the governor's tax reform proposal, the Commercial Activity Tax, her view of Louisiana's tax structure, and her view of the overall growth of state government with Representative Miguez. She also discussed the tax refund process, the department's use of temporary job appointments to help process returns, the dropped call rate and the department's call center, and corporate taxes with Representative Amedée.

Secretary Robinson discussed advanced sales tax collections, the impact of not collecting sales taxes from online purchases, the growth of average salaries for department employees, and she and Mr. Clarence J. Lymon, Undersecretary for the Department of Revenue, 617 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 219-2150, also discussed expenditures during the department's amnesty period and the department's efforts to collect delinquent debt with Representative Schroder. (See Exhibit C)

Secretary Robinson discussed severance tax assessments for companies in the oil and gas industry with Representative Miguez.

Office of Alcohol and Tobacco Control (ATC)

Ms. Juana Lombard, Commissioner of ATC, 7979 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 925-4041, discussed the functions of the department, compliance checks, the department's FY17-18 budget, regulations regarding food sales in local breweries, and the overall growth of the brewery industry with Representatives Miguez and Foil. She also discussed how other states regulate breweries with Representative Abraham.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Miguez offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 3 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miguez, Amedée, and Bagley voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Blake Miguez
Subcommittee on General Government