

House Committee on Appropriations

Minutes of Meeting
2020 Regular Session
March 16, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Jerome "Zee" Zeringue, chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. in Room 5, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The committee administrative assistant called the roll.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Jerome "Zee" Zeringue, chairman
Representative Roy Daryl Adams
Representative Tony Bacala
Representative Barbara W. Carpenter
Representative R. Dewith Carrier
Representative Raymond J. Crews
Representative Daryl Andrew Deshotel
Representative Mary DuBuisson
Representative Rick Edmonds
Representative Aimee Adatto Freeman
Representative Lance Harris
Representative John R. Illg, Jr.
Representative Frederick Douglass Jones
Representative Timothy P. Kerner
Representative Rodney Lyons
Representative Tanner D. Magee
Representative C. Denise Marcelle
Representative Jack G. McFarland
Representative Blake Miguez
Representative Dustin Miller
Representative Troy D. Romero
Representative Francis C. Thompson
Representative Christopher Turner
Representative William "Bill" Wheat, Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Gary M. Carter, Jr., vice chairman

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Katie Andress, committee administrative assistant

Stephanie Little, attorney

Amanda Trapp, legislative analyst

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Faye Talbot, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION

Chairman Zeringue briefed the committee regarding safety measures put into place due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Gifford Briggs, president, Louisiana Oil and Gas Association, P.O. Box 4069, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, and Mr. Mark K. Miller, president, Merlin Oil and Gas, Inc., P.O. Box 52628, Lafayette, LA 70508, (337) 989-7200, discussed the impact of the decline of oil and gas prices on the state's budget.

Mr. Briggs also discussed the federal government's potential response to Louisiana's oil and gas industry crisis with Representative Edmonds.

House Bill No. 105 by Representative Zeringue

The following agencies contained in House Bill No. 105 were presented and discussed:

Department of Transportation and Development

Mr. Daniel Waguespack, budget analyst, House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7477, presented an overview and discussed the FY 21 budget for the department.

Dr. Eric Kalivoda, deputy secretary, Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), P.O. Box 94245, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 379-1200, discussed the department's efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Mr. Waguespack and Mr. Barry Keeling, undersecretary, DOTD, 1201 Capitol Access Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 379-1270, discussed trends in the department's salaries and related benefits with Representative Harris.

Dr. Kalivoda and Mr. Keeling discussed the Logo Sign Program, the lawn care and litter collection along the interstate, the new Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport project, and suggestions to increase the state's gas tax with Representative Illg.

Dr. Kalivoda discussed the department's personnel costs compared to other states and funding for certain projects with Representatives Bacala and Crews.

Representative Magee in the chair.

Mr. Keeling discussed fees related to the Office of Technology Services with Representative Deshotel. Mr. Keeling and Dr. Kalivoda also discussed specialty fuel taxes with Representative Deshotel.

Dr. Kalivoda discussed lawn maintenance contracts, the equipment buy back program, and the state's capitol outlay project backlog with Representative DuBuisson.

Dr. Kalivoda discussed the Statewide Flood Control Program, projects that received Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles (GARVEE) bonds, and the department's turnover rate with Representative Edmonds. Mr. Keeling also discussed the department's excess budget authority and funding increases to the Watershed project with Representative Edmonds.

Representative Miller in the chair.

Dr. Kalivoda updated Representative Kerner regarding the status of the Kerner Bridge Replacement project. Dr. Kalivoda also discussed the potential use of toll credits for certain projects with Representative Lyons.

Representative Zeringue in the chair.

The meeting was recessed at 10:43 a.m. and reconvened at 11:24 a.m.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Representative Zeringue announced that the meeting would be adjourned and that the House would convene at 3:00 p.m. to receive an update from the speaker of the House regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Turner offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 24 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Zeringue, Adams, Bacala, Carpenter, Carrier, Crews, Deshotel, DuBuisson, Edmonds, Freeman, Harris, Illg, Jones, Kerner, Lyons, Magee, Marcelle, McFarland, Miguez, Dustin Miller, Romero, Thompson, Turner, and Wheat voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Jerome "Zee" Zeringue
House Committee on Appropriations