

House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs

Minutes of Meeting
2024 Regular Session
March 28, 2024

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 9:04 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 Bryan Fontenot
Representative Barbara Reich Freiberg, vice chair
Representative Alonzo L. Knox
Representative Patricia "Pat" Moore
Representative Candace N. Newell
Representative Charles Anthony Owen
Representative Joseph A. Stagni
Representative Matthew Willard
Representative Rashid Armand Young

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Steven Jackson
Representative Rodney Lyons
Representative C. Denise Marcelle

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Janet Anthony, sergeant at arms
Angela Mcknight, sergeant at arms

III. REMARKS

Foy Bryan Gadberry, chair
Barbara Reich Freiberg, vice chair

IV. ORIENTATION ITEMS

Consideration and adoption of the minutes of 2023 Regular Session committee meetings held on April 27, May 3, May 11, May 18, and May 25, 2023:

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to adopt the 2023 Regular Session minutes of the House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs from meetings held on April 27, May 3, May 11, May 18, and May 25, 2023. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, and Owen voted yea.

Representative Fontenot offered a motion to enact a three-minute rule for questions from committee members and testimony from witnesses. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, and Willard voted yea.

Consideration and adoption of committee rules:

Representative Farnum offered a motion to adopt rules as presented to the committee and included in the committee records as Exhibit D. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, and Owen voted yea.

Committee jurisdiction: Tina Righteous, committee attorney

Attorney Tina Righteous provided a memorandum labeled "Committee Jurisdiction" which is included as Exhibit A in the committee records.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

PRESENTATIONS:

Office of State Examiner - Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service

Adrienne Bordelon, office of state examiner, Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service, 7722 Office Park Boulevard, Suite 500, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, provided a handout labeled "Office of State Examiner Fire & Police Civil Service" which is included as Exhibit B in the committee records.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Louisiana Municipal Association

Richard Williams, Louisiana Municipal Association (LMA), 6767 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, presented a PowerPoint and provided a handout labeled "The Louisiana Municipal Association" which is included as Exhibit C in the committee records.

Paulette Bailey Wilson, LMA, 10191 Patriot Drive, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke for information only.

Police Jury Association of Louisiana

Guy Cormier, Police Jury Association of Louisiana, 707 North 7th Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only.

Representatives of other local government entities

Meg Bankston, Parish Presidents of Louisiana, P.O. Box 45698, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke for information only.

VI. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION

House Bill No. 4 by Representative Zeringue

Representative Zeringue presented House Bill No. 4, which provides for an increase in wireless service charges for 911 services provided by the Terrebonne Parish Communications District.

Mark Boudreaux, Terrebonne 911, 110 Capital Boulevard, Houma, LA, spoke in support of House Bill No. 4.

Representative Domangue offered a motion to report House Bill No. 4 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 4 was reported favorably by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, and Willard 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.

House Bill No. 50 by Representative Butler

Representative Butler presented House Bill No. 50, which provides for the qualifications for the office of police chief in the village of Pine Prairie.

Quint West, mayor of Pine Prairie, no address provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 50.

Representative Farnum offered a motion to report House Bill No. 50 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 50 was reported favorably by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, and Willard voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 7 by Representative Bourriaque

Representative Bourriaque presented House Bill No. 7, which provides relative to the board of the South Cameron Consolidated Waterworks District No. 1 in Cameron Parish.

Representative Farnum offered a motion to report House Bill No. 7 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 7 was reported favorably by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 20 by Representative Riser

Representative Riser presented House Bill No. 20, which provides relative to administration of funds of the Catahoula Parish Library.

Representative Stagni offered a motion to report House Bill No. 20 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 20 was reported favorably by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

House Bill No. 183 by Representative LaCombe

On behalf of Representative LaCombe, Representative Riser presented House Bill No. 183, which provides relative to the civil service status of employees of New Roads Public Housing Authority.

Representative Stagni offered a motion to report House Bill No. 183 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 183 was reported favorably by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 148 by Representative Glorioso

Representative Glorioso presented House Bill No. 148, which removes certain restrictions on the disposal of immovable property by the governing authority of Slidell.

Representative Carver offered a motion to report House Bill No. 148 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 148 was reported favorably by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 181 by Representative Brass

Representative Brass presented House Bill No. 181, which provides for the membership of gravity drainage district boards of commissioners in Ascension Parish.

Representative Newell offered a motion to report House Bill No. 181 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 181 was reported favorably by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young 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.

House Bill No. 354 by Representative Brass

Representative Brass presented House Bill No. 354, which provides for the renaming of road lighting districts and the allocation of funding.

Clint Cointment, Ascension Parish, 615 East Worthey Street, Gonzales, LA 70737, spoke in support of House Bill No. 354.

Oliver Joseph, 615 East Worthey Street, Gonzales, LA 70737, spoke in support of House Bill No. 354.

Roy Sullivan, no witness card provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 354.

Representative Newell offered a motion to report House Bill No. 354 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 354 was reported favorably by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 4 in support, and 2 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 182 by Representative Travis Johnson

Representative Travis Johnson presented House Bill No. 182, which creates the Ferriday Downtown Entertainment District.

Representative Fontenot offered amendments that require the tax proposition to appear on ballots at an election held on a date that corresponds with the dates of gubernatorial, congressional, or municipal and ward primary elections.

Representative Fontenot offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Representative Knox offered a motion to report House Bill No. 182 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 182 was reported with amendments by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

House Bill No. 168 by Representative Carlson

Representative Carlson presented House Bill No. 168, which provides relative to qualifications for certified librarians.

Michael Holt, 1236 Rochport Street, no city given, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 168.

Lynette Mejia, Louisiana Citizens Against Censorship (LCAC), 151 Schoeffler Road, Carencro, LA, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 168.

Michael Russo, 11930 Oakshire Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70810, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 168.

Mary Lib Guercio, LCAC, 207 Grand Pointe Boulevard, Lafayette, LA, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 168.

Carla Chance, 104 Hidden Hills, Arnaudville, LA 70512, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 168.

Kelsye Baudoin, 104 St. Lucius Street, Youngsville, LA 70592, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 168.

Kathy Wascom, 1255 Aberdeen, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 168.

Mary Stein, 12903 Goodwood Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 168.

Jeffrey "Rivale" Sykes, 30258 Carl Hodges Road, Holden, LA 70744, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 168.

Melissa Flournoy, 10,000 Women, 650 North Sixth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 168.

Lisa R. Rustemeyer, 780 Montgomery Street, Mandeville, LA 70448, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 168.

Jordan Gonzales, 23789 Springhill Drive, Denham Springs, LA 70726, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 168.

Representative Bayham offered amendments in the form of a substitute bill. Representative Bayham offered a motion to adopt the substitute bill. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Representative Newell offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 168, to which Representative Farnum objected. Representative Newell withdrew her motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 168.

Representative Newell offered a motion to involuntarily defer action on House Bill No. 168, to which Representative Fontenot objected. Representative Fontenot offered a substitute motion to report House Bill No. 168 without action with recommendation that it be recommitted to the House Committee on Education. Representative Fontenot withdrew his motion to report House Bill No. 168 without action with recommendation that it be recommitted to the House Committee on Education.

Representative Newell offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 168. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support, 2 in opposition, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 168 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

House Bill No. 218 by Representative Bagley

Representative Bagley presented House Bill No. 218, which authorizes Caddo Parish Fire District No. Four to levy a sales and use tax.

Chad Falls, Caddo Fire Department District 4, 8240 Colquitt Road, Keithville, LA 71047, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 218.

Representative Stagni offered amendments that require the tax proposition to appear on a ballot at an election conducted in accordance with the Louisiana Election Code and held on a date that corresponds with the dates of either gubernatorial or congressional elections.

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

Representative Stagni offered a motion to report House Bill No. 218 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 218 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Cox, Domangue, Fontenot, Freiberg, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 152 by Representative Berault

Representative Berault presented House Bill No. 152, which provides relative to a Community Development District in St. Tammany Parish.

Desmond LeBlanc, Lakeshore Villages, 5504 Grand Springs Road, Slidell, LA 70461, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 152.

Lawrence Dupre, 900 Lakeshore Village Point, no city given, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 152.

Representative Carver offered a motion to report House Bill No. 152 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 152 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Willard, and Young voted yea.

House Bill No. 225 by Representative Boyd

Representative Boyd presented House Bill No. 225, which creates the Tall Timbers Crime Prevention and Improvement District in New Orleans.

Representative Gadberry offered amendments to change provisions for the maximum parcel fee from \$280 initial maximum, with a 10% increase each year to a maximum of \$360, to \$230 for first two years and \$250 thereafter.

Representative Gadberry offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report House Bill No. 225 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 225 was reported with amendments by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

House Bill No. 694 by Representative Boyd

Representative Boyd presented House Bill No. 694, which establishes the Louisiana Music Commission within the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism.

Kristin Sanders, office of cultural development, 1051 North Third Street, 4th Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 694.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report House Bill No. 694 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 694 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 674 by Representative Bryant

Representative Bryant presented House Bill No. 674, which authorizes a local governing authority to adopt ordinances to address blighted property with purported collector's automobiles.

Lauren Debetaz, office of motor vehicles, 7979 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 674.

Representative Newell offered a motion to report House Bill No. 674 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 674 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Domangue, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young 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.

House Bill No. 141 by Representative Bamburg

Representative Bamburg presented House Bill No. 141, which provides for the abolition of the office of police chief in the town of Martin.

Representative Newell offered a motion to report House Bill No. 141 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 141 was reported favorably by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

House Bill No. 185 by Representative Newell

Representative Newell presented House Bill No. 185, which provides for creation of Castle Manor Security and Improvement District in New Orleans.

Representative Cox offered a motion to report House Bill No. 185 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 185 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

House Bill No. 184 by Representative McFarland

On behalf of Representative McFarland, Representative Fontenot presented House Bill No. 184, which provides relative to police services in the village of Calvin.

Representative Fontenot offered a motion to report House Bill No. 184 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 184 was reported favorably by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Gadberry offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Date adopted: