

House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs

Minutes of Meeting
2024 Regular Session
May 1, 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 9:08 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 Steven Jackson
Representative Alonzo L. Knox
Representative Rodney Lyons
Representative C. Denise Marcelle
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:

None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

None

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION

Senate Bill No. 386 by Senator Price

Senator Price presented Senate Bill No. 386, which provides relative to employees of the White Castle Housing Authority.

Representative Newell offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 386 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 386 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, and Willard voted yea.

Senate Bill No. 128 by Senator Miller

Senator Miller presented Senate Bill No. 128, which provides for the civil service status of a housing authority.

Representative Lyons offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 128 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 128 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Newell, and Willard voted yea.

Senate Bill No. 457 by Senator Foil

Senator Foil presented Senate Bill No. 457, which provides for economic development districts in East Baton Rouge Parish.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 457 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 457 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, and Willard voted yea.

Senate Bill No. 88 by Senator Connick

Senator Connick presented Senate Bill No. 88, which authorizes creation of a tax increment financing district for parishes of a certain size for economic development purposes.

Representative Lyons offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 88 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 88 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, and Willard voted yea.

House Bill No. 946 by Representative Gallé

Representative Gallé presented House Bill No. 946, which provides relative to members of parish library boards of control.

Vice Chair Freiberg in the chair.

Representative Farnum offered a motion to report House Bill No. 946 favorably, to which Representative Stagni offered a substitute motion to involuntarily defer action on House Bill No. 946. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 946 was involuntarily deferred by a vote of 11 yeas, 5 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Cox, Domangue, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Willard voted yea. Representatives Bayham, Billings, Carver, Farnum, and Fontenot voted nay. Representative Gadberry abstained.

Chair Gadberry in the chair.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 4 in support, 18 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. 946 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

Representative Freiberg 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 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Willard voted yea.

Senate Bill No. 398 by Senator Jenkins

Senator Jenkins presented Senate Bill No. 398, which provides for the hotel occupancy tax levied by the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau.

Representative Marcelle offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 398 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 398 was reported favorably by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Fontenot, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Stagni, and Willard 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.

House Bill No. 777 by Representative Dickerson

Representative Dickerson presented House Bill No. 777, which provides relative to the use of public funds.

Erin Sandefer, Livingston Parish Council, 24411 Oma Harris Lane, spoke in support of House Bill No. 777 and provided a handout, labeled "Content Warning" and included as Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Larry Davis, 17316 Copper Creek Drive, Suite #413, Livingston, LA 70754, spoke in support of House Bill No. 777.

Representative Carver offered amendments that exempt any official or employee of a postsecondary education institution or of the Louisiana Board of Regents from the provisions of this Section. Representative Carver 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, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Willard voted yea.

Representative Carver offered amendments that remove criminal penalties for violating the provisions of this Section. Representative Carver 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, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Willard voted yea.

Representative Bayham offered amendments to remove all penalties for violating the provisions of this Section. Representative Bayham offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bayham, Billings, Cox, Domangue, Fontenot, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Marcelle, Moore, Owen, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Vice Chair Freiberg in the chair.

Representative Marcelle offered a motion to involuntarily defer action on House Bill No. 777, to which Representative Owen objected. Representative Marcelle withdrew her motion to involuntarily defer action on House Bill No. 777.

Representative Marcelle offered amendments to exempt any official or employee of East Baton Rouge Parish from the provisions of this Section. Representative Marcelle withdrew the amendment.

Representative Fontenot offered amendments that the provisions of this Section are exclusively applicable to the parishes of Lafourche, St. Tammany, Vernon, Calcasieu, St. Bernard, Livingston, Beauregard, Sabine, and St. Charles. Representative Fontenot withdrew the amendment.

Representative Farnum offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 777, to which Representative Marcelle offered a substitute motion to involuntarily defer action on House Bill No. 777, to which Representative Farnum objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and action on House Bill No. 777 was involuntarily deferred by a vote of 9 yeas and 7 nays. Representatives Cox, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Newell, Willard, and Young voted yea. Representatives Bayham, Billings, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Moore, and Owen voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 21 in support, 29 in opposition, and 3 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 777 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

House Bill No. 688 by Representative Larvadain

Chair Gadberry in the chair.

Representative Larvadain presented House Bill No. 688, which provides relative to training requirements for local government officials.

Mike Waguespack, office of the Louisiana legislative auditor, P.O. Box 94397, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 688.

Paulette Bailey Wilson, Louisiana Municipal Association, 10191 Patriot Drive, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in support of House Bill No. 688.

Representative Gadberry offered amendments to:

1. Remove provisions of proposed law that require all elected officials in parishes and municipalities to participate in training and instead authorizes mayors and municipal governing authority members in certain municipalities to participate in such training.
2. Remove requirement that the elected officials receive training from specific organizations.
3. Remove requirement that the elected officials earn at least nine hours of training credit annually.
4. Remove requirement that training and other resources be made available to the staff members of the elected officials.

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, Billings, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Owen, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Representative Gadberry offered amendments to remove language that specifically excluded the Police Jury Association of Louisiana Municipal Association from the associations or groups that provide training to local government officials.

Representative Gadberry 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, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Representative Lyons offered a motion to report House Bill No. 688 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 688 was reported with amendments by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

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

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Knox offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Domangue, Farnum, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Date adopted: