
DIGEST

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HB 611 Original

2025 Regular Session

Hilferty

Abstract: Relative to the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans, changes the membership of the board and provides for its powers and duties.

Present law provides that the public water system, the public sewerage system, and the public drainage system of the city of New Orleans shall be constructed, controlled, maintained, and operated by a sewerage and water board to be composed as follows:

- (1) The mayor.
- (2) The chair of the Public Works, Sanitation and Environment Committee of the New Orleans city council or an appointee selected by the council president with a background in engineering, law, or consumer advocacy selected with the advice and consent of the city council. Any member appointed by the council president shall serve at the pleasure of the council president.
- (3) Two syndicate members of the board of liquidation, city debt, to be appointed by the mayor on the recommendation of the board of liquidation, city debt.
- (4) Seven citizens, to be appointed by the mayor, with the advice and consent of the city council from a list of nominees submitted by the sewerage and water board selection committee.

Proposed law changes the composition of the board as follows:

- (1) One member appointed by the mayor.
- (2) Two members, each appointed by an at-large member of the New Orleans city council.
- (3) One member appointed by the chair of the Public Works, Sanitation and Environment Committee of the New Orleans city council.
- (4) One member appointed by the secretary of the Dept. of Transportation and Development.
- (5) One member appointed by the State Bond Commission.
- (6) One member appointed by the Board of Liquidation, City debt.

- (7) One member appointed by the chief resilience officer of the state.
- (8) One member appointed by the chief administrative officer for the city of New Orleans.
- (9) Two members appointed by the legislative delegations from Orleans Parish.

Present law requires that each citizen member be a registered voter in Orleans Parish and have a domiciliary of Orleans Parish for two years previous to his appointment.

Proposed law removes present law.

Proposed law provides that the appointments to the board shall reflect the racial and gender diversity of the population of the city of New Orleans.

Proposed law removes present law.

Present law creates and provides for a selection committee for the purpose of submitting nominations to the mayor for board appointments. Provides that the committee is composed as follows:

- (1) The president of Dillard University or the president's designee.
- (2) The president of Loyola University or the president's designee.
- (3) The president of Tulane University or the president's designee.
- (4) The president of Xavier University or the president's designee.
- (5) The chancellor of Delgado Community College or the chancellor's designee.
- (6) The chancellor of University of New Orleans or the chancellor's designee.
- (7) The chancellor of Southern University at New Orleans or the chancellor's designee.
- (8) The chair of the board of directors of the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce or the chair's designee.
- (9) The president of the board of directors of the New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce or the president's designee.
- (10) The chair of the board of directors of the Urban League of Greater New Orleans or the chair's designee.

Proposed law removes present law.

Present law provides that if an appointed member is elected to any office or removes his domicile from Orleans Parish, his membership on the board is vacated and his successor shall be immediately

appointed. Provides that all vacancies occurring in the board membership under the appointment by the mayor shall be filled in the manner of the original appointment.

Proposed law removes present law.

Present law requires that a notice of vacancy on the board be published in the official journal for Orleans Parish and be communicated through any other publication, website, or electronic medium maintained by the board.

Proposed law removes present law.

Present law requires interested persons who meet the qualifications for board membership to submit an application to the board confirming their eligibility, professional qualifications, and experience.

Proposed law removes present law.

Present law requires the nominees from the selection committee to have experience in certain fields including architecture, environmental quality, finance, accounting, business administration, engineering, or law.

Proposed law instead requires board members to have experience in either of those fields.

Present law provides that if the mayor is unable to attend a meeting of the board, he may be represented by a person designated by the mayor who shall be an unclassified member of the mayor's administration. Provides that the person has all rights and powers granted to the mayor during the board meeting.

Proposed law removes present law.

Present law provides that the mayor is ex officio president of the board. Proposed law instead requires the board to elect a president for a term of one year.

Present law provides that the city attorney shall be the legal advisor of the board. Requires the city attorney to appoint, with the advice and consent of the board, a special counsel who shall have charge of and conduct the legal business of the board.

Proposed law removes present law and instead authorizes the board to employ the services of an attorney and to fix his fees or salary.

Present law provide that the agent for service of process of any legal papers served on the board shall be the executive director of the board or the special counsel appointed by the city attorney.

Proposed law removes the special counsel and provides that the board's legal counsel may also serve as the agent for service of process.

Present law provides that when expropriation is necessary, the city attorney or the special counsel,

on the request of the board, shall institute the expropriation proceedings in the name of the city of New Orleans.

Proposed law provides instead that the legal counsel shall institute expropriation procedures.

Present law provides that the mayor or the chief administrative officer and the executive director shall present each quarterly report to the city council at a designated meeting.

Proposed law removes the mayor and the chief administrative officer and instead requires the executive director to present the report.

Present law provides that the city of New Orleans is relieved of its obligation to make annual appropriations for the purpose of maintaining and operating its drainage system of the city of New Orleans and is not required to provide funds for maintaining and operating the drainage system.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law requires that all contracts executed by the board for the construction or repair of the public systems of sewerage, water and drainage contain a clause stipulating that the contractor shall give preference in employment to bona fide residents of the city of New Orleans, both skilled and unskilled. Prohibits the employment of any non-resident laborers, skilled or unskilled (except confidential clerks, chief superintendents and chief engineers).

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law authorizes the board to apportion its funds among the water, sewerage, and drainage systems by a vote of not less than ten members of the board, exclusive of the mayor. Requires that such apportionment be approved by the mayor in writing. Provides that in case the members and the mayor cannot agree on any apportionment, the matter must be referred to the city council, which may make the apportionment. Provides that present law is not applicable in cases of emergency.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Proposed law provides that terms of the members of the board in office on January 12, 2026, shall terminate on that date; however, the members shall remain in office until the members take office pursuant to proposed law.

Effective January 12, 2026.

(Amends R.S. 33:4071, 4073, 4077, 4077.1, 4078, 4091(D), and 4136; Repeals R.S. 33:4087, 4088, and 4146)