New law creates the Southern Heights Neighborhood Crime Prevention and Improvement District as a political subdivision in East Baton Rouge Parish to aid in crime prevention and to add to the security of district residents by providing for an increase of law enforcement personnel in the district. Provides for district boundaries.

Provides for governance of the district by a seven-member board of commissioners, all of whom must own property and reside within the district. Requires board members to serve without compensation and to serve terms of two or three years, as determined by new law. Provides that the board shall be composed as follows:

(1)   Three members appointed by the board of directors of the Southern Heights Property Owners Association, Inc.
(2)   One member appointed by the member(s) of the House of Representatives who represent the area which comprises the district.
(3)   One member appointed by the member(s) of the Senate who represent the area which comprises the district.
(4)   One member appointed by the assessor for East Baton Rouge Parish.
(5)   One member appointed by the Metro Council member(s) who represent the district.

Provides for the powers and duties of the district including the following:

(1)   To sue and be sued.
(2)   To adopt and use a corporate seal.
(3)   To receive and spend funds collected in accordance with a budget adopted in accordance with new law.
(4)   To enter into contracts for security patrols in the district.
(5)   To perform other functions or activities necessary for achieving any purpose of the district.
(6)   To purchase items necessary to achieve any purpose of the district.
(7)   To acquire, lease, insure, and sell immovable property.

Authorizes the governing authority of East Baton Rouge Parish, subject to voter approval, to impose a parcel fee on improved and unimproved parcels within the district. Provides that the fee shall be as provided by duly adopted resolution of the board not exceed $100 per parcel per year. Requires the board, not less than 30 days prior to any election to approve the fee, to mail notification of the upcoming election to each registered voter of the district and to each parcel owner who is not a registered voter of the district.

Provides that not less than five years after the fee is approved, the governing authority of the district may increase the amount of the fee one time, without an election, not to exceed $150 per parcel per year. Provides that the fee shall expire 10 years after its initial imposition, but may be renewed subject to voter approval for a term not to exceed 10 years.

Provides that the fee shall be collected at the same time and in the same manner as ad valorem taxes are collected by the parish. Further provides that any parcel fee shall be enforced with the same authority and subject to the same penalties as ad valorem taxes. Requires the sheriff to remit to the district all amounts collected not more than 60 days after collection; however, authorizes the district to enter into an agreement with the sheriff to authorize the sheriff to retain a collection fee.

Requires the board to adopt an annual budget in accordance with Local Government Budget Act and provides that the district shall be subject to audit by the legislative auditor.

Provides that it is the purpose and intent of new law that the additional law enforcement personnel and their services provided for through the fees authorized by new law shall be supplemental to and not in lieu of personnel and services provided in the district by the city-parish.

Requires the district's board, if the district ceases to exist, to transmit all district funds to the city-parish to be used for law enforcement purposes in the area which comprised the district.

Provides for indemnification of board members by the district and limits board member liability for acts or omissions arising out of the performance of a member's duties.

Effective August 1, 2013.

(Adds R.S. 33:9097.19)