
DIGEST

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HB 613 Reengrossed

2025 Regular Session

Beaulieu

Abstract: Creates the Acadiana Regional Airport and the Lemaire Memorial Airport District in Iberia Parish.

Proposed law creates the Acadiana Regional Airport and Lemaire Memorial Airport District subject to approval by a majority vote of the Iberia Parish Council and approval by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Specifies, that upon such approvals the district will come into existence.

Proposed law specifies that the domicile of the district is Iberia Parish. Further, specifies that the domicile may be changed to any place within the boundaries of the district, or may be at the seat of any political subdivision, a portion of which is included within the boundaries of the district, provided the board approves the change in domicile.

Proposed law specifies that the boundaries of the district are coterminous with the boundaries of Iberia Parish, consisting of Acadiana Regional Airport and LeMaire Memorial Airport.

Proposed law requires the district maintain suitable offices in Iberia Parish.

Proposed law sets the composition of a board at seven members and requires they be citizens of the U.S. and residents of Iberia Parish. Additionally, requires the Iberia Parish Council have authority to appoint all members of the board and may, by majority vote, remove and replace any member. Further, requires two members be domiciled in the city of New Iberia and one member be domiciled in the city of Jeanerette.

Proposed law requires members have experience in aviation, business, accounting, finance, marketing, engineering, law, real estate, economic development, management or another field of value to operation of the airport. Further, prohibits a full-time employee of local government from being eligible for appointment to the board.

Proposed law specifies that the current Iberia Parish Airport board members will serve as the district board members for the remainder of their current terms. Additionally, requires that upon expiration of terms, successors are to be appointed, and may serve up to three additional terms of five years.

Proposed law specifies that service by a board member for four or more years of a term must be a five year term for determining the number of terms.

Proposed law specifies that any vacancy in the membership of the board to be filled by a majority

vote of Iberia Parish Council for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Proposed law specifies that any member of the board may be removed for cause upon the recommendation of a majority of the board.

Proposed law requires the board elect from among its own members a chairperson, a vice chairperson, a secretary, and a treasurer. Authorizes the offices of secretary and treasurer to be held by one person.

Proposed law requires the board meet in regular session once each month and also meet in special session as often as the chairperson convenes the board or on the written request of three members. Additionally, specifies that a quorum is four members of the district board present at a meeting. Further, requires that a simply majority vote to pass an agenda item.

Proposed law specifies the board members serve without compensation.

Proposed law requires the board to prescribe rules to govern its meetings, and allows the chairperson to vote.

Proposed law specifies that the district is a public corporation and has all powers of public corporations including the right and power to incur debt and contract obligations, to sue and be sued, to have a corporate seal, and to perform in its corporate capacity and in its corporate name all acts necessary and proper for the purpose of acquiring, constructing, maintaining, and operating airports and airport facilities, including both movable and immovable property within its jurisdiction.

Proposed law grants the district all authority as provided in present law and upon the "approval date" which is defined as the date on which the FAA issues a certificate to the district, conferring operational jurisdiction over the airport under present law, the board will acquire the following powers:

- (1) Accessibility to the FAA's approval of the assignment of existing grant agreements to the District, in the case of an uncertified report, the date specified in the agreement under which the airport is to be transferred to district.
- (2) Enter into contracts and agreements necessary or incidental to the performance of its duties and execution of its powers under proposed law, with a department or agency of the U.S., with a state or local governmental agency, or with another person, public or private, with terms and conditions acceptable to the district.
- (3) Exercise exclusive responsibility to study and plan any improvements, expansion, or enhancements that affect the airport and commission planning, engineering, economic, and other studies to provide information for making decisions about the location, design, management, and other features of the airport or airport facilities.
- (4) Exercise responsibility for developing all aspects of the airport and airport facilities,

including, but not limited to, all the location of terminals, hangars, aids to air navigation, parking lots and structures, cargo facilities, and all other facilities and services necessary to serve passengers and other customers of the airport.

- (5) Obtain street and highway access and egress with the objective of minimizing, to the extent practicable, traffic congestion on access routes in the vicinity of the airport.
- (6) Participate in demonstration programs and economic development that directly benefits the district.
- (7) Act as a sponsor and submit requests for, accept, and be responsible to perform all of the assurance associated with accepting grants from the FAA, or another agency of the U.S. or of this state, with respect to the airports under the operational jurisdiction of the district, and perform the duties and responsibilities previously assumed by the local government by virtue of its acceptance of grants from the FAA or another agency of the U.S. or this state. Requires the district to serve as the agent of the local government for the preparation, submission, execution, and administration of any state or federal grants pending on the effective date of proposed law.

Proposed law requires the district to submit an annual financial report disclosing all receipts and disbursements to the Iberia Parish Council, within 120 days following the end of each calendar year.

Proposed law specifies the district has the additional power to do the following:

- (1) Acquire, and assume the exclusive right, responsibility, and authority to occupy, operate, control, and use, the airports and the airport facilities owned by the local government on that date, or under the jurisdiction of the Iberia Parish Airport Authority subject only to any restrictions imposed by present law.
- (2) Exclusive rights and authority to occupy, operate, control, and use the district facilities.
- (3) Acquire the operational jurisdiction over all real property of the district, including, but not limited to, terminals, runways, taxiways, aprons, hangars, aids to air navigation, vehicles or facilities, parking facilities for passengers and employees, and all buildings and facilities used to operate, maintain, and manage the district, including governmental, industrial, commercial and agricultural within the geographical area of the airports property, subject to any liens on the real property and restrictions and limitations on the use of real property.
- (4) Assume the local government's right, title, and interest in, and to all of the local government's responsibilities arising under, leases, concessions, and other contracts for the airport facilities.
- (5) Assume all financial obligations secured by revenues and fees generated from the operations of the district, including but not limited to airports revenue bonds, special facilities revenue bonds, and all bonded indebtedness associated with the district.

- (6) Assume ownership of all cash balances and investments relating to or resulting from operations of the district for which operational jurisdiction has been transferred to the district, all money held under an ordinance, resolution, or indenture related to or securing obligations of the local government that have been assumed by the district, all of the accounts receivable or actions arising from operations of the district, and all benefits of contracts and agreements.
- (7) Assume ownership of all vehicles, office equipment, furniture and furnishings, and movable assets, including but not limited to computers, records and files, software licenses required for financial management, personnel management, accounting and inventory systems, and general administration.

Proposed law requires local government comply with the following requirements:

- (1) Refrain from any action that would impair the district's exercise of the powers granted to the district under this chapter or that could cause the district to violate its rate or bond covenants.
- (2) Refrain from any action to sell, transfer, or otherwise encumber or dispose of airport facilities owned by the local government without the consent of the district and, if necessary, the FAA.
- (3) Take all action reasonably necessary to cure any defects in title to airport facilities transferred to the district.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 2:350.1- 350.6)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works to the original bill:

1. Make technical changes.
2. Specify that upon the approvals of the Iberia Parish Council and the Federal Aviation Administration, the Acadiana Regional Airport and Lemaire Memorial Airport District will be established.
3. Clarify that the domicile of the district may be changed to any location within the district boundaries or to the seat of any political subdivision partially located within the district, subject to approval of the board.
4. Authorize the Iberia Parish Council authority to appoint all members of the board and to remove and replace any member by majority vote.

5. Require two members to be domiciled in the city of New Iberia and one in the city of Jeanerette.
6. Change the quorum requirement for the board from three members to four members.

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Require that any proposals to levy taxes receive approval from the Iberia Parish Council.
2. Remove the provision allowing board members appointed under proposed law to reappoint themselves for up to three consecutive terms.
3. Require that any vacancy in the membership of the board be filled by a majority vote of Iberia Parish Council for the remainder of the unexpired term.
4. Make technical changes.