

New law creates the University Acres Crime Prevention and Neighborhood Improvement District in East Baton Rouge Parish for the purpose of enhancing security and providing for the overall betterment of the district. Provides that the district shall be governed by a board of commissioners consisting of the following members:

- (1) The president of the University Acres Civic Assoc. "the association" or its successor.
- (2) Three members appointed by the board of directors of the association.
- (3) One member appointed by the member(s) of the La. House of Representatives who represent the area which comprises the district.
- (4) One member appointed by the member(s) of the La. Senate who represent the area which comprises the district.
- (5) One member appointed by the member(s) of the East Baton Rouge Parish Metro Council who represent the area which comprises the district.

New law provides that all appointing authorities, other than the board of directors of the association, shall make appointments from a list of nominations submitted by the association. Requires the appointing authorities to make appointments within 30 days of receipt of such list. Requires the board of directors of the association to appoint an interim member if an appointing authority fails to fill a vacancy within 30 days. The interim member will serve until the position is filled by the appointing authority.

New law provides that members serve without compensation but may receive reimbursement for expenses, not to exceed \$200 per year.

New law provides that the district has the following powers and duties:

- (1) To sue and be sued.
- (2) To adopt, use, and alter a corporate seal.
- (3) To receive and expend funds in accordance with new law.
- (4) To enforce municipal use and development rules and regulations affecting or relating to the beautification and security of the district.
- (5) To enter into contracts.
- (6) To provide for or enhance security patrols and to provide for improved lighting, signage, and other security matters.
- (7) To acquire or lease items and supplies.
- (8) To accept private grants and donations.
- (9) To procure insurance against liability of board members.
- (10) To perform or have performed any function or activity to carry out its purposes.

New law authorizes the district, subject to voter approval, to impose and collect a parcel fee. Provides that the initial parcel fee, for the first calendar year, shall be \$365; thereafter the fee shall not exceed \$500 per improved parcel per year. Provides that the fee shall be imposed on each unit within a multifamily dwelling and if multiple adjacent parcels are combined for the purpose of housing a single-family dwelling, the combined parcel shall constitute a single improved parcel for the purposes of the imposition of the fee.

Existing constitution provides for freezing the assessment level for ad valorem taxes on property with a homestead exemption for an owner whose income is below a certain level (\$50,000 adjusted annually for inflation) and who meets one of the following qualifications:

- (1) Is sixty-five years of age or older.
- (2) Has a service-connected disability rating of 50% or more.
- (3) Is a member of the U.S. armed forces or the La. National Guard who owned and last occupied such property and was killed in action, or is missing in action or a prisoner of war for a period exceeding 90 days.
- (4) Is permanently totally disabled.

New law provides that a person who qualifies for the special assessment level is exempt from the parcel fee imposed pursuant to new law.

New law authorizes the district to levy and collect the fee for 15 years from initial levy and authorizes renewal. Requires the sheriff of East Baton Rouge Parish to collect the fee in the same manner and at the same time as ad valorem taxes and requires that any unpaid fee be added to the parish tax rolls and enforced with the same authority and subject to the same penalties and procedures as unpaid ad valorem taxes. Authorizes the board to enter into an agreement with the sheriff to authorize the sheriff to retain a collection fee.

New law requires the district's board to adopt an annual budget in accordance with existing law (R.S. 39:1301 et seq. – The La. Local Government Budget Act) and provides that the district shall be subject to audit by the legislative auditor.

New law provides that it is the intent of new law that the additional law enforcement personnel and 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 of Baton Rouge and East Baton Rouge Parish.

New law provides that no board member or officer of the district shall be liable to the district or to any individual who resides, owns property, visits, or otherwise conducts business in the district for monetary damages for breach of his duties as a board member or officer unless the board member performs an act or omission not in good faith or which involves intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law or any transaction from which he derives an improper personal benefit.

Effective upon signature of governor (June 23, 2014).

(Adds R.S. 33:9097.22)