

**The Legislative Committee of the Acadia Parish Police Jury met on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, at 9:00 AM in the Police Jury Meeting Room.**

Roll call was taken. Present were Pat Daigle, Jeffery Morgan, and Paul Ed Guidry. A quorum was present.

The item for this agenda is: Discussion on whether to recommend the Police Jury to remove/exempt certain parcels of land from Acadia Parish Economic Development District No. 1 as requested by parcel owners.

A discussion was held by Luke Dupre, Acadia Parish Police Jury Attorney, regarding the Economic Development Districts purpose. Mr. Dupre explained that the economic development district was created following a detailed study conducted in coordination with the parish engineer, the Chamber of Commerce, and economic development and housing experts, and was not arbitrarily established by the Police Jury. He stated that the purpose of the district is to incentivize economic development by allowing additional district-specific revenues, including a 2% sales tax and hotel/motel tax, to fund infrastructure and improvement projects within the district such as roads, bridges, drainage, lift stations, utilities, or parks, provided they foster economic development. Mr. Dupre noted that large-scale business developments often require substantial infrastructure investments that would be unreasonable to fund from the parish-wide budget for the benefit of a limited area, and the district model ensures that such costs are borne within the district itself. He acknowledged that only businesses located within the district are subject to the additional tax and recognized the inequity faced by those businesses compared to nearby businesses outside the district that do not pay the tax but also do not receive the district's benefits. Mr. Dupre explained that when the district was established, it was anticipated that more businesses would locate within it, which would have generated revenue more quickly; however, with fewer contributing businesses and rising project costs, revenue accumulation has been slower than expected. He advised that potential policy options include encouraging additional businesses to locate within the district, modifying or removing parcels that receive minimal benefit, shrinking the district to focus on areas with greater development potential, dissolving the district, or continuing to study the district while engaging business owners to better align the district boundaries with economic development goals.

A discussion was held by Taylor Henry with Acadia Parish Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development regarding the Economic Development District No. 1. Ms. Henry stated that Economic Development Districts are one of several tools used to generate revenue for parish economic development, similar to other incentives such as PILOTs and tax credits. She noted that she was not involved in the original creation of the district but believes it was established with a long-term vision, emphasizing that economic development is a gradual process that often requires revisiting and refining decisions over time. Ms. Henry explained that the district was created in anticipation of future development and infrastructure needs, including water, sewer, and roads, which cannot reasonably be funded solely through the general parish budget. She highlighted that EDDs help ensure parishes remain competitive for future business investments, both against neighboring states and neighboring parishes, particularly as the state places greater authority in local governments to manage incentives and infrastructure funding. While acknowledging that the district currently holds limited funds, she emphasized that three years is a short timeframe in economic development and cited examples where similar districts took several years before producing visible results. Ms. Henry explained that EDDs are typically created in areas targeted for new growth or revitalization, rather than areas with long-established businesses, and noted that current business concerns largely center on understanding long-term impacts, costs, and plans for district funds. She concluded by encouraging continued discussion and public engagement, stating that if the district is dissolved or amended, the Police Jury should also consider alternative methods for funding future infrastructure investments necessary to attract new businesses to the parish.

Acadia Parish Police Jury President Beau Petitjean held a discussion regarding the upcoming business interested in coming to Acadia Parish. Mr. Petitjean stated that new businesses are already locating within the parish, including a fuel station planned near a highway exit, and noted that one of the primary questions from such businesses is how the parish can assist with necessary infrastructure. He explained that while tax abatements are a common incentive, the administration is cautious in their use and that the economic development district provides an alternative means of assistance by funding infrastructure improvements such as water or sewer lines without granting abatements. Mr. Petitjean noted that businesses locating within the district would generate parish sales tax revenue while also contributing to the district's additional 2% tax, creating a compounding or "snowball" effect as more businesses locate in the area.

Jay Domingue with Reach 4 Connections, who is a business owner in Economic Development District No. 1 held a discussion regarding his concern about being in the district. Mr. Domingue expressed opposition to his business being included in the economic development district, stating that the additional 2% sales tax places a substantial financial burden on his company without providing corresponding benefits. He explained that his business does not rely on or benefit from district-funded infrastructure such as water, sewer, communications, or road improvements, as those services are already in place or privately maintained, yet he is taxed on large material purchases related to building and maintaining broadband infrastructure throughout the parish. He raised concerns regarding the district's non-contiguous structure, noting that revenues collected in one area may be spent in another without benefiting the businesses generating the tax. Mr. Domingue emphasized that his company has operated in the parish for decades, employs local residents, and provides essential internet services, yet is penalized due solely to its location within the district. He acknowledged that the district may have been established legally but stated that legality does not necessarily equate to fairness.

Acadia Parish Police Jury President Beau Petitjean responds to Jay Domingue stating that the economic development district provides a way to assist new businesses with needed infrastructure, such as utilities or access improvements, without relying on tax abatements. He used the example of a fuel station locating within the district, noting that the business did not request abatements but could benefit from infrastructure assistance funded through the district, while still generating parish sales tax revenue and contributing to district funds that may be reinvested in roads and drainage. Mr. Petitjean acknowledged concerns raised by non-retail businesses and stated that the administration has researched whether individual parcels or businesses could be removed from the district, emphasizing that changes must be made thoughtfully and consistently rather than on a case-by-case basis driven by individual objections. He compared the mandatory nature of district taxes to other required business taxes, noting that while the parish understands the burden felt by some businesses, the intent is not to penalize them. Mr. Petitjean stressed that the parish wants affected businesses to succeed and has engaged in ongoing discussions to identify appropriate reforms. He concluded by stating that the committee meeting was convened to evaluate potential reforms in a responsible manner that balances individual business concerns with the parish's obligation to generate revenue and invest in infrastructure for the broader public benefit.

Karen McBride, Reach 4, stated concerns regarding the inclusion of existing businesses within the economic development district, questioning why established businesses were subject to additional taxes rather than limiting the district to future development. While expressing support for economic development in Acadia Parish, she stated that the additional 2% tax operates as a financial penalty for existing businesses that cannot pass the cost on to customers and receive no direct benefit from district-funded infrastructure such as water or sewer services.

Resident at 1517 West Mill stated that his business does not benefit from the economic development district and requested that the committee consider his removal from the district.

Luke Dupre held a discussion explaining that if someone has an issue with how they are being taxed, that is something they need to contact the School Board about.

State Representative Chance Henry stated that use taxes are still necessary for large manufacturing or industrial projects, explaining that if a 500-acre site were developed with a large facility, the cost of infrastructure could be substantial and might require bonding against future district revenues. He noted that broadly exempting all businesses from use taxes would not be practical in those situations because of the volume of materials and infrastructure investment involved. Representative Henry suggested that one possible reform could be to limit or remove the use tax for certain existing non-retail businesses that are unlikely to require substantial future infrastructure investment, while continuing to apply the tax to businesses that will draw heavily on district resources. He noted that any such approach would require careful consideration, potential case-by-case evaluation, and legal review.

Taylor Henry, Acadia Parish Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development, stated that there is no existing model in which every contributor to an economic development district receives a direct and immediate benefit, cautioning against using that standard as the sole measure for determining a viable solution. She noted that while no one likes paying taxes or questioning their personal return, economic development efforts are intended to serve the

broader community over time rather than individual interests alone. Ms. Henry emphasized that public service often requires sacrifice for the greater good and encouraged the committee to pursue a solution that is broadly beneficial, even if it does not satisfy every party. She concluded by stating that economic development is a long-term investment, likening it to planting trees for future generations, and expressed her willingness to continue participating in discussions to move the parish forward collectively.

Alan Lawson, owner of Bocage Crawfish, stated that his business is primarily non-retail and expressed concern that the additional 2% tax on inputs, equipment, and construction places his company at a competitive disadvantage compared to similar businesses located outside the district. He questioned why economic development funding is generated by imposing a higher tax rate on a limited number of businesses rather than applying a lower rate more broadly across the parish. Mr. Lawson stated that while he supports economic development and understands the need for infrastructure investment, he believes the current structure unfairly increases his cost of doing business without providing corresponding benefits. He also raised concerns about the district's creation and public notice process, noting that while the district may have been established legally, many affected businesses were unaware of it at the time. Mr. Lawson concluded by requesting that his business be removed from the economic development district, stating that the current arrangement is not equitable for his operation.

Jared Monk, owner of Jaguar Energy Services, stated that he understands both sides of the issue, noting that existing non-retail businesses bear the cost of the additional 2% tax directly when they cannot pass it on, while new developments such as his planned RV park may benefit from district-funded infrastructure and can pass the cost to end users. He expressed that it would be more equitable to separate or treat differently businesses that receive no direct benefit from the district. Mr. Monk acknowledged that while infrastructure improvements ultimately benefit the broader area when new businesses locate, the financial burden should align more closely with those who receive the benefit.

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMITTEE, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED BY PAUL ED GUIDRY AND SECONDED BY PAT DAIGLE UNTIL THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED COMMITTEE MEETING ON MARCH 3, 2026.**

\_\_\_/s/ Corey Vincent  
COREY VINCENT  
PARISH ADMINISTRATOR