

Public Hearing  
March 7, 2022  
Upcoming tax rededications election

A public hearing was held on March 7, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. in the Police Jury meeting room 200 Court Street, Ste. 207, Ville Platte, La to provide time for public comments and or questions regarding the upcoming elections in regards to the rededications of the Library and Health Unit funds.

Mrs. Linda Lebsack with Friends of the Library addressed the Jury in questioning if the rededication of the tax millages does not pass, then what will be the Police Jury's backup plan. President Bryan Vidrine responded by saying this is the only plan at this time and if not passed then the Jury will have more meetings and see what other options are available. Mrs. Lebsack stated that loss of funding for the Library is concerning due to the need of a new library facility in the Basile area, maintenance needed at the Pine Prairie Library and also the expansion of the main library building.

President Vidrine stated that if the rededication of the taxes is passed by the voters, this will not be a perpetual tax. The tax will be for the remainder of this term which is five years. At the end of that term then the taxes will be put back on the ballot separately for renewal.

Police Jury Legal Counsel, Jacob Fusilier stated that if the Parish cannot handle their financial obligations, then the State will come in and take over all operations and goes into receivership. The Legislative Auditor will appoint a receiver, which will become like a bankruptcy trust. All the parish budgets then are analyzed thoroughly and decide which bills to pay and what positions or areas to cut in order to get the parish back in line financially. There is nothing the people or elected officials can do to stop this. The jail and public safety will be a priority for any receiver because it is mandated by the State.

Secretary-Treasurer, Donald Bergeron explained that regardless is a jail is built or not the funding is needed at this time to help pay for parish inmates. There are currently 157 inmates, with 82 inmates housed outside the parish. This is costing the parish \$2,163 per day. The projected shortfall for this year is (\$234,541). The Jury is currently paying these bills because of federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act. Mr. Bergeron stated that if passed, the tax rededication will assist in paying the monthly housing and maintenance for the parish inmates.

The proposal to rededicate taxes for the Library and Health Unit will be on the Saturday March 26, 2022 election ballot.

Being there were no other comments the hearing was declared closed.

                  /s/ Bryan Vidrine                    
Bryan Vidrine, President

                  /s/ Donald Bergeron                    
Donald Bergeron, Secretary-Treasurer