

Zachary Taylor Parkway Statutes

Begins: RS 48:1801 (updated 10/2010)

§1801. Definitions

For purposes of this Chapter, the following words have the meanings ascribed to them by this Section, except where the context clearly indicates otherwise:

(1) "Commission" means the Zachary Taylor Parkway Commission.

(2) "Department" means the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development.

(3) "District" means the Zachary Taylor Parkway District, which is comprised of the parishes of Avoyelles, East Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, Rapides, St. Helena, Washington, and West Feliciana, and of that portion of the parish of Tangipahoa which lies north of Louisiana Highway 40.

(4) "Parkway" means a four-lane highway traversing the Louisiana Highway 1 and Louisiana Highway 10 corridor, which shall be known as the Zachary Taylor Parkway, which shall have as its western terminus Interstate 49 in the vicinity of Alexandria, which shall cross the Pearl River in the vicinity of Bogalusa, and which shall cross the Mississippi River by way of the bridge which is planned for construction in the vicinity of St. Francisville and New Roads, and which shall have as its eastern terminus the intersection of Mississippi Highway 26 with Interstate 59 near Poplarville, Mississippi.

(5) "Project" means:

(a) The construction of new roadways and bridges.

(b) The improvement or extension of existing roadways and bridges along the route described in Paragraph (4).

Acts 1992, No. 288, §1; Acts 1993, No. 230, §1.

§1802. Declaration of Policy

A. The legislature finds that the planned construction of a bridge across the Mississippi River in the vicinity of the town of St. Francisville and the city of New Roads has highlighted the need for improved access highways that would connect such bridge with Interstate 49 to the northwest and with Interstate 55 and Interstate 59 to the east in order to improve prospects for economic development and tourism in the parishes that would be served by such highways.

B. The legislature also finds that most of the people living in the district are disadvantaged from an economic development standpoint because they are not served by the kind of highways that economic development prospects require. As a result of this lack of an adequate transportation system, unemployment is high throughout most of the district, and a large percentage of young people who grow up in the district move outside the district in order to find suitable employment.

C. The legislature further finds that, in addition, travel by automobile or truck between the eastern portion of the district and the western portion of the district is difficult and unnecessarily time-consuming because the most direct route is by means of two-lane highways that permit a relatively slow average rate of speed.

D. Such conditions are detrimental to the public interest and require governmental action to correct them. Accordingly, it is the public policy of this state in the interest of public health, safety, convenience, and welfare, to promote the construction of a modern four-lane highway connecting the eastern portion of the district with the western portion of the district, to improve employment opportunities in the district by making the district more attractive to economic development prospects and by increasing tourism in the district.

E. The construction of such a highway would further serve the public interest by relieving some of the traffic congestion in the Baton Rouge area and by assisting with any evacuation that might become necessary in connection with the nuclear plant in the parish of West Feliciana.

Acts 1992, No. 288, §1.

§1803. Legislative Intent

It is the intent of the legislature that those responsible for planning and designing the highway will place primary emphasis on the development of a thoroughfare that will increase tourism and will meet the needs of economic development prospects as well as the needs of those industries and agribusiness firms that are currently providing jobs for the people who live in the district. While those responsible for planning and designing the highway will undoubtedly be able to incorporate in the said highway some of the roadways and bridges that are currently a part of Louisiana Highways 1 and 10, they should do so only to the extent that such incorporation is consistent with the goals set forth in this Section.

Acts 1992, No. 288, §1.

§1804. Creation of District and Commission; Powers

A. There is hereby created the Zachary Taylor Parkway District, subject to the conditions hereinafter set forth, which shall be a body politic and corporate and a political subdivision of the state of Louisiana comprising all of the territory within the geographical boundaries of the parishes of Avoyelles, East Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, Rapides, St. Helena, Washington, and West Feliciana, together with all of the territory within the geographical boundaries of the parish of Tangipahoa that lies north of Louisiana Highway 40.

B. There is hereby created the Zachary Taylor Parkway Commission, and the management and control of the district is hereby vested in the commission. The commission shall be domiciled in West Feliciana Parish.

C. The commission is hereby granted all the rights, powers, privileges, and immunities granted to political subdivisions, including but not limited to the following:

(1) To sue and be sued.

(2) To adopt, use, and alter at will a corporate seal.

(3) To initiate and coordinate research studies, and the gathering of information on the project, including but not limited to the following:

(a) Engineering studies.

(b) Traffic flow and pattern studies.

(c) Environmental impact studies.

(d) Location of the proposed route.

(e) Economic development impacts and benefits.

(f) Feasibility of obtaining designation of the highway as a National Defense Highway and as a part of the National Highway System.

(g) Utility relocation.

(h) Right of way acquisition.

(i) Project construction cost/benefit ratio studies.

(j) Feasibility of including the highway in the Louisiana Scenic Byway Program.

(4) To be designated an official repository for information relating to and about the project. As such, the district is empowered to receive and preserve all information gathered by other parties pertaining to the project.

(5) To receive contributions, donations, grants, and appropriations of money or other things of value from any public or private source.

(6) To enter into a cooperative endeavor by written agreement with the state or with any other public or private entity.

(7) To employ such persons as employees and to enter into such contracts for services as it deems advisable, but the commission shall not enter into any contract for the design or construction of the project or any portion thereof.

(8) To work jointly or in cooperation with the state of Mississippi in the planning and development of the parkway and to carry out the purposes of this Chapter.

D. The commission shall not design any portion of the project, engage in or supervise the construction of any portion of the project, nor maintain any portion of the project.

Acts 1992, No. 288, §1; Acts 1993, No. 230, §1.

§1805. Commission; Appointment, Term, and Related Matters

A. The commission shall be composed of one voting member from each of the eight parishes comprising the district, and of the mayors of all municipalities located in the district, who shall serve as nonvoting members. The voting commission member from each parish shall be appointed by the parish president, except in a parish where there is no parish president, in which case he shall be appointed by the president of the police jury; however, each such appointment shall be subject to the approval of the parish governing body. Persons appointed to membership on the commission shall be qualified voters and shall not be members of the parish governing body. All voting and nonvoting members of the commission shall be given notice of all meetings by the secretary of the commission.

B.(1) The initial term of members appointed from the parishes of Avoyelles, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, and Washington shall be one year. The initial term of members appointed from the parishes of East Feliciana, Rapides, Tangipahoa, and West Feliciana shall be two years. All terms after the initial terms shall be for a period of two years. The initial term of each member shall commence on the effective date of that member's appointment. All terms shall end on the thirty-first day of August. All terms other than the initial terms shall commence on the first day of September.

(2) Notwithstanding any provision of R.S. 42:3.2 to the contrary, members of the commission shall not serve more than twelve consecutive years beginning with appointments made on or after January 1, 2011.

C. A voting member of the commission may be removed by the appointing authority for just cause. In case of abandonment of his office, conviction of a felony, or a plea of nolo contendere thereto, the office of a voting member shall become vacant upon the declaration of a majority of the other voting members of the commission. A voting member shall be deemed to have abandoned his office upon failure to attend any three consecutive meetings of the commission, unless the member's absence was excused by the commission in response to the member's request, or unless the member was represented by the alternate member who resides in the same parish as the member.

D. Commission members shall not receive per diem and shall not be reimbursed for expenses incurred in connection with attending meetings of the commission. The commission may authorize reimbursement of expenses incurred by a commission member in the performance of a task specifically assigned to such member by the commission.

E. The commission shall elect from its members a chairman and a vice chairman for terms to expire on the thirty-first day of August of each year. The chairman may vote to create a tie vote or to

break a tie vote, but the chairman shall not otherwise be entitled to vote. The commission shall elect for the same term a secretary, who may be, but who is not required to be, a member of the commission.

F. The commission shall hold at least one regular meeting during each calendar quarter. Special meetings may be called by the chairman. The secretary of the commission shall call a special meeting of the commission when requested in writing to do so by four or more members of the commission. In such event, the members requesting the special meeting shall furnish the secretary of the commission with the agenda for the meeting, which agenda shall be included in the notice of the meeting.

G. The parish officer empowered to appoint members to the commission shall appoint an alternate member at the same time as the appointment of the member is made. The appointment of the alternate member shall also be subject to the approval of the parish governing body. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, that member may be represented by the alternate member from that parish.

H. A quorum shall consist of five members. A majority of the members present at a meeting may exercise all the powers of the commission if a quorum is present at the commencement of the meeting.

I. In the event a commission member's position on the commission should become vacant by reason of death, resignation, or otherwise, the alternate member for that parish shall serve for the unexpired portion of the term. Any vacancy in the position of an alternate commission member shall be filled by the appointing authority for the parish represented by the alternate commission member.

J. The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development or his designee shall serve as an advisor to the commission. The directors of the Zachary Taylor Parkway Association, a nonprofit corporation, shall also serve as advisors to the commission. Notice of all meetings of the commission shall be given to the secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development and to the president of the association.

Acts 1992, No. 288, §1; Acts 1993, No. 230, §1; Acts 2008, No. 885, §§1, 2; Acts 2010, No. 207, §1, eff. Jan. 1, 2011.

§1806. Advice and services of the Department of Transportation and Development; Interstate Cooperation

The department is authorized to work jointly or in cooperation with the state of Mississippi, and to provide such advice and services to the commission as will, in the opinion of the secretary of the department, tend to achieve the objectives of this Chapter.

Acts 1992, No. 288, §1; Acts 1993, No. 230, §1.