Confusion remains over who is mayor

By BRUCE SCHULTZ
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ABBEVILLE — An agreement was reached Wednesday which may end a controversy between the newly elected mayor, Brady Broussard, and the outgoing mayor, Larry Campisi, but confusion remains over who officially is the mayor.

Broussard will assume mayoral duties on May 31, but Larry Campisi will continue functioning as mayor until May 30. But the agreement stipulates that Broussard's swearing-in this past Monday was proper.

The agreement was hammered out in a meeting lasting several hours between Campisi and Broussard, who have been battling over the date of Broussard's succession. Campisi had contended he should remain in office until July 1, but Broussard asserted that an newly elected mayor could take office upon being sworn in and commissioned.

One question involved is which takes precedence - the city's home-rule charter or the state laws dealing with mayors; the situation would be, "Hebert said,"法定 as to exactly what takes precedence.

Both parties will have to agree on the terms of compromise, and some details have not been worked out yet, Hebert said. For example, the question remains whether both men will receive a salary as mayor for May.

Shelton Picard, at-large councilman who also was defeated in April, said Broussard was legally correct to assume office Monday, when Broussard received his commission from the secretary of state's office. Campisi should have stepped aside, Picard said.

But Hebert said the compromise was only a "cease-fire," it "caused further confusion.

"In other words you have two mayors really," Picard said. "It doesn't make any sense." Picard said he's not sure if he's still on the council.

"I don't think the new councilman-at-large was sworn in, not that I know," he said.

"It's not clear in my mind whether I'm on the council now, unless you have two sets of councils also," he added.

Broussard was sworn in as mayor on May 5. Campisi will continue to perform the duties of the office until May 30. I can't say any more than that," Conque said. "Draw your own conclusions."

"The two guys are not going to comment either," Conque said.

Broussard and Campisi said they promised each other not to comment further on the matter.

Campisi's attorney, Calvin Woodruff of Abbeville, could not be reached for comment.

Broussard's attorney, Irby Hebert of Abbeville, admitted the situation is confusing.

"It's confusing to start off with, and that's why probably a court decision on it... would have been more definitive as to exactly what the situation would be," Hebert said.

Campisi and Broussard came to terms because they "wanted to save the city and future adverse publicity," Hebert said.

The consent judgment probably will be drawn up by Monday, and it will have to be signed by a district court judge, Hebert said, although judges typically do not play an active role in such agreements.

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