Head Start Plan Organized Here

The Lafayette Parish Council, the newly organized official agency to reinstitute an anti-poverty program in this area, moved to give the parish school board authority to operate the Head Start program here, Rev. James L. Stovall, acting chairman for the council's executive committee, announced today.

The action was taken at the council's first official meeting yesterday at 5 p.m. in city hall.

Representatives of the school board attending the meeting said they would operate the Head Start program this summer and also in the fall. If the Parish Council declared them to be the delegate agency, Stovall said.

In response, the Parish Council voted to authorize its executive committee, a seven-member body, to study the proposal submitted by the school board, and to declare the board to be the delegate agency to operate the program, provided their proposal is adequate and in order.

The Council was confident that it would have the power and the funds to begin the Head Start program, because a representative of the state office of the Office of Economic Opportunity, Cornelius Bridges, was present at the meeting. He advised the organization that $1,300,000 of government funds was on hand for Acadia, St. Landry and Vermilion parishes. "If the committee approves the school board's proposal, it is expected that we will get our proportionate share," Rev. Stovall stated.

About six weeks ago, when the Council was not officially organized but consisted of a group of interested citizens, the group was given the assurance that if they would form a council composed of 12 representatives from public agencies, 12 from private agencies and 12 from the poor, the council could become the instrument for renewing the poverty program in this parish, Rev. Stovall said.

"The group was also given the assurance that the Head Start program could be funded immediately," he added.

The decision on whether the school board's proposal is acceptable to the council, will be made by the council's executive board at a meeting to be held at 3:30 p.m. today in the school board office.

Six other members of the executive committee, in addition to Rev. Stovall, elected by the estimated 50 people attending were: Charles Finley, elected vice chairman; Mrs. Jesse Taylor, secretary; and Kenny Bowen, treasurer.

"It is expected that within the near future, representatives from the council will join with representatives from other parishes," the executive committee chairman said. "In order to bring the full benefits of the anti-poverty program to this parish and other parishes,"