Jury amends liquor hours

By MARK PLAISANCE
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NAPOLEONVILLE — Businesses in Assumption Parish soon must stop selling alcoholic beverages at 2 a.m. except on designated holidays, the Police Jury decided Wednesday.

Also, the jurors put on hold a request to the state Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Affairs Division, that would establish a landfill site in the Bertrandville area. Instead they agreed to advertise for equipment to convert the site into a transfer location.

The jury voted 7-2 for the alcoholic beverage ordinance. It will take effect April 1, which gives the jury enough time to inform the public of the new law. Businesses which derive more than 60 percent of their profits from the sale of alcoholic beverages must close between 2:30 and 6 a.m.

The ordinance was opposed by jurors Allen Daze and Lawrence Gros. Gros attempted to delay a vote on the issue but failed when his motion to table discussion did not receive a second.

"I think we should meet with the public," Gros said. "The barrooms, it ought to be up to themselves (when to close)."

He also proposed reopening bars at 8 a.m. instead of 6 a.m. "The drunks just have enough time to sober up (at 6 a.m.)," he said.

President Paul Cancienne said the ordinance is similar to that of neighboring parishes and will aid in freeing sheriff's deputies from a normally troublesome problem.

Juror Murvin Theriot asked to allow bars to remain open an additional two hours on weekends, but he didn't include that in his motion.

Violation of the ordinance can result in a fine of up to $500 or six months in jail, both fine and jail, or suspension or revocation of the alcoholic beverage permit.

The ordinance does not apply on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, July 4 and any other day the jury so designates.

Jurors estimate that more than 90 businesses in the parish will be affected by the ordinance.

In other business, the jury decided to delay an application to the solid waste department of the state Department of Natural Resources which would permit construction of disposal sites in the Bertrandville area. Rather, it agreed to advertise for equipment to make a transfer site.

The proposed transfer site, which the jury originally mentioned in July 1982 as a landfill site, drew considerable protest at that time from residents in the Ward 6 community.

Members of Assumption Parish Concerned Citizens met with parish officials, and a dozen members of the group picketed outside the jury building with signs that said "Dump the Dump" and "Why Beautify Bertrandville With a Dump?"

The residents complained that the dump site is in the middle of a residential neighborhood and poses a serious threat.

Cancienne told the people that Bertrandville is the only area in which a landowner offered to sell property to the jury.

If a landfill eventually is established, it would be the only solid waste location in the parish. The jury has two trash dump sites and transports garbage to a landfill in Sorrento.

The transfer site would make it possible to compact solid waste and to destroy old trees and branches in a furnace.