Acadia Jury OKs 1-18 bridge repairs

By JO CART
Advocate correspondent

CROWLEY — The Acadia Parish Police Jury resolved a 4-year-old problem Tuesday by approving repairs for a bridge connecting Acadia Parish Road 1-18 to Yates Road in Lafayette Parish.

While the bridge has been closed for repairs, farmers and landowners were forced to detour about 30 miles.

The jury authorized paying its half of the $50,000 repair bill.

A letter from engineer Bill Campbell indicated that Lafayette Parish funds are available as well and that work is expected to begin shortly. The state has promised to loan some equipment for the project.

Another bridge on Parish Road 1-18 did not fare as well.

Lynn Richard said the bridge, which is located south of Church Point, was closed for repairs last week. He was told that the cost for replacing the 168-foot-long bridge would be about $240,000 and that no funds are available.

Richard said he believes the bridge could be repaired much more cheaply and said the need is critical.

The jury discussed the possibility of using solid waste funds for such repairs.

Board attorney Ron Bertrand said a ruling on the legality of such a move has not been received from the state attorney general.

In other action, the jury unanimously approved declaring Sept. 15 as John Breaux Day in the parish. Jurors said the action was appropriate because Breaux is a Crowley native.

"It might be the last chance that Democrats in Acadia Parish have to elect a U.S. senator from our area," said a letter requesting the action. The letter was signed by Acadia Parish Sheriff Ken Goss, Clerk of Court Andrus Barousse and Assessor Russell Benoit.

Also sponsoring the day — which will include a tour of the parish and a supper of red beans and rice for $10 a plate in Crowley — are state Sen. Cecil Picard, D-Abbeville; state Rep. Donald Thibodeaux, D-Crowley; District Attorney Nathan Stansbury; and the Acadia Parish Democratic Executive Committee.

In other action, the jury:

- Approved a recommendation from its Solid Waste Committee to immediately terminate all pending transactions concerning the movement of solid waste into the parish.

- Approved a millage adjustment for the Acadia-Evangeline Fire Protection District from .93 to .97 mills.
- Appointed Dr. John W. Williams to another six-year term on the Acadia-St. Landry Hospital Service District Board, starting Oct. 1.
- Approved transferring two polling places. The voting place at the National Guard Armory, which is closing Sept. 15, will move to the Redemptorist School. To increase access for the handicapped, the School Board Media Center will replace the polling place that had been located at the Farm Bureau building.
- Adopted a resolution to start work on two drainage projects involving Lyons Point Gully, at a total cost of $1,241,000. Of that figure, 30 percent will be paid by a millage from the two affected drainage districts. The other 70 percent was provided by the Legislature.
- Agreed to hold a special meeting in the next two weeks to study a bingo ordinance. The state is requiring that local governments adopt bingo ordinances by Sept. 28.