Mayor May Hire Director
To Operate Cajundome
WITHOUT CIVIL SERVICE

By KATHLEEN THAMES
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A bill which would possibly enable the city to hire a Cajundome manager without going through the Civil Service process is expected to be pulled before the Legislature can vote on it, Mayor Dud Lastrapes said today.

But Lastrapes said that doesn't mean the manager will be a Civil Service employee.

"We can hire a manager through my office," he said. "We talked with our Civil Service director, Lee Eilers, and he has no problem with it."

A 1958 law requires that a municipal auditorium manager be a Civil Service employee. But members of the Cajundome Management Board, a citizen's advisory committee, were interested in creating an option to allow the city to possibly hire a non-classified auditorium manager.

Seeking A Change

Board chairman William Broadhurst asked local legislators to introduce a late bill to amend that 1958 law. They filed the bill.

But Lastrapes said that, in the meantime, city officials have decided they can hire a manager without a change in the law. The manager would be an assistant to the mayor, which is a non-classified position, Lastrapes said.

"We can do the same thing" is what we're saying," Lastrapes said.

So far he has heard no opposition to the plan from members of the Cajundome Management Board.

Broadhurst was unavailable for comment this morning.

Lastrapes said he is not concerned about possible allegations that he could "control" a manager since he would be hired through the mayor's office.

"You Have To Answer"

"You have to answer to some public official somewhere," he said.

One reason for pulling the amendment to the Civil Service Law before a vote is that an important legal question is yet unanswered, the mayor said. That is: Would the city's home rule charter have to be changed if the Civil Service law is amended? A referendum, which is a slow procedure, must usually be called to alter the city's charter.

City officials are anxious to hire a Cajundome manager. They have already started advertising for that position and hope to hire a manager by September.

If the city hires a Cajundome manager through the mayor's office, the Cajundome Management Board would still participate in screening applicants for the job, Lastrapes said.

"We'll all be involved. We want them to be involved," he said.