Assumption Police Jury to consider property tax

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NAPOLEONVILLE — Assumption Parish residents soon could be asked to vote on a property tax proposal to support Assumption General Hospital.

The Police Jury voted Wednesday night to meet in special session Monday to discuss the possibility of calling an election to levy a property tax not exceeding 5 mills to support the hospital. The hospital presently does not collect a millage tax.

The jury signed a contract earlier this year with Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center in Baton Rouge to operate the parish-run hospital for $250,000 a year.

Jurors previously had discussed the likelihood of asking voters to approve the revenue-raising measure because of declining parish funds.

The special meeting will be held at the hospital at 6:30 p.m.

In another matter, the jury continued its attempt to reduce the $900,000 operating deficit for the proposed 1987 budget.

Jurors languished over the $4.7 million budget during a lengthy finance committee meeting held before the jury's regular meeting.

Jurors looked at more cuts bringing the proposed deficit to $495,000.

Jury President Joe Harrison Jr. said the deficit for next year "is something we can work with." The jury started 1986 with a $700,000 deficit.

Parish Manager Jimmy Clement reported that the $150,000 solid waste budget could be cut by 50 percent by laying off three employees and limiting trash pickup to only five months out of the year.

In order to save $75,000 the jury could stop picking up trash year around and only pick up trash three times each year, Clement said.

He said trash pickup could take place in April and May to handle the trash put out as a result of spring cleaning and again in September and October. Trash pickup trucks also would roll in January to pick up Christmas trees.

"It's a matter of the people getting adjusted to when to put it (trash) out," Clement said, adding that other parishes also have reduced trash pickup to two or three times a year.

In a related item the jury decided not to appropriate the $2,500 needed for the Clerk of Court's Office to conduct a registered voter canvass.

Parish Registrar Sherry Delambre said state law requires all registrars to conduct a voter canvass of one-fourth of the precinct in the parish each year.

Jurors said the funds are not available to cover the cost of the canvass. They agreed to send a letter to the State Registrar of Voters Office explaining why the canvass would not be funded.

The jury is expected to finalize its 1987 budget next month.