Police jury president to step down

By TIM TALLEY
River parishes bureau

GONZALES — Ascension Parish Police Jury President Carey Frederic will step down from the jury's most powerful position next week, jurors said Friday.

Vice President Alan J. "Boxcar" Braud of Prairieville is the most likely successor and probably will be appointed by the 11-member jury, authorities said.

Frederic, president for nearly five years, said he will resign the presidency to devote more time to a new retail grocery business he plans to open in about two weeks.

"I'm burned out. I need a little rest. I'd like to get on the sidelines and just take care of my little area," Frederic said. He has represented the St. Amant area on the jury since 1980.

Frederic's resignation was discussed during an informal gathering of nine jurors Thursday night at a Gonzales restaurant. Braud, who sponsored the meeting, said jurors Eleman Babin and Darnell Martinez did not attend.

"The meeting was more or less a supper of police jurors," Braud said. "We just ate supper and shot the bull and then we left."

The meeting did not violate Louisiana's open meetings law because the law exempts social gatherings of public officials when no official action is taken, Braud said. The law requires meetings of public bodies to be announced publicly in advance and to be open to the public.

Juror Thomas "Moose" Pearce, chairman of the jury's finance committee, said Braud has expressed a desire to serve as jury president.

"Boxcar has said something about wanting to serve as president," Pearce said. "I'm not against Carey. Maybe a change might be good."

"Anybody can be president. The president's no big thing," said Juror Milton "Needlenose" Vicknair.

Frederic said the jury has accomplished a great deal under his leadership. Jurors hired a parishwide administrator, placed maintenance crews under a parishwide unit system and adopted a comprehensive policy manual.

The jury also promoted a massive flood-protection project on the parish's east side, revamped the parish's recreation program and successfully renewed the parish's one-cent sales and use tax, he said.

"I'm proud of it. I have no regrets," he said.

Frederic said he hopes the jury will remain unified during the transition.

"We've got a hell of a good group of jurors. I hope they go 10-0 (in approving a new president)," Frederic said.

The Police Jury president is paid $900 a month, $100 more than a juror's pay. Jurors said it is not certain who will succeed Braud as vice president.

"I might be the vice president," Vicknair said.