ENFORCING THE LAW
Vermilion To Penalize Absent Board Members

Members of the Vermilion Parish School Board are to be assessed a $200 penalty for each month they fail to attend a meeting. Absenteeism on local public bodies such as school boards, the parish police jury, and such, slows down governmental operation. If a would-be officeholder offers his candidacy to serve the public, the least the public can expect is attending meetings where decisions are being made that will affect the entire municipality.

The Vermilion board will accept a valid excuse for an absence. The member can present his reason to the executive committee, which will decide if it's valid. If not, that's 100 bucks less from the paycheck next month. Looking at politics in a realistic manner, however, it does not seem likely that the executive committee of almost any public body will be quick to dock one of its own. Who knows? A member of that same committee probably wants to take a day off himself from the next meeting.

The same principle applies to any parish. The Lafayette Parish School Board and Police Jury by large have good attendance, although the Police Jury is known to miss a goodly quota of meetings, both regular and committee. A couple of weeks ago that when a Police Jury committee met, the few present had to go around and corral a couple of jurors who weren't on that committee so that they could have a quorum. The Legislature passed a law some time ago permitting a police jury or a school board to assess a $200 penalty on any member missing a meeting. The law further states that any juror missing a meeting could be fined $25. School boards could still hit a missing member for 20 bucks.

That law is on the books but we've heard of no instance on the local level to levy a $200 fine — or, for that matter — has been collected from a missing member.

The by-law does not apply to non-elective bodies. If it did, and it were enforced, the Charter Commission could really hit it big. Attendance at its meetings has been dismal. The solution in this case is not to turn down an appointment if they don't intend to sit and serve. In the case of elected bodies like police juries and school boards — the law is on the books and it should be put into action.

SPEND MONEY WISELY
Chamber Eyes Approach To Traffic Problem

Public officials and private citizens in Lafayette have said it many times over. In editorial comment and our annual editorial series geared to the betterment of our community, we have called for action. Lafayette is holding back the progress of our city.

Traffic is the No. 1 problem facing Lafayette. Last week the same opinion was expressed in another manner. A meeting was held by the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. The chamber's membership was polled on the major traffic priorities for the city's arterial streets and highways. It is a long and arduous job. This is, of course, a long-term project and a costly one. The problem is eventually it must be done, even if it means an increase in taxation.

Driving through Lafayette is getting an adequate supply of gas, but the city and parish officials aren't spending the money as judiciously as they could. In other words, there isn't the proper, long-range planning on where the traffic dollar should go.

One reason why funds are not being utilized is that an average citizen is not well-informed about the selection and funding of street projects. Therefore, the man on the street may be aware that the traffic problem is of immense proportions, but he is not familiar with the method by which money is doled out by local, state and federal governments to correct arterial deficiencies.

The conclusion by the chamber that a tax program favoring the jugular problem would be launched is a commendable one. If the taxpayer knows the ins and outs of a $200 billion dollar is being spent on the highways and byways, he will be more inclined to give firm support to such a program, even if it means he must pay more for it.

The chamber's survey is definitely a good step, and we hope that it doesn't go the way of too many other surveys. A man on the sidewalk, when asked for his opinion, will turn away. His conclusions concern the thinking of the leadership and that is they who must follow through on making those favored projects a reality.

The present ADVERTISER results from the merger of the original LAFAYETTE ADVERTISER, founded in 1865 and the LAFAYETTE GAZETTE, founded in 1899.

WASHINGTON MERR Bureaucracy

Washington - President Carter has approved the American people to join in the war against inflation. Carter will send Congress three bills that will be aimed at the causes of inflation. The three bills are aimed at the causes of inflation, and the president will send Congress three bills that will be aimed at the causes of inflation. The three bills are aimed at the causes of inflation.

The president should deliver the same lecture to the Congress. The only fact that is certain is that one of the most serious inflationary pressures on the economy is the continuing wage practices by the presidents that control the Defense Department's billion-dollar budget.

Incompetent, negligent or merely lazy personnel permits contractors to charge excessive prices.