

**RS 33:4071**

## PART III. CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

## §4071. Creation and organization of sewerage and water board

A.(1) The public water system, the public sewerage system, and the public drainage system of the city of New Orleans shall be constructed, controlled, maintained, and operated by a sewerage and water board to be composed as follows:

(a) The mayor.

(b) The chair of the Public Works, Sanitation and Environment Committee of the New Orleans city council, a member of the committee appointed by the chair, or a civil engineer appointed by the chair. Any member appointed by the chair shall serve at the pleasure of the chair.

(c) Two syndicate members of the board of liquidation, city debt, to be appointed by the mayor on the recommendation of the board of liquidation, city debt.

(d) Seven citizens, to be appointed by the mayor, with the advice and consent of the city council from a list of nominees submitted by the Sewerage and Water Board Selection Committee.

(e) The members appointed pursuant to Subparagraphs (c) and (d) of this Paragraph shall include one citizen from each of the five councilmanic districts within the city of New Orleans. In addition, two of the appointments shall be consumer advocates with community advocacy or consumer protection experience or experience in a related field.

(2)(a) For purposes of this Section, the Sewerage and Water Board Selection Committee, hereinafter referred to as the "selection committee", is hereby created to be comprised as follows:

(i) The president of Dillard University or the president's designee.

(ii) The president of Loyola University or the president's designee.

(iii) The president of Tulane University or the president's designee.

(iv) The president of Xavier University or the president's designee.

(v) The chancellor of Delgado Community College or the chancellor's designee.

(vi) The chancellor of University of New Orleans or the chancellor's designee.

(vii) The chancellor of Southern University at New Orleans or the chancellor's designee.

(viii) The chair of the board of directors of the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce or the chair's designee.

(ix) The president of the board of directors of the New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce or the president's designee.

(x) The chair of the board of directors of the Urban League of Greater New Orleans or the chair's designee.

(b) Notice of a vacancy on the sewerage and water board shall be published in the official journal for Orleans Parish by the sewerage and water board and shall be communicated through any other publication, website, or electronic medium maintained by the New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board or the city of New Orleans for the purpose of achieving public awareness of the vacancy. Such notice shall advise potential candidates of the residency requirements, professional qualifications, and application deadlines. Such notices shall be published no less than two times within a thirty day period after a vacancy has been declared by the sewerage and water board. Any interested person who meets the qualifications provided for in this Section shall submit an application to the sewerage and water board confirming their eligibility, professional qualifications, and experience. The sewerage and water board shall transmit all applications received to the selection committee within seven days after the deadline for submission of applications.

(c) The selection committee shall meet no less than fifteen days and no more than thirty days after close of the application deadline to consider each name submitted for nomination. Selection committee members may also submit names of persons who also meet the qualification requirements provided in this Section. The selection committee shall verify that each nominee meets such qualification requirements. After a thorough review of each application, the selection committee shall by majority vote submit to the mayor three names for each vacancy on the sewerage and water board.

(d) Within sixty days of receipt of the list of nominees, the mayor shall select one of the three nominees for submission to the city council for approval.

(e) The city council shall have thirty days from receipt of submission of the nomination by the mayor to disapprove the nominee. If the city council does not disapprove the nominee within such time, it shall be deemed that the city council consents to the appointment.

(f) If the city council disapproves the nominee from the mayor, the selection committee shall convene in no less than thirty days and no more than sixty days after disapproval to resubmit three nominees to the mayor.

(g) If for any reason the mayor fails to submit a nomination to the city council within sixty days of receipt of the list of nominees by the selection committee, the selection committee shall submit such list of nominees directly to the city council for selection and approval.

(3) Each nominee shall have experience in either architecture, environmental quality, finance, accounting, business administration, engineering, law, public health, urban planning, facilities management, public administration, science, construction, business management, community or consumer advocacy, or other pertinent disciplines.

(4)(a) For members appointed pursuant to Subparagraphs (1)(c) and (d) of this Subsection, the terms of office shall be four years after initial terms as provided in Subparagraph (b) of this Paragraph. A member shall serve no more than two consecutive terms of office.

(b) Three members shall serve an initial term of one year; three members shall serve an initial term of two years; three members shall serve an initial term of three years; and two members shall serve an initial term of four years, as determined by lot at the first meeting of the board.

(5) If the mayor is unable to attend a meeting of the sewerage and water board, the mayor may be represented at the board meeting by a person designated by the mayor who shall be an unclassified member of the mayor's administration. The person shall have all rights and powers granted to the mayor with regard to any such board meeting including the right to vote and shall be counted for purposes of a quorum.

(6) The appointments to the board shall reflect the racial and gender diversity of the population of the city of New Orleans to the extent practicable.

B.(1) Each of the citizen members shall be a registered voter in Orleans Parish and shall have been a domiciliary of Orleans Parish for two years previous to his appointment.

(2) In the event any appointed member is elected to any office or removes his domicile from Orleans Parish, his membership on the board shall be ipso facto vacated, and his successor shall be immediately appointed.

C. All vacancies occurring in the membership of the board under appointment by the mayor shall be filled in the manner prescribed by this Section for the original appointment.

(2), (3) Repealed by Acts 2013, No. 345, §2.

D. No person who is a stockholder or bondholder in any sewerage or waterworks company or who holds any public office yielding emoluments to the holder other than those specified in this Part shall be eligible for appointment to the board.

E. A quorum of the board shall adopt rules fixing its own meetings and procedures. Any amendments or changes to such rules shall be adopted only after approved by a quorum of the board.

F. Notwithstanding any provisions of law to the contrary, the board may adopt rules and procedures authorizing the adjusting, releasing, or extinguishing of any indebtedness from a customer's sewerage and water bill. The rule shall limit the board's compromising authority to appropriate instances in which any of the following occur:

(1) Instances of error on the part of the district such as equipment failure or process failure, and in such instances, only to the extent the failure increased the customer's indebtedness.

(2) Instances in which an employee of the board, or a person acting on behalf of the board, fails to read a customer's water meter regardless of whether the board has submitted an invoice to the customer for an amount owed during any such period.

(3) Instances of error not on the part of the customer due to unforeseen damage or an extreme weather-related event or mandatory evacuation, and in such instances, only to the extent the situation increased the customer's indebtedness.

(4) Instances where the customer is disproportionately impoverished or needy and qualifies for an adjustment, release, or extinguishment pursuant to an established social welfare program of the district.

Amended by Acts 1950, No. 352, §1; Acts 1954, No. 361, §1; Acts 1968, No. 329, §1; Acts 1974, No. 311, §1; Acts 1984, No. 488, §1, eff. July 6, 1984; Acts 2010, No. 694, §1, eff. Jan. 1, 2011; Acts 2011, No. 101, §1, eff. June 20, 2011; Acts 2013, No. 345, §§1, 2; Acts 2015, No. 445, §1, eff. July 1, 2015; Acts 2018, No. 366, §1; Acts 2020, No. 227, §1, eff. June 11, 2020.

NOTE: See Acts 2010, No. 694, §4, regarding effective date.

NOTE: See Acts 2013, No. 345, §§3, 4 related to effectiveness and board members.

NOTE: See Acts 2018, No. 366, §§2, 3 related to effectiveness and board members.