

BY-LAWS
of the
Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (SWLA-RPC)
Imperial Calcasieu Regional Planning and Development Commission (IMCAL)
As Amended on Adoption of Resolution No. 2021-2177 on July 22, 2021

Article I. Name

The name of this commission is transitional. The original and current name is identified as the Imperial Calcasieu Regional Planning and Development Commission (IMCAL) with a Board sponsored transition to the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (SWLA-RPC) as state (Revised Statutes) and local member governments (Code of Ordinances) approve and adopt.

Article II. Purpose

The agency shall be an instrumentality of the parishes in Southwest Louisiana identified as Planning District 5 by the State Legislature including the parishes of Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron and Jefferson Davis operating in public service capacities deemed appropriate by law and participating member governments.

Article III. Mission Statement

The Mission of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission is to engage our members, identify their needs, wants and shovel ready projects, plan for those projects and implement those plans with sustainability and resiliency. In summary, “Engage, Identify, Plan and Implement”.

Article IV. Legal References

1. Sections 131 through 140 of Title 33, Louisiana Revised Statutes and amendments and supplements thereto;
2. Act 472 of 1977, creating the Planning and Development Districts in Louisiana, Sub-part F of Part 4 of Chapter I of the Title 33:140.61 and 140.62.
3. Those powers and duties delegated the Regional Planning Commission by the appointing authorities of the membership and approved by the Board of Directors.

Article V. Membership

Membership in the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission operating district is voluntary and is subject to qualifications established by the Board of Directors.

Membership eligible governments and governmental entities are:

1. Parish governments
2. Municipal governments
3. Parish Economic Development Districts
4. Local Harbor, Terminal, and Industrial Development Districts
5. Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
6. Other Special Purpose Districts and Authorities

Article VI. Annual Membership Dues

The Board of Directors shall meet in May of each year to review and adopt an annual budget to operate the Regional Planning Commission for the new fiscal year beginning July 1st. The Board shall consider and adopt membership dues for the fiscal year at the May Budget Meeting. Membership dues shall reflect goals, objectives and services defined for the Regional Planning Commission operating each year in the approved annual budget. Membership dues for parishes and municipalities are based on most recent per capita estimates of the U.S. Census Bureau. Membership dues for economic development districts, port, harbor, terminal and industrial districts and other special purpose districts shall be a fixed amount. Participating members may be invoiced for annual membership dues monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually as convenient to the participating member. The Board of Directors shall monitor dues payments for necessary budget adjustments.

Article VII. Board of Directors

Representation Seats

The Board of Directors shall consist of not more than thirteen (13) members who shall be appointed as follows:

One representative from each of the following parishes: Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron and Jefferson Davis who shall be the Parish President or his/her designated representative who shall serve for not less than a one-year term.

One representative from each of the following municipalities: DeRidder, Jennings, Lake Charles, Oakdale, Sulphur and Westlake who shall be the municipal mayor or his/her designated representative who shall serve for not less than a one-year term.

One mayor selected in rotation for two-year terms from municipalities with less than 5,000 population within the Southwest Louisiana Planning District 5 Region.

One local port, harbor, terminal, industrial or special purpose district director in rotation for two-year terms representing one of the following: West Calcasieu Parish, Cameron Parish Port, Harbor and Terminal District, Lake Charles Harbor & Terminal District, Port of Vinton, Chennault International Airport and Special Purpose District.

Board Meetings

The Board of Directors shall meet in months of the year as designated at first meeting in July and discretionary call of the Chair when deemed necessary.

First Meeting of the Year

- 1) The first meeting of the Board each year shall occur in July.
- 2) Board members shall be recognized and formally confirmed for the new operating year.
- 3) Chair shall be elected by majority vote of the Board.
- 4) Vice Chair shall be elected by majority vote of the Board
- 5) Treasurer shall be elected by majority vote of the Board
- 6) Secretary shall be elected by majority vote of the Board
- 7) First Resolution of the year shall be identifying and authorizing any two of the following officers to sign all checks issued by the Regional Planning Commission: Chair, Vice Chair or Treasurer.
- 8) Review and approve previous meeting Minutes of the Board of Directors
- 9) Review and approve a Reserve Fund Balance needed for the new fiscal year.

- 10) Consider individual nominations to Chair Permanent Standing Committees of the Regional Planning Commission with preference given to elected officials in the Southwest Louisiana Region.
- 11) Review and approve the Order of Business for Board Meetings.
- 12) Adopt a tentative schedule of meetings for the operating year: July, September, November, January, March, May and June.
- 13) Election of Board officers for Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary shall be held each year in January. Said officers to serve a term of one year. A majority vote of the Board members present at the January meeting shall determine election. New elected officers shall assume their respective positions and responsibilities effective February 1st each year.

Board Vacancies

Board member vacancies held by a designated representative during operating year shall be filled by appointment of parish president, mayor or director as appropriate.

Board Member Terms

Police Jury/Parish Presidents may serve for duration of their elected position.

Municipal mayors may serve for duration of their elected position unless subject to rotation as noted in these By-Laws

Directors may serve on rotation for two years.

Meeting Quorum

Quorum requirement for a business meeting of the Board of Directors shall be seven (7) members.

Meeting Notices

All meetings of the Board of Directors shall be posted with meeting agenda five calendar days prior to meeting date as follows:

- 1) Front door of building where meeting is to be held.
- 2) Website of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (IMCAL)
- 3) Legal Section of designated local official journal

And distributed electronically as follows:

- 1) Board Members (agenda with attachments)
- 2) Local Media (agenda)
- 3) Permanent Standing Committee Members (agenda with attachments)
- 4) Public (as requested)

Public Statements Responsibilities

Chair of the Board of Directors shall be the official voice of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (IMCAL) or in his/her absence, the Vice Chair. Members of the Board may make personal public statements related to the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission's work and responsibilities but shall not represent themselves as speaking on behalf of the Commission.

Voting Requirements

No action of the Board of Directors shall be authorized unless approved by a majority vote of quorum achieved meeting members present and open to the public. Proxy votes are not allowed. When a mayor or police jury/parish president has appointed a designated term limited representative, the designated representative shall be official vote caster in a meeting.

Executive Director

Employment of an Executive Director for administration and management of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (IMCAL) is at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors.

Responsibilities

The Board of Directors, in addition to normal required actions necessary for policy making decisions, shall specifically review and approve the following:

- 1) Annual operating budget and any amendments thereto.
- 2) Annual review and approval of administrative Rules of Policy and Procedure.
- 3) All contracts, agreements, cooperative endeavors, and memorandums of understanding.
- 4) SWLA-RPC (IMCAL) indebtedness, Letters of Credit and other financial commitments.
- 5) Southwest Louisiana Regional Comprehensive Plan and any amendments thereto.
- 6) Formal recommendations made by the Regional Planning Commission's Permanent Standing Committees.
- 7) Specific/Special enterprise service programs and projects for member governments.
- 8) Recognition of each member government's Comprehensive Master Plan priorities defined in five-page summaries and any amendments.

Article VIII. Responsibilities of Officers

Officers are elected in January of each year to serve a term of twelve months beginning February 1 and ending January 31. Members may be elected to any officer position twice separately or consecutively.

Chair: The Chair of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (IMCAL) shall set and approve all meetings of the Board of Directors both scheduled and special call. The Chair shall call all meetings of the Executive Committee as determined necessary. The Chair shall approve all meeting agenda items for the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee.

Vice Chair: The Vice Chair of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (IMCAL) shall fulfill responsibilities of Chair when the Chair is absent and unable. Vice Chair shall review and submit to the Chair all formal recommendations received from the Permanent Standing Committees for action deemed appropriate.

Treasurer: The Treasurer of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (IMCAL) shall review all financial reports and financial documents affecting operating budget for submittal to the Board of Directors for action.

Secretary: The Secretary of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (IMCAL) shall review all draft resolutions and meeting minutes to be considered for approval and adoption by the Board of Directors prior to submittal. The Secretary shall be responsible for confirming all Board meeting public notices and postings.

Article IX. Permanent Standing Committees

The Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (IMCAL) shall maintain permanent standing committees responsible for coordinating planning district administration, initiatives, programs and projects by member governments and priorities determined essential to the Region. With exception of the Executive Committee, Permanent Standing Committee Chairs and members serve at discretion of the Board of Directors.

1) Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee shall include five members: Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, and Past Chair. The Executive Committee is established to meet and act for the Board of Directors between meetings of the Board when determined necessary by the Chair. The Executive Committee shall be the appeal board for all matters affecting personnel, litigation, contracts, agreements, and mitigation. Four members present for the Executive Committee meeting constitute a quorum to conduct business.

2) Transportation Committee.

The Transportation Committee shall be comprised of not less than five members and not more than eleven members including appointed Committee Chair. Membership on committee shall be preferentially offered to elected officials but allowable to others with transportation planning and implementation experience. The Board of Directors shall approve all members to the Transportation Committee. Meeting quorums and formal actions taken on recommendations to the Board are established by the Committee.

The Transportation Committee is tasked with preparation, maintenance and amendments to the Southwest Louisiana Regional Transportation Plan, including all modes, Coordination with short and long range transportation plan improvements programmed for urban areas by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development for the region, and local governments including parishes, municipalities, harbor ports, air ports and rail entities are primary responsibilities of the Regional Transportation Committee.

3) Planning and Community Development Committee.

The Planning and Community Development Committee shall be comprised of not less than seven members and not more than eleven members including the appointed Committee Chair. Membership on the committee shall be preferentially offered to elected officials but allowable to others with planning and community development experience. The Board of Directors shall approve all members to the Planning and Community Development Committee. Meeting quorums and formal actions taken on recommendations to the Board are established by the Committee.

The Committee is tasked with several responsibilities including but not limited to specifically, preparation, maintenance and amendments to the Southwest Louisiana Regional Comprehensive Plan and the Southwest Louisiana Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS). Community development initiatives for the planning district are coordinated through the Committee and may be broad ranging.

The Southwest Louisiana Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) Committee is a subpart of the Planning and Community Development Committee. The CEDS Committee is the principal facilitator of the CEDS process and is responsible for developing and updating the CEDS.

4) Housing Committee.

The Housing Committee shall be comprised of not less than seven members and not more than fifteen members including the appointed Committee Chair. Membership on committee shall be preferentially offered to elected officials but allowable to others with housing related experience. The Board of Directors shall approve all members to the Housing Committee. Meeting quorums and formal actions taken on recommendations to the Board are established by the Committee.

The responsibilities of the Housing Committee include developing and maintaining a regional housing plan, facilitating strategic housing investments such as financing, trades training, context design, and coordination of housing services and resources such as a clearinghouse for housing information throughout the Southwest Louisiana Region.

5) GIS and Technology Committee.

The GIS and Technology Committee shall be comprised of not less than five members and not more than seven members including the appointed Committee Chair. Membership on committee shall be preferentially offered to elected officials but allowable to others with geographic information system and technology related experience. The Board of Directors shall approve all members to the GIS and Technology Committee. Meeting quorums and formal actions taken on recommendations to the Board are established by the Committee.

The responsibilities of the GIS and Technology Committee include several elements beyond geographical digital mapping systems. Software development in community services needed by and provided to member governments is a primary focus of the Committee. Communication technology, a rapidly expanding component of economic development, planning, community development and transportation, requires a continuous understanding and application. Tasks of the Committee are to facilitate development and integration of advancing technology in the delivery of member services to the public. The GIS and Technology Committee may help support and coordinate its work with other Permanent Standing Committees of the Regional Planning Commission.

6) Designated Special/Major Projects Committee.

The Designated Special/Major Projects Committee shall be comprised of not less than five members and not more than seven members including the appointed Committee Chair. Membership on committee shall be preferentially offered to elected officials but allowable to others with an interest in designated major projects of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission. The Board of Directors shall approve all members to the Designated Special/Major Projects Committee. Meeting quorums and formal actions taken on recommendations to the Board are established by the Committee.

There are from time to time special or major projects of critical importance to the Southwest Louisiana Region where an enhanced emphasis or need has been recognized. When identified and determined by the Board of Directors, special/major projects shall be studied, planned, facilitated, and coordinated and advanced by the work tasks of the Designated Special Major Projects Committee.

Article X. Administrative Services Support

The Southwest Regional Planning Commission (IMCAL) may be requested and may provide coordination and administrative responsibilities for a variety of functions not directly regulated or responsible to the Board of Directors. An example is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which functions independently of the Board but is provided management, administrative, staff and contractual capacities.

Article XI. General

- Section 1. Officers and members of the Board of Directors shall serve without compensation.
- Section 2. The Executive Director shall be responsible for management of Planning Commission staff and execution of approved and adopted instruments by the Commission.
- Section 3. The administration and management of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission (IMCAL) shall be conducted through the Rules of Policy and Procedure and these By-Laws adopted by the Board of Directors as amended.
- Section 4. Amendments to these By-Laws shall be made by a two-thirds vote of members present for a meeting of the Board of Directors.
- Section 5. The fiscal year of the Southwest Louisiana Regional Planning Commission/Imperial Calcasieu Regional Planning and Development Commission (IMCAL) is July 1st through June 30th.
- Section 6. Financial accounting records of the SWLA-RPC/IMCAL shall be professionally audited each year.
- Section 7. "Robert's Rules of Order" as amended shall be parliamentary authority for all matters of procedures not covered by the By-Laws and Rules of Policy and Procedure adopted by the Board of Directors.