

Bossier Parish Police Jury
Attn: President Tom Salzer
P.O. Box 70
Benton, LA 71006
Submitted via email

July 31, 2026

Re: July 15, 2026 Agenda Violated Open Meetings Law Requirements



PO Box 56157
New Orleans, LA 70156
504-522-0617
laaclu.org

Sarah Whittington
Advocacy Director

Dear Police Jury President Salzer and members of the Bossier Parish Police Jury:

We write today to raise two key concerns about the anticipated inclusion of agenda Item 22 from the July 15, 2026 Police Jury agenda on the upcoming August 5, 2026 agenda.¹ Item 22 purports to criminalize the entering or remaining in a restroom or locker room facility that does not match a person's defined biological sex after being requested to leave. While, to date, the agenda for the follow-on August 5, 2026, meeting has not been published online, news reports indicate that the ordinance referenced in Item 22 will lie over and be voted on at the August 5th meeting. Because this ordinance seeks to create a new crime in Bossier Parish, strict adherence to the open meetings laws is not only necessary, it is legally required. As the Policy Jury has not followed the law to date, the ACLU of Louisiana is asking it to repair this oversight.

Our first concern relates to the insufficient notice to the public of this agenda item. Pursuant to La. R.S. §42:19A(1)(b)(ii)(bb), "[e]ach item on the agenda shall be listed separately and described with reasonable specificity." But Item 22 of the July 15th agenda was vague. It stated only that the Jury would "[c]onsider adoption of an ordinance amending Chapter 78, 'Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions' of the Bossier Parish Code of Ordinances, to add certain sections and subsections." Item 22 does not specify, as it must, that adoption of the ordinance will bar individuals from entering or remaining in multi-occupancy restrooms or lockers rooms that do not match their defined biological sex after being asked to leave under penalty of fine and imprisonment. This is an egregious omission as, right now, Chapter 78 of the Bossier Code of Ordinances only addresses issues unrelated to restroom designation or use.²

As such, adding an entirely new section to Chapter 78 – particularly one that criminalizes the use of public spaces and makes enforcement incumbent on parish staff – without any further context or explanation of the addition and its impacts is unlawful. Indeed, it does not comport with the Code, which requires that agenda items be reasonably specific as to the content, nature, or application of a proposed ordinance. Moreover, the current notice does not include a title, let alone a general description of the

¹ See Bossier Parish Police Jury Agenda, July 15, 2026, https://www.bossierparishla.gov/docs/default-source/police-jury/meeting-documents/meeting-agendas/07-15-2026-bppj-agenda-packet.pdf?sfvrsn=96a8927d_1.

² See Bossier Parish Code of Ordinances, Chapter 78, https://library.municode.com/la/bossier_parish_police_jury/codes/code_of_ordinances, last updated July 15, 2026 (last visited July 31, 2026).

intended changes to this chapter or the potential criminal liability Bossier residents or visitors might face should the ordinance be adopted. That too is patently contrary to the operative statute.

Second, as compared to other proposed ordinances amending the Code of Ordinances that appear on the same agenda of July 15th, Item 22 was neither publicly noticed on the Jury's website³ nor listed on the agenda as a "public hearing."⁴ By way of explanation, Items 14, 15, and 16 were all listed for public hearing as they concerned changes to be made to Chapters 10, 46, and 74 of the Code of Ordinances respectively. Item 16 too, which aims to amend Chapter 74 regarding "Library" ordinances, was noticed for a public hearing on August 19th. Each of these proposed ordinance amendments provides sufficient specificity for a person to formulate an idea of what topic might be covered; they include titles, such as "Public Interest and Special Events" or "Regulation of Noise within the Unincorporated Limits of the Parish of Bossier." This specificity in contrasting circumstances begs the question as to why Item 22 was not noticed and not listed with even a title or any information concerning what offenses the board may or may criminalize during the July 15th meeting.

In the end, if Item 22 were a properly noticed and specific agenda item, there would be an opportunity for critical public comment prior to any actions or decisions by the Police Jury. Indeed, ordinances that seek to criminalize behavior should be fairly considered, and the individuals impacted or charged with enforcement should have an appropriate opportunity to provide comment. Parish staff may very well have issues or concerns about their own personal and professional liability created by this proposed ordinance.

Without proper notice, any action taken by the Police Jury on Item 22 will violate the open meetings laws. La. R.S. §42:19A(1)(b)(ii)(bb). The lack of reasonable specificity previously provided on July 15, 2026 does not allow for proper notice and has thus operated to stifle the ability for the public to provide comment. This runs headlong into the law. Accordingly, rather than move forward with taking any action on the proposed ordinance on August 5th, we ask the Police Jury to provide proper notice in the forthcoming agenda of August 5th so that the instrument (Item 22) will again lie over to provide for public comment and feedback. The law does not allow the Police Jury to wantonly create new crimes in Bossier Parish without providing sufficient notice to the public.

Sincerely,



Sarah Whittington

CC: Patrick Jackson

³ See Bossier Parish Police Jury Public Notices, <https://www.bossierparishla.gov/police-jury/news-events/public-notice/1> (last visited July 31, 2026).

⁴ *Supra* note 1.



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