



JPOIG Overview

Planning Advisory Board Unqualified Appointments #2025-0008

December 17, 2025

Why We Did This Investigation

The Jefferson Parish Office of Inspector General (JPOIG) initiated this investigation after reviewing the 09/17/2025 Council meeting agenda which included a resolution to appoint an individual to the Planning Advisory Board (PAB) for Council District 3. The nominee did not appear to meet the legal qualifications required for PAB membership.

The JPOIG notified the nominating councilmember prior to the meeting. The resolution to appoint the nominee was amended during the Council meeting, and another individual was nominated. The second individual was appointed. Subsequently, the JPOIG investigated the appointment and membership of the PAB. The JPOIG previously issued a report in 2019 identifying the same issue, JPOIG #2018-0028.

What We Recommend

- Replace the unqualified appointee with an individual who meets all criteria established by JPCO §33-1.22.
- Audit the qualifications of all current PAB members, replacing any who do not meet the ordinance requirements.
- Establish formal procedures to verify and document that all Council nominees to Parish boards meet statutory qualifications prior to appointment.

What We Found

The JPOIG's investigation revealed the following:

- ❖ District 3 Councilman Byron Lee nominated individuals for appointment to the Planning Advisory Board (PAB) who did not meet the legal qualifications, specifically, the requirement to own property in Jefferson Parish as set forth in the Jefferson Parish Code of Ordinances (JPCO §33-1.22).
- ❖ The Parish Council, acting as a body, voted to appoint an unqualified individual to the PAB.

The PAB is an advisory body established by Parish Charter and ordinance to conduct public hearings and make recommendations on major land-use and zoning matters in Jefferson Parish. Members receive per diem payments and can meet up to 52 times per year. Because of the significance of the PAB's role, the JPCO requires that members:

- be residents of Jefferson Parish;
- be qualified voters of Jefferson Parish; and
- own property in Jefferson Parish.

These requirements are clear and unambiguous. The failure to verify qualifications resulted in an unlawful appointment.

The JPOIG issued a report in 2019 identifying the same issue—appointment of an unqualified PAB member—and recommended safeguards to prevent recurrence. The persistence of this issue demonstrates a pattern of noncompliance and insufficient oversight of board appointments.

Response

- By letter dated 10/10/2025, Councilmembers directed Research & Budget Analysis to review and vet all council appointments.
- On 10/22/2025, Councilmembers adopted a Resolution directing Planning Advisory Board to study ordinance with intent of evaluating and updating qualifications for PAB.
- On 12/10/2025, Council amended JPCO §33-1.22, *Planning advisory board*, and struck from the qualifications for membership, "Own property in Jefferson Parish."

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