

Gonzales property owners urged to take advantage of Louisiana Certified Economic Development Sites program

GONZALES – Ellyn Couvillion, ecouvillion@theadvocate.com

The nonprofit Ascension Economic Development Corp. is encouraging property owners in Gonzales to take advantage of a statewide program that promotes sites available for development.

While there are currently 10 pieces of property in Ascension Parish listed in the [Louisiana Certified Economic Development Sites](#) program – more than any other parish in the state – there are no sites in Gonzales yet listed, said Mike Eades, AEDC president and chief executive officer of the organization.

“We’re positioning these properties to get to the top of the heap when prospects come to town,” Eades told the Gonzales City Council on Monday, in his semiannual report to council members.

Property certified to be in the program comes ready with information for prospective buyers on title extracts, zoning and survey information, wetlands inventory and more, Eades said.

Property owners, Eades said, pay only 8.5 percent of the approximately \$15,000 cost of the due diligence required to get their land approved for the program.

The AEDC works with the state Department of Economic Development and the Baton Rouge Area Chamber on the program

and is reaching out to several property owners in Gonzales, Eades said.

Mayor Barney Arceneaux opened the City Council meeting by congratulating [City Councilman Kenny Matassa](#), the presumptive winner of Saturday's election for parish president.

The new parish president takes office in January.

If his election stands once the final, official votes are in, Matassa would, according to state election law, submit in the coming weeks a notarized letter of resignation from the council to Secretary of State Tom Schedler, who would officially declare the council seat vacant.

At that point, the city would name an interim appointment to the council seat.

City Clerk Clay Stafford said after Monday's meeting that the appointment would be for all of 2016, with the election for the seat to be part of the open primary elections next fall, when all of the city's council seats will be up for vote.