

Prator asks to lead Caddo Homeland Security

Wednesday, May 14, 2014

Caddo Sheriff Steve Prator has asked to be named director of Homeland Security in Caddo Parish, a move that could save the parish and City of Shreveport nearly \$200,000.

A new director will be needed by June 30 when the Caddo-Bossier Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness is dissolved and separate parish offices are established. State law requires each parish governing body to appoint its own Homeland Security director.

In a letter to Caddo Parish Commission President Doug Dominick, Prator said it makes sense for the Sheriff to serve as director because the Sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer in the parish, including Shreveport, and deputies are already trained in emergency preparedness. Caddo deputies hold national and state certifications in emergency management and as Homeland Protection professionals, and Prator serves as the North District Director of the Louisiana Sheriff's Association Emergency Task Force, which is called upon to assist communities and Sheriff's Offices involved in a disaster.

Last week, Caddo commissioners approved a resolution to create the local Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness office and for the cost of salaries to be divided between Shreveport, Caddo, and the Sheriff's Office. It was estimated that Shreveport would pay \$97,200; Caddo, \$73,800; and the sheriff's office, \$9,000. If the appointment is approved, Prator said the Sheriff's Office would assume all costs associated with the proposed budget, which would save the City and Parish \$171,000 combined.

Prator said the Sheriff's Office and other public safety agencies in Caddo Parish have an established working relationship that has served the citizens well in the past. "The Sheriff's Office works daily with other emergency service agencies throughout our parish. We have the best fire service and law enforcement agencies anywhere, and we would continue to rely on their experience and seek their input in emergency planning. Nothing about their level of participation would change."