



## Crime watchdog seeks ethics probe into Broussard business dealings



The Metropolitan Crime Commission questions whether Jefferson Parish President Aaron Broussard has rented a vacation home he owns at Trout Point Lodge in Nova Scotia to parish contractors.

by Dennis Woltering and Rob Nelson / Eyewitness News

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**NEW ORLEANS - The Metropolitan Crime Commission is asking the Louisiana ethics board to determine if Jefferson Parish president Aaron Broussard has violated the state ethics code.**

In a letter to the ethics administration, the Crime Commission questions whether it was proper for Broussard to solicit business for Lagniappe Industries, the insurance firm owned by his former chief administrative officer, Tim Whitmer, and to accept \$5,000 for legal work he has acknowledged doing for Lagniappe.

In addition, MCC president Rafael Goyeneche calls for the crime commission to determine if Broussard profited from parish contractors using a vacation lodge the

parish president and his wife own in Nova Scotia.

“We're asking the ethics administration to determine if Mr. Broussard enriched himself by inviting or encouraging any of these potential parish vendors to go up there and utilize his property or invest in his property,” Goyeneche told Eyewitness News on Thursday.

In a separate matter, since records reveal Broussard has accepted hundreds of state court appointments since 2004 to represent people involved in lawsuits whom the court can't find, Goyeneche questions if Broussard considers his position as parish president a part time job .

“Where he can devote time to a legal practice that not only involves Lagniappe Industries and earning a \$5,000 fee over several months and also soliciting business for Lagniappe, but additionally accepting 50 cases that we could find in 2009 in which the court appointed him to represent an absent litigant? He made thousands of dollars doing that,” said Goyeneche.

WWL tried to reach Broussard for comment. A statement released late Thursday did not address his outside legal work and said he isn't responding to the ethical questions, on the advice of his attorney.

“Mr. Broussard has requested a copy (of the Metropolitan Crime Commission's) letter from the Ethics Committee to discern the allegations made in order to fully cooperate with the Ethics Administration to reveal the actual facts of his ownership and the management of his property,” the statement said.

“The Commission's policy is not to confirm or deny receipt of such contact. If one is made, it is referred to a committee that determines if an investigation will be conducted. Mr. Broussard reaffirms that he has properly disclosed his ownership of property in Nova Scotia on his Louisiana Board of Ethics Personal Financial Disclosure Report and that he will contest that this property was rented to business people holding public contracts with Jefferson Parish. Respecting the confidentiality policy of the Ethics Administration, Mr. Broussard will withhold further comment on this matter on the advice of his attorney.”

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