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St. Tammany

Inspector general panel to discuss options

Meeting to focus on 3 ideas to create office

BY SARA PAGONES spagones@theadvocate.com

For nearly six months, members of a task force investigating the feasibility of creating an inspector general's office for St. Tammany Parish have hashed out issues in meetings, listened to experts and even taken field trips in an effort to fulfill their legislative mandate.

The 23-member panel will meet Monday to discuss the pros and cons of three alternatives ahead of a February vote on what to report to the Legislature by March 1 — the culmination of its work.

However, some members point to another vote, taken earlier this month, as the real moment of truth for the task force. Ron Guth, Pearl River's town attorney and its representative on the panel, pushed to add a fourth option to those being considered by the

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Website links co-eds with 'sugar daddies'

LSU student says she pays expenses, tuition with money

BY KORAN ADDO kaddo@theadvocate.com

Ashley, a 20-year-old LSU student from Lafayette, has a secret. While she waits tables to supplement her college financial aid, she also regularly flies out to California to spend paid time with a "sugar daddy" she met on a website created to help wealthier men hook up with young people.

Ashley said the money she gets from the more traditional sources doesn't stretch far enough to cover her tuition on top of her living expenses. Tuition in Louisiana has risen by 51 percent since she's been in school.

"I live off campus and I always

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A RAFT OF SCHEMES

The federal indictment lays out five different schemes in which Ray Nagin allegedly traded his influence in exchange for money, gifts or other favors, many of which went to the Nagin family firm, Stone Age. Here is a summary:

Infographic showing various schemes involving Ray Nagin and other individuals like Mark St. Pierre, Frank Fradella, Rodney Williams, George Solomon, and Home Depot. Includes a central photo of Ray Nagin and arrows pointing to various text boxes detailing the schemes.

* Neither Solomon nor Home Depot, or any of its employees, has been charged with a crime in the Nagin case. The indictment does not name Solomon, referring to him instead as "Businessman A," but sources with knowledge of the case have confirmed his identity. Source: Staff research

By EMMETT MAYER III, Special to The Advocate

See NAGIN, page 4A

Nagin faces uphill court battle, slew of witnesses

BY GORDON RUSSELL grussell@theadvocate.com

A year ago last week, Ray Nagin became the first New Orleans mayor ever indicted on corruption charges.

This week, he becomes a member of a larger, but still exclusive, club: allegedly crooked politicians who decide to test the federal government by going to trial.

Beating the rap will be a tall order for Nagin, legal analysts say, noting the breadth of the government's case: A 25-page indictment lists 21 charges, including a conspiracy involving 59 "overt acts." The dry recitations contained in the indictment will be fleshed out at trial by testimony from a slew of cooperating witnesses — convicted and otherwise — who have agreed to take the stand against the former mayor.

To have a chance at acquittal, most observers say, Nagin will almost certainly have to testify in his own defense.

"I've never in 50 years of doing this won a case where my client didn't take the stand," said veteran defense attorney Julian Murray. "I know the judge tells the jury not to hold it against the defendant if they don't, but the jury wants to hear them give their side of the story."

That's especially true when the parade of witnesses and evidence is so extensive, said Murray, who believes Nagin faces an "uphill battle."

Loyola University law professor Dane Ciolino agreed, saying the case against Nagin is comparable to the one the government brought against former U.S. Rep. William Jefferson in 2009.

"It looks like a very tough case," Ciolino said. "Here, they may not have admissions from the mayor,

Old Man Winter to revisit New Orleans area

New cold front to linger, bring freezing rain Tuesday

BY DAN LAWTON dlawton@theadvocate.com

After a couple of days of sunshine and nice weather, another cold front will arrive in the New Orleans area Monday night, sending temperatures diving into the high 20s on the north shore and producing rain, sleet and possibly snow.

The front will move into the area during the day Monday, bringing a good chance of rain with it, according to Bob Wagner, a forecaster with the National Weather Service. Temperatures will

drop close to freezing Monday night on the south shore.

On Tuesday, Wagner said, a weather system slicing across the northern Gulf of Mexico will bring more precipitation into the area. He said the system could cause sleet and freezing rain in New Orleans and snow farther north.

The National Weather Service has issued a winter storm warning for southeast Louisiana and southern Mississippi for Tuesday and Tuesday night.

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Advocate staff photo by ELIOT KAMENITZ

Willie Henderson wraps up one of the two sego palms in his daughter's front yard Friday in Slidell. Another cold front is expected to drop temperatures into the 20s on Monday.

