

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 2ND DAY OF MARCH, 2020

The Caddo Parish Long Range Committee met in legal session on the above date, immediately following the Work Session, in the Government Chambers Conference Room, with Mr. John E. Atkins, Chairman, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Atkins, Young, and Chavez (3). ABSENT: Commissioners Epperson and Gage-Watts (2).

Also, in attendance were Assistant Administrator Erica Bryant, Parish Attorney Donna Frazier, Finance Director Hayley Barnett, Commissioner Todd Hopkins, Pastor Andrew Randall and RJ Johnson.

Invocation was given by Pastor Randall, and Mr. Chavez led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

There were no agenda additions and no public comments, so Mr. Atkins moved onto the first New Business item, *discuss funding for the national convention for men's fraternity.*

Mr. Johnson introduced himself as the Host Chair of the 84th Province Conference for the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity and Vice President of Shreveport Alumni Chapter. He also introduced Pastor Randall as the Chapter President.

Mr. Johnson said that they are coming before the Commission to request \$10,000 in funding to assist with the cost of the 84th council. The 84th Province Council will take place in Shreveport. They are the largest province in Kappa Alpha Psi. There will be about 1,500 brothers as well as their families at this conference. He is asking that the Commission become an official sponsor of this event that will be held on March 25-29 at the Shreveport Convention Center. Mr. Johnson also noted that the event will be co-hosted by the Bossier, LSUS, and Centenary Chapters as well.

Answering a question from Mr. Atkins regarding the timing of the funding, Mrs. Nations explained that this would not come up for adoption by the full body until April 9.

Answering a question from Mr. Young regarding the host hotels, Mr. Johnson explained that the host hotel is Sam's Town Casino, but the overflow will be staying at the Holiday Inn Downtown and the Holiday Inn Express. He also mentioned that approximately 1,500 people have pre-registered for this event.

Mr. Chavez wanted to know if the Commission's funding fall under General Sponsorships. Mr. Johnson stated that was correct. He also mentioned that the sponsorships are invited to attend their public meeting, which is attended by the sororities and fraternities in the area, as well as, honoring five distinguished citizens from the Caddo and Bossier area.

Mr. Chavez asked the Committee members to discuss having Caddo Parish signage and other marketing material or would it be better not to promote Caddo Parish. Mr. Atkins stated that he does not have a strong view on that. Mr. Young suggested recommendations be made to the attendees to visit local businesses they would otherwise not know about. Mr. Chavez agreed with Mr. Young's statement and mentioned that they could put together a list of local establishments.

Attorney Frazier asked that the Committee advise her of which sponsorship package they would like to fund because it would have to be a part of the agreement.

Mr. Chavez stated that they "could get more bang for their buck" to promote the Parish. Mr. Atkins mentioned that the better outcome would be to maximize the usage of local businesses in the community thereby maximizing local tax generation and get the best return on investment.

Mr. Randall commented that they could do it as a partnership in promoting local businesses less than a general sponsorship if they are trying to avoid uneven representation.

Mr. Atkins agreed that they do not need any special signage. He suggested that the attendees be informed of the local restaurants, casinos, etc. to engage the tourist dollar back into the community.

Mr. Chavez wanted to know if the Commission could afford to spend \$10,000 towards this sponsorship. Mrs. Barnett said that the Economic Development budget is lower than it has been in the past.

Answering a question from Mr. Atkins regarding the start of the fraternity, Mr. Johnson explained that most of the brothers pledge as an undergrad, but there are opportunities for brothers to pledge once they've graduated if they did not have the opportunity to do so in college.

Mr. Randall stated that when Shreveport Alumni began he was a part of the first group and then later joined the fraternity during his undergrad. Now he has the privilege of being chapter president. He is proud to be a part of it.

Answering a question from Mr. Chavez regarding the number of pre-registered attendees, Mr. Johnson explained that they are currently at about 1,200 pre-registered attendees. He also pointed out that registration ends March 18.

Mr. Atkins feels that this will be a great event with positive public relations for the community.

It was **moved by Mr. Chavez**, seconded by Mr. Young, *to recommend to the full body an appropriation of \$10,000 to Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Young, and Chavez (3). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Epperson (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

There be no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned.

Michelle Nations
Deputy Commission Clerk