

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THE 10th DAY OF MARCH, 2021

The Caddo Parish Commission met in an Economic Development Committee Meeting, on the above date, at 1:00 p.m., via Zoom teleconference, with Mr. Cawthorne, Chairperson, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Gage-Watts, and Johnson (5). ABSENT: Commissioner Young (1).

The invocation was given by Mr. Burrell, and Mr. Atkins led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AGENDA ADDITIONS**

It was **moved by Mr. Burrell**, seconded by Mr. Cawthorne, *to expand the agenda and add Discuss ITEP Application for Inferno Manufacturing under New Business.*

At this time, the Chair opened the floor for public comments. There being no one to speak in favor or against the agenda addition, the Chair closed the public comments.

At this time, Mr. Burrell's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Gage-Watts, and Johnson (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *to expand the agenda and approve consideration of items under La.R.S. 42:17.1. Motion carried by acclamation.*

**CERTIFICATE FOR TELECONFERENCE**

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Louisiana has declared a statewide Public Health emergency, inclusive of Caddo Parish, in Proclamation Number 25 JBE 2020; and,

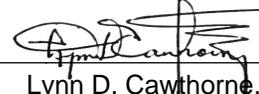
WHEREAS, the Governor, has further extended that declaration via Proclamations Number 158 JBE 2020 and Number 159 JBE 2020; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 42:17.1 allows members of political subdivisions to participate in its meetings electronically under certain limited circumstances.

THEREFORE, in accordance with the Provisions of R.S. 42:17.1, the presiding officer of the Caddo Parish Commission hereby certifies that this meeting is to address matters that are:

- (a) directly related to the public Commission's response to the Coronavirus Pandemic and are critical to the health, safety, or welfare of the public.
- (b) that if they are delayed will cause curtailment of vital public services or severe economic dislocation and hardship.
- (c) critical to continuation of the business of the Commission and that are not able to be postponed to a meeting held in accordance with the other provisions of Open Meetings Law due to a legal requirement or other deadline that cannot be postponed or delayed by the public body.
- (d) critical or time-sensitive and have been determined by the undersigned should not be delayed;\*  
*consideration of matters under Paragraph (d) will initially require a two-thirds vote of those members present).*

**DATE: March 8, 2021**



Lynn D. Cawthorne, Chair

Mr. Cawthorne opened up the floor for Citizens Comments. At this time, there were no public comments.

**NEW BUSINESS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Committee and said the following items will be discussed:

- *Discuss Bayou Classic*

- *Proposal for Center for Medical Education & Emerging Viral Threats*
- *Inferno Manufacturing ITEP Application*

Mr. Johnson is the Parish's representative on the Sports Commission. He said that the Bayou Classic is scheduled for April 17, 2021. The activities will start that Friday. Mr. Johnson also explained that there are COVID restrictions for these events. For example, the pregame reception will be by invitation only. He also said that there will be a Fan Fest in Festival Plaza.

Mr. Johnson also explained that the City of Shreveport is the host of the event with the Sports Commission as the fiscal agent. The City is requesting \$50,000 from the Parish of Caddo, City of Bossier, and Bossier Parish through the Sports Commission as a sponsor for this event. He also said that the Bossier Parish has already moved and passed their request, and the Bossier City will be voting on it next week.

The Grambling and Southern University game is one the largest sporting events in Louisiana, and this year it will be held in Shreveport. Currently, the stadium capacity is 25,000 people, but they are only selling 12,500 tickets.

Ms. Stacy Brown said that this is a tremendous economic for this area. She said with 12,500 tickets sold, there will be an estimate \$2M economic impact for this area; and with the 25,000 tickets sold, an estimated \$4M economic impact for this area. The City and other organizations are working hard to put together several other ancillary events to ensure that people are out and about spending money in the community.

Mr. Kelly Wells said that this event has always been on the bucket list for the Sports Commission. He also said that the Bayou Classic had about 54,000 people at the Super Dome in New Orleans the last year they played. He announced that the Battle of the Bands will not be able to take place because SWAC requested that the bands on perform at home games, but there could be some changes to that. He also explained that there were about 54,000 people in the Super Dome, but an estimated 150,000 people in New Orleans throughout the Bayou Classic weekend. He said that the Sports Commission is supportive of this event.

Mr. Cawthorne requested that the Tourism Bureau submit a copy of the economic impact to the Commissioners. Attorney Frazier requested that a copy of the sponsorship package be sent to her.

Mr. Atkins said that this is the type of economic return the Commission should support.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know the funding amounts for the different governmental bodies. Mr. Johnson said that \$15,000 was requested from Bossier Parish and \$15,000 from Bossier City.

Mr. Burrell then wanted to know what was included in the Fan Fest. Mr. Johnson said that it would be a mini-festival with vendors and entertainment.

Mr. Johnson mentioned that Grambling and Southern played in Shreveport in 1973 at a neutral site. The attendance at that time was about 40,000, which led to the game being hijacked by New Orleans. He said that this is a second chance to bring the game back to Shreveport.

It was **moved by Mr. Burrell**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *to recommend to the full body an appropriation of \$50,000 for the Port City Prize Fest. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Gage-Watts, and Johnson (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

- *Proposal for Center for Medical Education & Emerging Viral Threats*

Dr. Markey Pierre conducted PowerPoint presentation regarding the Center for Medical Education & Emerging Viral Threats.

The Center for Medical Education & Emerging Viral Threats is more than a building. It is the answer to creating sustainable economic growth in North Louisiana while improving the overall health of the citizens. It is the opportunity to expand our footprint as a national leader in research where our discoveries will enhance lives in Caddo Parish, our region, and beyond.

LSU Health is the sixth largest employer in Caddo-Bossier with a total of 2,703 employees (1,721 full-time and 982 part-time). LSU Health Shreveport supports 4,242 jobs in the region.

LSU Health's economic impact is \$2.99B. \$2.4B from LSUHS alumni practicing in North LA and \$595.4M of direct impact in Shreveport region. Each graduating physician generates an average of \$2M in economic impact, an average of 11.9 jobs and 8.3% of Louisiana's gross state product.

The Center for Medical Education will address the healthcare shortage in Louisiana by expanding their medical school class size. 87% of Louisiana parishes have a healthcare shortage. 28% of active licensed physicians are over the age of 60. Louisiana has the 13<sup>th</sup> oldest physician workforce in the United States. LSUHS ranks in the top 15% in the nation for retaining students in-state to practice with 49% of our graduates practicing in Louisiana. 70% of the physicians practicing in North Louisiana completed a portion or all of their education at LSUHS. LSUHS ranks in the top 24% in the nation for graduates who practice in rural areas.

The Center for Medical Education will enhance our learning and wellness environment to align with students needs and expectations. In 2014, Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) sited inadequate wellness space and 24/7 individualized secure study space.

The Center for Medical Education will increase the competitive edge for recruitment of students, residents, and faculty. We compete for students that are often exposed to newer or state of the art campuses.

The Center for Medical Education will provide an opportunity for growth and the addition of new programs, such as dental school, nurse anesthetist, new doctorate programs in the SAHP, etc.

The Center for Medical Education will provide a positive impact to the economy of North Louisiana. With healthcare as one of the driving forces in our economy, the growth of LSUHS is essential to the growth of Shreveport/Bossier and the greater Monroe area.

Some of the key components for The Center for Medical Education are 500-person auditorium and meeting space, new clinical skills center (simulation center and standardized patient center), 2-250-person lecture halls, 25 small group study rooms, Center of Excellence for Emerging Viral Threats (CEVT), academic affairs and medical education offices, onsite IT support, and a wellness center.

The Center for Emerging Viral Threats (CEVT) engages in multidisciplinary, basic, translational, and public health research on viruses; provides surveillance and detection for current and future viral threats; provides cutting edge diagnostics and access to national clinical trials; and educates physicians, scientists, and the community about prevention, treatment, and the science of viral-mediated diseases. Some of the components of CEVT include a molecular reference lab, public health deployment, public health education and outreach, and public health research.

The project funding structure is as follows. The total project costs are \$72M, with a state contribution of \$41.M, local and federal contributions of \$12.5M, and private contributions of \$17.5M. The anticipated construction start date is April 2021 with a potential completion date of September 30, 2023.

The request to the Caddo Parish Commission is to partner with LSU Health Shreveport to develop the transformational Center for Medical Education & Wellness, impacting the health of the parish and region by investing \$1M over a three-year period.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know the funding source of this appropriation if the Commission approves it. Dr. Wilson said that it would probably come out of the Oil & Gas Fund. Mr. Atkins then wanted to know its fund balance. Mrs. Barnett said that the balance is \$6.4M.

Mr. Johnson wanted to know the balance in General Fund. Mrs. Barnett said that the balance is \$18.2M.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know the location of the Center. Dr. Pierre said it would be in front of BRF.

Mr. Burrell then wanted to know if there are any funding opportunities from the federal government. Dr. Pierre said that they submitted several applications and are working very closely with the Congressional Delegation to address some of the needs that they have.

Mr. Burrell also wanted to know if the current facility would be repurposed for something else. Dr. Kevil said that they are expanding because they have almost no space right now to meet the current needs that they have. Mr. Burrell clarified that they are adding to the space, not taking away.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if there is a possibility that the Parish could receive more COVID funds to channel to this endeavor. Dr. Wilson said that there is a possibility that the Parish could receive more COVID relief, and this may be able to fit into that category.

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *to recommend to the full body an appropriation of \$1M for the Center for Medical Education & Wellness over a three-year period.*

Dr. Wilson wanted to know if that funding would begin in 2022. Mr. Johnson said that it is based upon LSU's needs. Dr. Pierre said that it would be nice if they could start the first \$333,000 in 2021, but they will work at the will of the Parish.

Mr. Atkins asked for a brief summary of the economic impact numbers. Dr. Kevil said that they would be able to put fourteen faculty members at the facility with salaries beginning at \$150,000. Their research dollars for each individual would be about \$1.2M. The additional research dollars from the federal government would be about \$14M. Within the first 18-24 months, the hope is that it will be in the neighborhood of \$24M to \$25M just from the CVET.

Dr. Kevil said that this will feed forward very quickly. He also mentioned that there is going to be growth in the cancer research area as well.

Dr. Pierre said that this vision came from their chancellor Dr. Ghali. Dr. Kevil said that he sees this area being a regional site for medical technology and biomedical research and training. Dr. Kevil also said that Shreveport is on the map nationally due to discovering a COVID variant at LSU that has made a difference nationwide.

At this time, Mr. Johnson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, and Johnson (4). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

- *Discuss ITEP Application for Inferno Manufacturing*

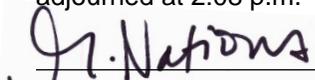
Mr. Burrell asked for a brief summary of what an ITEP is. Dr. Wilson said that the ITEP program is another tool in economic development in Louisiana to enhance business opportunities and encourage the expansion of existing businesses as well as recruiting new businesses. It can be used for expanding manufacturing production by way of adding more equipment, build plants from the ground up, etc. Normally, they look at the number of jobs being created and the amount of money being spent. Dr. Wilson also mentioned that this is a state program, but it is the Parish's responsibility to give an ok of whether or not they would like this exemption to take place.

Dr. Wilson explained that Mr. Allen Organic is coming to the Commission again for another opportunity to expand his manufacturing base. He said that Mr. Organic is investing \$256,000 in new manufacturing equipment, and he will hire two new employees with annual payroll of \$100,000. Dr. Wilson said that it is a property tax abatement. He also said that it would be approximately \$25,000 for 5 years and \$50,000 for 10 years.

Dr. Wilson said that this is well-worth the Commission's approval. He also said that Mr. Organic invested \$125,000 of his own money to set up COVID testing throughout the Parish. Mr. Organic has given back to this community.

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *to recommend to the full body the approval of the ITEP application for Inferno Manufacturing with the recommendation of approval from the Committee and Administration. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, and Johnson (4). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:08 p.m.



Assistant Commission Clerk