

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 4th DAY OF MAY, 2020

The Caddo Parish Commission met in legal and regular session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., via Zoom teleconference, with President Chavez, presiding, and the following members in attendance, constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). ABSENT: None (0).

The invocation was given by Mr. Epperson, and Mr. Hopkins led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Jon Glover sent in the following statement:

Item 11.1 Authorize introduction of Ordinance No. 5957 of 2020 prompts questions: What specifically is being considered with this Ordinance? Is the funding, \$300k, predicated on approval or being awarded the information noted in the ordinance? Item 11.II Authorize introduction of Ordinance No. 5958 of 2020 prompted questions needing attention: Why and what prompts the resubmittal of Southern University's proposal for \$250k? If funds are not readily available via the normal process, would the transfer of funds from the Oil & Gas Fund address this request? If so, why? What will the impact be to the Oil & Gas Fund if this consideration is approved? Item 14.II Ordinance No. 5951 of 2020 prompts a question: Why is this item being considered for appropriation when this event did not take place at the specified time, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity 84th Province Council March 25-28, 2020 due to the coronavirus?

Mr. Chavez requested that the citizen comment be emailed to all the Commissioners.

Answering a question from Mr. Epperson regarding if Ms. Glover is affiliated with the media, Mr. Chavez said that she does write articles for the Inquisitor as well as other publications.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Dr. Wilson reported that the directors are working on a return to work plan. Answering a question from Mr. Burrell regarding returning to work as it relates to the CDC guidelines, Dr. Wilson said that they are formulated a plan, and it will not be "business as usual". He also said that temperatures will be taken, rotating telework, social distancing, and other measures will be taken to protect the employees. Mr. Epperson requested that Dr. Wilson provide that plan to all Commissioners.

Mrs. Gage-Watts asked that Dr. Wilson look into procuring additional masks for the citizens.

Mr. Chavez asked Dr. Wilson about the statues of the animal shelter. Dr. Wilson announced that there has been a 93% live release rate for the shelter. He also mentioned that there are less than 100 animals in the shelter currently.

COMMUNIQUES/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Mr. Johnson said that the Appropriations Committee met today to discuss the NGOs that were allocated funds for this year. He said that they postponed funding for several organizations until they receive information regarding what that organization is doing based on their mission statement. These numbers should be available for the next Work Session.
- Mr. Young talked about Mr. Alan Berry who is serving on the Zoning Board of Appeals. He said that his term expired last month. Mr. Berry normally would not have an issue rotating off the board, but he is concerned with loss of institutional memory since the majority of the board members have only been serving for a few years.
- Mr. Burrell received a call from the pastor at Galilee Baptist Church regarding setting up a mobile testing site at the church. The Pastor advised that there is a significant amount of traffic in that area. Mr. Jackson said that he spoke with the pastor wife and put her in touch with the appropriate people regarding this issue.

Mr. Jackson advised that they are down to one mobile unit that is serving all of northeast and northwest Louisiana.

CERTIFICATE FOR TELECONFERENCE

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Louisiana has issued Proclamation Number 33 JBE 2020, stating that, due to the current Public Health emergency declared in the Governor's Proclamation Number 25 JBE 2020, and citing the provisions of La. R.S. 29:721, *et seq.*, granting him the

authority to control the “ingress and egress to and from a disaster, the movement of persons within the area, and the occupancy of premises therein; and

WHEREAS, the Governor, in Proclamation Number 33 JBE 2020, has limited all gatherings of 10 or more people, for public safety purposes; and

WHEREAS, Governor has issued a general stay at home order “unless performing an essential activity,” 33 JBE 2020, Section 3; and

WHEREAS, attendance at a Caddo Parish Commission Work Session meeting is not stated in the list of essential activities, listed in 33 JBE 2020, Section 3; and

WHEREAS, the usual conduct of the meeting would require travel and the presence of a number of persons in excess of ten (10); and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State, in Proclamation Number 30 JBE 2020, Section 4, issued on March 16, 2020, has invoked the aforementioned statutes authorizing him to allow attendance at essential governmental meetings via teleconference or video conference during the pendency of this emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State, in Proclamation Number 41 JBE 2020, Section 13, issued on April 2, 2020, has extended the Stay-At-Home Order until Thursday, April 30, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on April 27, 2020, Governor John Bel Edward extended the Stay-At-Home Order until Friday, May 15, 2020.

THEREFORE, the Caddo Parish Commission hereby certifies that it will not be able to obtain a quorum and convene a meeting in a public forum on May 4, 2020 due to the Governor’s proclamations, and will be required to meet by video conference, and, if necessary teleconference, on that date as allowed by law and the Proclamations of the Governor listed above.

Date: May 1, 2020

/s/Mario Chavez, President

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Mr. Chavez offered prayers for Councilman Flurry as he goes through his treatments at Baylor.

NEW BUSINESS

It was **moved by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *that Ordinance No. 5957 of 2020, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Economic Development Fund to provide an appropriation for Project Grace and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday’s Regular Session for introduction.

Mr. Atkins said that this appropriation request is to entice a call center to locate in Shreveport and Caddo Parish. The proposal carries approximately 400 direct jobs with another 90 indirect jobs. They are proposing \$2M in capital expenditures for fixtures, furniture, and equipment. An investment of \$300,000 would generate an internal rate of return to the Parish about 18% with a six year payout. The dollars would not go out until job benchmarks are met, along with a clawback provision. He said that this went through the Economic Development Committee and received a unanimous vote to forward to the full body.

Answering a question from Mr. Burrell regarding the average hourly wage for the employees, Mr. Atkins said that they would receive approximately \$23,400 per year. Mr. Martinez said that the employees would receive a baseline of \$10 per hour.

Mr. Scott Martinez, NLEP, mentioned that Caddo Parish is competing with two other communities for this call center. He also explained that this would be done in three different disbursements. After the company achieves the first 150 employees after the first year, the company would receive \$112,500. After the company reaches the second benchmark of 250 employees after year three, they would receive \$75,000. The third payment after year five and obtaining 400 employees, they would receive \$112,500. He reiterated that there would be no upfront monies. He also suggested that the CEA include a clawback for noncompliance.

Mr. Jackson commended Mr. Martinez for bringing this project to the Commission.

Mr. Martinez also pointed out that the NLEP is asking the City of Shreveport to delay any permits and fees associated with this project.

Mr. Epperson cautioned that this is a public meeting, and Caddo Parish is in competition with other communities on this project.

At this time, Mr. Atkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *that Ordinance No. 5958 of 2020, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Economic Development Fund to provide an appropriation for Southern University and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's Regular Session for introduction.

Mr. Johnson explained that this request went before the Economic Development Committee, and it was forwarded to the full body.

Substitute motion by Mr. Young, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *to amend Ordinance No. 5958 of 2020, and reduce the appropriation to the SUSLA Nursing Program to \$50,000 and provide no funding to the Aviation Program and MS-KICK.*

Mr. Young explained that during this time, the Commission should cut back on funding during this pandemic. He also said that MS-KICK has a beautiful facility and believes it can operate with what it has at this current time. Mr. Young also talked about the Nursing Program and believes it to be appropriate to make a gesture showing that the Commission supports the school.

Mr. Taliaferro wanted clarification regarding the funding source for this funding request. Mrs. Barnett explained that the way the ordinance is written, the request would be transferred from the Oil & Gas Fund to the Economic Development Fund. She also explained that there is not the fund balance to carry the \$250,000 request at this time.

Mr. Taliaferro wanted to know if there was a big rush to fund this project at this time.

Amendment by Mr. Jackson, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *to amend Ordinance No. 5958 of 2020, and reduce the appropriation to the SUSLA Nursing Program to \$50,000 and postpone the appropriations for the Aviation Program and MS-KICK.*

Mr. Jackson explained that the Parish could receive a significant amount of funds from the CARES Act. Those funds could be utilized to reimburse a project or initiative related to COVID-19 work. He said that the MS-KICK could possibly utilize some of those funds. He asked that the Commissioners support his amendment to postpone the allocations for the Aviation Program and MS-KICK once they get a better picture of what the budget looks like.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know the fund balance in the Oil & Gas Fund. Mrs. Barnette stated that there is \$5.5M in the Oil & Gas Fund.

Answering another question from Mr. Burrell regarding the Aerospace Program, Mr. Jackson explained that the Commission has provided Aerospace approximately \$1M over the past three or four years. Mr. Jackson also said that there needs to be a conversation to wean some of these projects off of the Parish. He also said that he has an issue with the majority of the funding for this program goes to hangar rental.

Mrs. Barnett also mentioned that it has been the Commission's practice to transfer from Oil & Gas if there is a large expenditure that the fund cannot handle.

Mr. Chavez also pointed out that the Commissioners received information regarding the details of the three different programs requesting funding.

Mr. Johnson said that SUSLA has submitted a funding request for three different projects. He said that the Nursing Program is vital, especially during times like these. SUSLA is teaching students to become nurses, which will be a direct impact to this Parish, he said.

Mr. Johnson agreed that a significant amount of money has been put into the Aerospace Program. He also mentioned that Global Airlines relocated to this Parish. He said that the Aerospace program could provide the workforce to Global Airlines.

Mr. Johnson explained that the Oil & Gas Fund still receives money due to the deal made with the former GM Plant. He said that the Parish is collecting \$65,000 a month for rental of the plant.

Mr. Atkins said that he has issues with the scale of their request, not the initiatives. He pointed out that the Economic Development Budget prior to COVID-19 was \$450,000; Southern University made a request of \$250,000. He believes that is an inappropriate request and out of scale with what they should be asking from the Commission.

He then talked about the Aerospace Program. He said that this program has been funded by the Commission for a number of years, with a poor return on investment. Mr. Atkins also mentioned

that there are less than a dozen graduates from that program who are working in Caddo Parish at this time. Mr. Atkins said that he cannot support funding additional aviation monies for Southern University.

Substitute motion by Mrs. Gage-Watts, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *to amend Ordinance No. 5958 of 2020, and reduce the funding to the SUSLA Nursing Program to \$100,000, reduce the funding to the MS-KICK Program to \$25,000, and reduce the funding to the Aviation Program to \$15,000.*

Attorney Frazier pointed out that there are two amendments on the board.

At this time, Mr. Johnson withdrew his original motion.

Mrs. Gage-Watts said that this is a pipeline for prosperity through this request. She further said that the medical/nursing is a robust industry in this Parish. She said that these projects are about keeping families in Caddo Parish. She said that this is actively investing in workforce stability for this Parish. Mrs. Gage-Watts asked that the Commission support her substitute motion.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if an artificial budget of \$450,000 was sent for the Economic Development Fund. Mr. Atkins addressed Mr. Burrell and said that it is what the body voted to establish and more of a historical precedent. Mr. Atkins also said that he would like to get a solid return on the Caddo Parish taxpayers' dollars on the Commission's investments. He is concerned that he has not seen that return on investment after backing certain organizations for a number of years.

Call for the Question by Mr. Epperson, seconded by Mr. Johnson. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, Mrs. Gage-Watts' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Cawthorne, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, and Johnson (7). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (5). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *that Resolution No. 28 of 2020, a resolution to amend the Caddo Parish By-Laws to require formal requests for Commission appropriations to entities not part of Caddo Parish government, and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda.

Mr. Hopkins wanted to know if this was across the board or just for NGOs. Mr. Johnson said that this would apply to any organization requesting money from the Commission. He further explained that it should come in the form of a formal request.

Substitute motion by Mr. Jackson, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *that Resolution No. 28 of 2020, a resolution to amend the Caddo Parish By-Laws to require formal requests for Commission appropriations to entities not part of Caddo Parish government, and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be remanded to the Personnel Policies & Procedures Committee.

Mr. Jackson asked Attorney Frazier if the Commission could put a By-Law in place that augments or supersedes the State Constitution. Attorney Frazier stated that this resolution would have no effect on that.

Mr. Jackson then asked if the Constitution gives the Parish Commission authority to make appropriations and bypass their by-laws, would this stop that. Attorney Frazier explained that this does not do that. She further explained that if there was an amendment made to the Constitution, this would not supersede their work. Mr. Jackson said that he will forward Attorney Frazier an attorney general's opinion regarding this.

Answering another question from Mr. Jackson regarding receiving a formal request from NLEP in regards to Project Grace, Attorney Frazier said that she is not aware of other than what was brought to the committee meeting.

Mr. Jackson then wanted to know if the company would have to submit a formal request if this were to be enacted. Attorney Frazier said that they would.

Mr. Jackson would like this to be vetted in committee and asked the Commission to support his substitute motion.

Mr. Johnson clarified that the Caddo Parish does not have a parish president, but instead a Commission President. He also pointed out that Caddo Parish is not a police jury, but is governed by the Home Rule Charter. He said that the Police Jury form of government is governed by the State Constitution.

He further clarified the reason behind this resolution. He said that the Commission just allocated funds to LSU without a formal request or application. He would like a formal request from organizations who are asking for funding detailing the amount requested and what the funds will be used for.

Mr. Burrell suggested that “formal request” be defined.

Mr. Epperson clarified that a By-Law change requires a super majority vote.

Mr. Jackson clarified that the State Constitution governs that Caddo Parish Commission as well. He said that the Home Rule Charter does not supersede the State Constitution.

He also talked about the emergency funding that was allocated for LSU. He explained that in that project, time was of the essence. During the process, he consulted Commissioner Chavez, Dr. Wilson, and Mrs. Bryant. He also said that he reached out to everyone and tried to reconcile any questions they may have had regarding this funding. He understands that the Commissioners are not always going to agree on everything.

Mr. Johnson said “that if it slides through the crack one time, it could slide through the crack again”. He then asked Attorney Frazier if the Caddo Parish Commission follows the Police Jury Statute in the Louisiana Statutes. Attorney Frazier said that it depends on how analogous our situation is to the Police Jury form of government, however, the Charter generally governs the Parish’s actions. She also said that the Commission is bound to follow the State Constitution within the parameters of the Home Rule charter.

Mr. Johnson understands that the Commission did pass an emergency ordinance, but is unsure of how it was an emergency to the number of other mobile testing sites.

Call for the Question by Mr. Lazarus, seconded by Mr. Chavez. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (11). NAYS: Commissioner Jackson (1). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, Mr. Jackson’s substitute motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Hopkins, Jackson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (8). NAYS: Commissioners Cawthorne, Epperson, Gage-Watts, and Johnson (4).

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *to englobe and move the following resolutions to Thursday’s agenda:*

- *Resolution No. 29 of 2020, a resolution proclaiming April 25, 2020 as Abduhl Diabetes Walk Day in Caddo Parish*
- *Resolution No. 30 of 2020, a resolution proclaiming June 3, 2020 as Prince Hall Jubilee Day in Caddo Parish*

At this time, Mr. Jackson’s motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *to authorize appointment of Mr. Huey Horn to the Zoning Board of Appeals, term to expire April 30, 2025, be moved to Thursday’s Regular Session.*

Mr. Atkins said that Mr. Berry has been a member of the ZBA for twelve years and feels it is time for “fresh blood” on the board. He asked that the Commission consider this appointment to the board.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if someone was being replaced on the board. Mr. Atkins explained that Mr. Berry’s term expired April 30th of this year after serving 12 years on the ZBA.

At this time, Mr. Atkins’ motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

COMMUNIQUES/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Mr. Epperson reminded the Commission that tomorrow is Cinco de Mayo, which recognizes Mexican culture and heritage, not Mexican Independence Day. He mentioned two of his mentors, Mr. Zapatta and Mr. Cesar Chavez.

- Mr. Jackson thanked the Parish employees and personnel who has helped with COVID-19 mobile testing sites. He said they have been extremely successful. Mr. Jackson provided the Commissioners via email of the hotspots in the community by LDH.

Mr. Jackson will also send an email to Administration regarding the CARES Act and the funding that could come to Caddo Parish.

- Mr. Burrell wanted clarification on the testing sites for Caddo Parish. Mr. Jackson pointed out that the sites have to have hazmat mitigation plans in place as well.
- Mr. Atkins mentioned that he has extra masks available for anyone who needs them in their districts.

CONSENT AGENDA

- *Ordinance No. 5950 of 2020, an ordinance to establish the salary of the Commission Clerk pursuant to Section 3-10 of the Home Rule Charter for Caddo Parish, to adopt a compensation schedule for that position, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 5951 of 2020, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Economic Development Fund in the amount of \$10,000 to provide an appropriation for Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 5952 of 2020, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Economic Development Fund in the amount of \$8,489 to provide an appropriation for the Safe Summer Program for funds remaining at December 31, 2019 and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 5953 of 2020, an ordinance to donate surplus property under Chapter 19, Article II, Division 3 of the Code of Ordinances relative to Donation of Adjudicated Property acquired by the Parish under LA.R.S. 47:2236 et seq., to authorize the donation of property to Northwest Louisiana Community Development Corporation for a public purpose, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 5954 of 2020, an ordinance to close and abandon a portion of the dedication of Bel-Mar Drive, in the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 5956 of 2020, an ordinance authorizing an expenditure for the Reserve Trust Fund for the year 2020 to provide an appropriation of up to \$175,000 to perform COVID-19 testing and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Confirm appointment to the Quadrennial Charter Review Committee (1 to be selected):*
 1. *Ken Krefft*
 2. *Rudy Morton*
 3. *Joyce W. Rogers*
 4. *Dr. Melva Kristi*
 5. *Ryan Williams*
- *Confirm appointments to the Complete Count Census Committee:*
 1. *Pat Harwell*
 2. *Omari Ho-Sang*
 3. *Jacqueline Paul*
 4. *Sheila Rynders*
 5. *Debra Seamster*
 6. *Clifton Starks*
 7. *Cammie Wright*

There being no further business to come before the body, the meeting was adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

/s/Michelle Nations
Deputy Commission Clerk