

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 6th DAY OF MAY, 2021

The Caddo Parish Commission met in an American Rescue Plan Committee Meeting, on the above date, at 2:00 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mr. Johnson, Chairperson, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Cawthorne, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, and Johnson (5). ABSENT: None (0).

The Pledge of Allegiance and invocation were given in the last committee meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

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

- *Discuss comprehensive plan for the use of the American Rescue Plan Funds*

Mr. Johnson said that today's meeting is to get a basic overview of the American Rescue Plan and action moving forward on how to spend those dollars.

As of May 4, the U.S. Treasury provided guidelines on the uses, restrictions, and guiding principles for the funds. Revenue replacement (reduction due to COVID relative to most recent fiscal year prior to pandemic), COVID-19 expenses (response to public health emergency), premium pay to employees, investments in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, and economic recovery.

The restrictions are that the funds cannot be used to offset tax reductions or delay a tax or tax increase. It cannot be used for pension fund deposits. It cannot be used for road projects; roads will be covered under infrastructure plan.

The guiding principles for the American Rescue Plan are:

1. Avoid creating new programs or add-ons to existing programs.
2. Offset of revenue declines should be given priority.
3. Investment in critical infrastructure is a well-suited use.
4. Local jurisdictions should be aware of state-level ARPA efforts.
5. Understand what other entities are planning in order to enhance community.
6. Rating agencies will evaluate the use of the ARPA funds in formulating its credit opinion.
7. All cost must be incurred by December 31, 2024.

Mr. Johnson said that \$1.6B will be coming to the State of Louisiana. The Governor's priorities are shoring up the Unemployment Trust Fund (\$400M), Unemployment Insurance Loan Payment (\$230M), infrastructure (\$400M), water/sewer systems (\$300M), tourism and convention bureaus (\$125M), Department of Cultural Recreation & Tourism (\$20M), and Louisiana Port (\$50M).

Mr. Johnson said that the Parish will be receiving \$46M. The Parish Administration has given an overview of how they would like to utilize some of the funds, which has been broken down in two different draws. He gave a breakdown of each category for the funds. For revenue replacement, the first draw will be \$3.7M and the second draw \$3.7M. For infrastructure the first draw will be \$5M and the second draw \$8M. For COVID expenses, the first draw will be \$3M and the second draw \$1M. Premium pay only has one draw of \$600,000. Economic development will have two different draws, the first being \$3.8M, and the second draw \$4.2M. Administration is recommending approximately \$16.1M for the first draw and approximately \$16.9M for the second draw for a total of \$33M.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if the Parish lost \$3.7M in revenue. Mrs. Bryant said that from 2019-2020, the Parish did lose \$3.7M in revenues. She also said that they do not believe that the Riverboat Revenues and Sales Tax would rebound by 2022.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if the Commission could put those funds in the Reserve Trust Fund. Mr. Johnson explained that if the Parish does not use it, they will lose it. The funds have to be spent by December 31, 2024.

Mrs. Gage-Watts asked if creating new programs are prohibited. Mrs. Bryant stated that they are not. She further explained that these are temporary funds, so if a new program is added, a funding

mechanism would need to be put in place. That is why it is discouraged, she said.

Mr. Hopkins wanted to know if Caddo is losing Boomtown. Mrs. Bryant said that it looks like that boat is going to South Louisiana.

Mr. Atkins asked for clarification on COVID expenses. Mrs. Bryant explained that the Parish did not get reimbursed for \$800,000 from the CARES Act. She also said that they did not get reimbursed for the Nursing Program. Both of those costs are included. The other expenses are that for upgrades with biohazards on HVAC systems. She said that is the bulk of that.

Mrs. Bryant said that the District Attorney's Office sent a request for expansions and renovations, as well as revenue shortfall and premium pay. She said that the revenue shortfall and premiums is between \$1.5M and \$2M. She also said that their office expansion would be another \$2M-\$3M.

Mr. Johnson said that Commission programs is budgeted for \$5.5M. He said that this would be the bucket of money that the different proposals from Commissioners would come out of. Another category listed is the Other Public Bodies (Ward II, Water/Sewer Districts) which is budgeted for \$3M. The Other Organizations category (CCAA, NGO, Meals on Wheels, etc.) is budgeted for \$1.5M. Mr. Johnson said that the numbers can be adjusted as needed.

Mr. Cawthorne asked about the Economic Development funding from Administration. Mrs. Bryant explained that it is for the LSU Emerging Viral Threats Center and Walter B. Jacobs. She also explained that this would essentially pay the Parish back for that.

Mr. Cawthorne pointed out that the City Council is doing listening sessions. He wanted to know if the Commission will be hosting these types of sessions. Mr. Atkins said that the Commissioners could solicit input from their constituents and then factor that into the programs. Mr. Johnson said that this will be presented to the public.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if the Parish was reimbursed for mobile testing. Mrs. Bryant said that it was submitted too late.

Mr. Atkins also wanted to know if the efforts for broadband will be coordinated with the City of Shreveport. Dr. Wilson said that he spoke with Mayor Perkins and Dr. Goree regarding parish-wide broadband and stated his interest in partnering with them on their discussions. He also said that it will take an enormous amount of resources to make this happen.

Mr. Johnson said that this committee will meet again to adjust some of the numbers. He also pointed out that attached is an application to request for funding from the American Rescue Plan monies. He also said that the organizations or entities will need to provide documentation regarding how the funds were spent.

Mrs. Bryant also mentioned that Dr. Wilson will have to certify the expenses coming out of these monies. She also said they will need to submit reports periodically of how the funds are being spent.

It was **moved by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *to accept the application with the necessary reporting on the expenses and the accept the budget designations for the different categories which will define the spending of the American Rescue Plan funds.*

Mr. Atkins added a caveat that this budget is adjustable.

Mrs. Bryant wanted to know if this will be submitted to the full body. Mr. Johnson said that this is just the starting point, and at the next meeting, the blanks will be filled in.

Mrs. Bryant also wanted to know if there was a deadline that needs to be set. Mr. Johnson feel that they will be receiving requests in the next 30 days. Mrs. Bryant said that will be June 10, 2021.

At this time, Mr. Atkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: Commissioners Atkins, Cawthorne, Gage-watts, Hopkins, and Johnson (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:43 p.m.


Assistant Commission Clerk