

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 27th DAY OF MAY, 2021

The Caddo Parish Commission met in an American Rescue Plan Committee Meeting, on the above date, at 3:00 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).

Mr. Atkins gave the invocation, and Mr. Cawthorne led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

NEW BUSINESS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Committee and moved to the first New Business item, *Continue discussion on Comprehensive Plan for use of American Rescue Plan funds.*

Mr. Johnson explained that the Commission has to develop a strategic plan for the American Rescue Plan dollars that will be coming to the Parish. This committee will be tasked to work with Administration to help recommend the strategic plan to the full body by the deadline.

Mr. Johnson gave a summary of the uses, restrictions, and guiding principles for the American Rescue Plan funds.

Uses:

- Revenue replacement—reduction due to COVID relative to most recent fiscal year prior to pandemic.
- COVID-19 expenses—response to public health emergency and crime increase.
- Investments in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure
- Economic Recovery

Restrictions:

- Cannot offset tax reductions or delay a tax or tax increase
- Cannot be used for pension fund deposits
- Cannot be used for road projects (roads will be covered under infrastructure plan).

Guiding Principles:

- Avoid creating new programs or add-ons to existing programs
- Offset of revenue declines should be given high priority
- Investment in critical infrastructure is well suited use.
- Be aware of state-level ARPA efforts, Governor Edward's priorities for the first \$1.6B includes:
 - Shoring up the Unemployment Trust Fund--\$400M
 - Unemployment Insurance loan payment--\$230M
 - Infrastructure--\$400M
 - Tourism, Convention, & Visitors Bureaus--\$125M
 - Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism--\$20M
 - Louisiana Ports--\$50M
- Understand what other entities are planning in order to enhance community
- Rating agencies will evaluate the use of the ARPA funds in formulating its credit opinion
- All costs must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and incurred by December 31, 2026
- Expenses must have occurred on or after March 3, 2021
- Only premium pay can be associated with dates prior to March 3, 2021
- Strategic Plan must be provided to Treasury by August 31, 2021

Mr. Johnson then said that a project summary has been provided to the Commissioners. Currently, there are four headings: Parish Administration, Parish Funded Agencies, Commission Projects, and Other Public Bodies. Today's discussion will be regarding the Parish Administration projects and budgets.

Mrs. Bryant talked about the Administration project requests. They are estimating revenue replacement at \$6.7M, but only time will tell what that actual number will be.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know what are the big categories of lost revenue. Mrs. Bryant said riverboat, oil and gas, and sales taxes; property taxes are not included. Mrs. Barnett said that this also accounts for loss in growth in revenues. The Treasury allows the use of actual growth historically or a 4.1% growth in revenues. She said that they have not seen a growth in property taxes.

Mrs. Bryant continued and said that the Parish-Wide Broadband Initiative is estimated for \$2M, but that number may change. She also explained that the Commission has already voted on the premium pay for employees, which amounts to \$600,000.

She then talked about the response to teleworking during COVID. She said that they understand the need for a more electronic process to process papers, other documents, scanning, etc. She said that they do not anticipate teleworking for the length of time as was done during the quarantine, but there are other opportunities in which employees would need to telework.

Mr. Kevin Lawrence, Facilities & Maintenance Director, talked about MEP upgrades for Animal Services. He explained that it is for the indoor air quality that is needed to accomplish it. For Animal Services, they are gutting all of the HVAC units and going to all units being outside air. They are bipolar needlepoint ionization, which is the most effective product that kills COVID in the airstream. It produces ions which bond to particles in the air and are captured in the filters and neutralizes it. Mr. Lawrence said that this is going to be done throughout the Caddo Parish buildings.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if there would be other benefits to upgrading the HVAC systems. Mr. Lawrence said that they will also be more energy efficient.

Mr. Johnson asked about the water well and fire protection water storage tanks at CCC. Mrs. Bryant explained that they would like to remove the water well and add it to the MEP upgrade to the Courthouse. Mr. Lawrence said that the water storage tanks would be to store water in case they lose water from the City. They would have water on hand in case a fire broke out. Mr. Johnson then wanted to know if there were other jails in the state that has fire protection water storage tanks. Mr. Lawrence said that there are some.

Mr. Johnson then wanted to know about the hot water plant for CCC. Mr. Lawrence said that the water can be treated as it comes into the facility by putting the equipment ahead. The water is treated, then is sent through the hot water plant.

He then asked about the ozone upgrade on laundry at CCC. Mr. Lawrence said that they are currently using an ozone system that kills all diseases when doing laundry at the jail. It is need of replacement.

Mr. Johnson then wanted to know if the Sheriff is paying for any of these upgrades. Mr. Lawrence said that it is a Parish building, and the Parish is responsible for the maintenance of it.

Mr. Johnson asked about the second floor annex of Juvenile Services. Mr. Clay Walker, Juvenile Services Director, said that it would be used for training space.

Mr. Johnson also asked about the mental health training. Mr. Walker explained that it is for the staff and for families who have been facing mental health issues because of COVID. He said that they have seen an increase in mental health cases because of COVID.

Mr. Johnson then asked about contract truancy staff. Mr. Walker said that because of COVID, the number of truants has increased approximately 250% or 3,000. They are wanting to get contract staff for about two years to get a handle on the number of truant cases there are now because of COVID. Mr. Johnson wanted to know if the Parish handles truancy or if the School Board handles truancy cases. Mr. Walker explained that the Parish handles truancy and after a student is truant for five days, they are then placed under FINS (Family In Need of Services), which is juvenile court. He also explained that they are working in conjunction with the School Board to handle the service needs side of this, and the School Board will be handling the academic side of it. He also said that they are using some of their ARP monies for this.

Mrs. Gage-Watts also pointed out that some of the children were logged on and in class, but they did not complete their attendance. Mr. Walker said that they did so some of the preliminary work to weed that out. There are two populations of children who are currently truants: one who never logged on, and the other who logged on, but did not complete any of the work.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know more about the 4th floor of the Bickham Building. Mr. Lawrence explained that the 4th floor is being remodeled for usable space. Mr. Atkins wanted to know how many people would that accommodate. Mr. Lawrence said it would be between 10-12 people.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if there were dollars available to ensure Parish economic development sites are certifiable. Mrs. Bryant said that is not on the list, but they could look at it to put it on the list. Mr. Atkins said that several Commissioners have reached out to NLEP to see what needs to be done to ensure those economic development sites are attractive.

Mr. Cawthorne talked about Walter B. Jacobs. He wanted to know if it is a total renovation of the park. Mrs. Bryant said that this is not the total cost for the project, it is only the requested amount from the American Rescue dollars. The total cost will be presented to the Commission during the Capital Budget process. She said that they are planning that this park will be a tourist destination. Mr. Cawthorne wanted to know if this would create a revenue stream as a result. Mrs. Bryant said that it would, and they would need to increase staff and operating costs would also increase because of this. It is their plan to recoup those costs through the revenue stream.

Mr. Johnson asked about the COVID Information Distribution Center at CCC. Mr. Lawrence said that it would be large flat screen TVs installed in the pods in the common areas to display all of the COVID-19 information running 24 hours a day. Mr. Johnson said that the inmates could watch the news or information could be announced over a PA system.

Mr. Hopkins wanted to know if there has been any thought regarding the boat ramp at Earl G. Williamson Park. Mrs. Bryant said that it is not included on this list, but she will get with Mr. Patrick Wesley, Parks & Recreation Director, to get more information.

Mr. Johnson then moved onto the Parish Funded Agencies requests. He said that they are still waiting on the applications to be submitted.

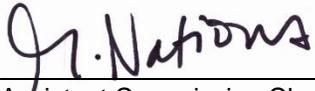
Mr. Johnson then moved onto the Caddo Parish Commission Project requests.

Answering a question from Mrs. Gage-Watts regarding if these projects have already been approved, Mrs. Bryant pointed out that four of the projects have already been approved by the Caddo Parish Commission.

It was **moved by Mr. Cawthorne**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *to establish a budget for the American Rescue Plan Fund based on the categories listed.* Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Cawthorne, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, and Johnson (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Johnson scheduled the next committee meeting for Thursday, July 15 at 3:00 p.m.

There being no further business, the Committee adjourned at 4:13 p.m.


Assistant Commission Clerk