

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION  
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION  
HELD ON THE 1<sup>ST</sup> DAY OF JUNE, 2021

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Work Session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mr. Johnson, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (10). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2).

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

**AGENDA ADDITIONS**

It was **moved by Mr. Chavez**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *to expand the agenda and add NLCOG update from Executive Director Kent Rogers under Visitors.*

At this time, Mr. Johnson opened the floor for anyone to speak in favor or against the agenda addition. There being no one to speak, the public hearing was closed.

At this time, Mr. Chavez's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (10). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Jermain Anderson came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I'm speaking on behalf of the people at Woodlawn Terrace Apartments. Due to the poorest conditions we've been living with over there-rats, mice, raw sewerage, things of that nature. We've been dealing with this for quite some time. Pretty much no change since April, since April this is what May? End of May? So, we've been dealing with this at least a little bit since after the winter storm since February. But it's been ongoing problem far as repair. Just pretty much a lot of things going on right on the complex. There's kids over there family children you know voicing our concerns. You know. We have no maintenance. We may have one-may last maybe about two weeks-maybe a month and that's about it. We really don't have any maintenance or anything as far as on grounds. We've had inspectors come through there. We've had so many things. People coming through there just checking on us. So, it's pretty nothing. Nothing much has changed basically since the time.

Mr. Johnson directed Mrs. Bryant and staff to help address this issue.

Cedric Blake came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I was asking about-I spoke with a young lady down here this morning. And I was talking about the rental assistance program. I'm actually in the Southern Hills. I'm actually been out of work and they did select me to help me with my rent to own home. And I'm steady calling numbers and I've given them my information and no one got back with me. They supposed to start paying it last month and it's a whole month. I don't know. She told me to come down here to explain that. So, I don't know who I get with that situation.

Mr. Johnson directed Mrs. Bryant and staff to help address this issue.

**VISITORS**

- Presentation from Alex T. Ray to the Caddo Parish Commission

Mr. Ray presented a plaque to the Caddo Parish Parks & Recreation Department for helping him with his Shreveport Father's Day 5k Walk/Run. He thanked the Commission for their continued support.

Mr. Chavez thanked Mr. Ray for all of his hard work on honoring fathers this Father's Day. He is looking forward to this event.

Mr. Wesley said it was an honor to partner up with him on his 5k.

- NLCOG Update  
Kent Rogers, Executive Director

Mr. Rogers gave an update on the I-69 Service Road. I-69 in Louisiana consist of three Sections of Independent Utility (SIU) SIU 14 from El Dorado, Arkansas to Haughton, Louisiana; SIU 15 from Haughton, Louisiana to Stonewall, Louisiana; SIU 16 from Stonewall, Louisiana to Tenaha, Texas.

The Record of Decision/EIS for SIU 15 identified a service road between Ellerbe Road in Caddo Parish and Stonewall Frierson Road in DeSoto Parish. The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development in cooperation with the Port of Caddo Bossier and NLCOG have begun to move forward with implementation of this Service Road in order to provide access to the Port of Caddo Bossier. There are three segments that are underway for the overall service road project. H.014054 - I-69 Frontage Road (Ellerbe Road to LA 1), this segment utilizes both existing right of way along Robson Road and some new right of way between Ellerbe Road and Robson Road that is within the I-69 SIU 15 and LA 3132 Extension Rights of Way. H.005184 - I-69 Frontage Road (Stonewall-Frierson Road to Ellerbe Road). This is the original service road identified within the Record of Decision for I-69 SIU15. H.014056 - I-69 Frontage Road (Stonewall Frierson) which provides for improvements and upgrades to Stonewall Frierson Road from the I-49 Interchange westward to its junction with segment two identified above. The overall project cost is estimated at \$32.25 million with \$15 million coming from existing federal earmark funds and state match support, \$10.5 million in Federal STP >200k funds, and the remaining \$6.75 from local match support. NLCOG signed the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the local parties this morning.

He then gave an update on the Jimmie Davis Bridge—LA 511. Currently there is approximately \$24 million towards the Jimmie Davis Bridge project from the Capital Outlay program. (see below from HB 2) Jimmie Davis Bridge Rehabilitation and Lighting, or Design, Engineering, Planning and Construction (Bossier) Payable from General Obligation Bonds Priority 1 \$ 8,982,400; Priority 5 \$15,000,000; Total \$ 23,982,400. There are also several pieces of legislation at the state level now that would allocate roughly \$100 million towards the project. Some of these pieces of legislation call for use of the COVID 19 funds dedicated to transportation others call for use of the existing 0.045% sales tax. Current alternatives are rehab the existing facility and build a new 2-lane span just north or build a new 4-lane span just north. If 4-lane option is chosen there will need to be an agreement as to what becomes of the existing facility.

Mr. Rogers then gave an update on the Metropolitan Transportation Plan—Set Aside Program. NLCOG recently updated our Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). This is our federally required Long Range Transportation plan with minimum of 20-year horizon. The federal requirements include performance-based planning. As part of the safety and security performance measure we included a series of set asides for various programs. One of these programs is upgrade the lighting along the controlled access facilities. This includes I-20, I-220/LA 3132, and I-49. The overall intent is to illuminate these facilities with new modern LED lighting. This will include repair and replace damaged/deficient bases/poles/mast arms and installation of new where missing; retrofitting luminaries with new LED kits; and upgrades to the power supply and distribution. This program will set aside \$3.2 million in STP >200k funds every 4 years. The set aside program includes the following:

1. Controlled Access Facility Lighting – Funding set aside to improve safety through lighting upgrades on controlled access facilities.
2. Motorist Assistance Patrol (MAP) – The MAP program provides free roadside assistance to stalled or stranded motorists.
3. Transit Transfer – Program funding set aside for bus replacement and support of SporTran fleet state of good repair.
4. Multi Year Aerial Flight – a multiyear multi flight program to gather aerial photography to support planning efforts.
5. Planning Studies – Planning study funding set aside to support MTP and other planning updates.

He then gave an update on the Louisiana Water Shed Initiative—Region 1. The first of the Louisiana Watershed projects have been announced. Gov. John Bel Edwards announced \$163 million in federal funding for 15 state projects and programs designed to reduce flood risk for communities throughout the state on March 23, 2021. This included \$6.6 million for Black Bayou structure hardening and runoff retention improvements. In addition, \$5.36 million for Ockley Basin for clearing, grading, and earthwork to construct flood storage areas at Mansfield Road and Texas Avenue, Forest Park and Avery Street, and Lawhon Street.

Some other projects of interests that he talked about were the LA 3132 (Inner Loop Extension) project which was scheduled for a public hearing on the Environmental Assessment in March of 2020. Due to COVID 19 restrictions that hearing was put on hold. A new hearing has been scheduled for August 17, 2021 at the Red River Ball Room at LSU-S Student Center.

The Linwood Avenue Phase 3 & 4 projects' pre-design meeting was held last week. It is anticipated that the construction could begin within the next 16 months. These projects are total rehab of Linwood Avenue from Mt. Zion North to 70<sup>th</sup> Street.

Mr. Burrell wanted to make it clear that the monies that was attempted to be removed from the I-49 project to the Jimmie Davis project was not necessary, since it has its own funding sources. Mr. Rogers said that the Jimmie Davis project has about \$24M within Capital Outlay. It is also listed out as one of the projects with the COVID funding that the State has received.

Mr. Chavez asked that Mr. Rogers send him a strip map for the I-49 Corridor via email.

Mr. Hopkins asked for more information on the Black Bayou project. Mr. Rogers said that it was for structure hardening and runoff retention improvements, including replacing the spillway.

Mr. Taliaferro wanted to know about the four lane Jimmie Davis Bridge. Mr. Rogers said that the environmental document is to rehab the existing two-lane span or constructing a four-lane span. If the four-lane span is the chosen option, there is a caveat because the existing bridge is a historic bridge. He also said that there has been conversations about converting the existing bridge into a bike/ped bridge, in which that would go to one of the local jurisdictions. All four jurisdictions—Caddo Parish Commission, Bossier City, Bossier Parish, and the City of Shreveport—indicated a “resounding no” on that issue. There has also been conversations about dismantling it and putting it somewhere else. The funds that are available could construct a new four-lane, but there is not enough money to convert the existing bridge into a bike/ped bridge as well.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *that the following ordinances be moved to Thursday’s agenda for introduction:*

- *Ordinance No. 6072 of 2021, an ordinance setting the Parish Millage for the purpose of paying principal and interest, due in 2021, on outstanding parish bond issues and to instruct the Assessor to include said millage on the tax roll of the Parish of Caddo for the year 2021, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6073 of 2021, an ordinance to set the General Purpose and Special Purpose Millages providing for millage rate adjustments, as allowed by Article VII, Section 23 of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974 and LA R.S. 47:1705 (B), levying and imposing taxes and assessments for 2021 on all the property subject to taxation in the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect*
- *Ordinance No. 6074 of 2021, an ordinance setting the assessment of property classified as timberlands and to instruct the Assessor to include said assessment on the tax roll of the Parish of Caddo for the year 2021, and to otherwise provide with respect*
- *Ordinance No. 6075 of 2021 an ordinance to adopt the values fixed, or to be fixed, by the Louisiana Tax Commission on all assessments for railways and other public service corporations, and to instruct the Assessor to extend such assessments and values on the tax roll of the Parish of Caddo for the year 2021, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

At this time, Mr. Jackson’s motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (10). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *that Ordinance No. 6076 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund for the year 2021 to provide an appropriation of \$5,000 to conduct a training program for Caddo Parish Fire Districts, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday’s agenda for introduction.

Mr. Hopkins explained that the fire districts conduct different training every three to four years. This year’s training would be to go in and save firefighters who have fallen or get hurt during a fire rescue.

At this time, Mr. Hopkins’ motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (10). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Chavez**, seconded by Mr. Jackson, *that Ordinance No. 6077 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the American Rescue Plan Fund to provide an appropriation of \$100,000 for five D3 Edge Security Trailers, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday’s agenda for introduction.

Mr. Chavez believes it is advantageous to purchase this technology with the rising crime in this community. He said that these trailers could be loaned out to other agencies as well as mitigating crime. Mr. Chavez also explained that these trailers could also be used for risk mitigation at Parish events. It can also be funded out of the American Rescue Plan monies. He will schedule a Long Range Planning Committee on Thursday to draft a comprehensive plan on where these could be best utilized.

Mr. Jackson asked to be added as a co-sponsor for this ordinance.

At this time, Mr. Chavez's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (10). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Burrell**, seconded by Mr. Jackson, *that Ordinance No. 6078 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the American Rescue Plan Fund to provide an appropriation of \$25,000 for a wastewater program for COVID-19, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Burrell explained that this will allow LSU to do testing for viral concentrations in the waste water to determine the density of where the virus is.

At this time, Mr. Burrell's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (10). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Jackson, *that Ordinance No. 6079 of 2021, an ordinance to accept the streets in Blanchard Lake Estates Subdivision Unit 2 & 3 into the Parish of Caddo Road System and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Hopkins asked that Jimmy Whittington explain this ordinance. Mr. Whittington said that this ordinance is just to accept these streets into the Caddo Parish Road System. Caddo Parish will maintain the roads. He also said that they met the Caddo specifications.

At this time, Mr. Hopkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (10). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *that Resolution No. 46 of 2021, a resolution adopting a Citizen Participation Plan for the CDBG Program* be moved to Thursday's agenda. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (10). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *that Resolution No. 47 of 2021, a resolution creating an Ad Hoc Pandemic Taskforce, and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda.

Mr. Cawthorne asked for the major bullet points that Mr. Jackson would like to achieve out of this taskforce. Mr. Jackson said that this is to work with local health public officials regarding COVID-19 and to work with other agencies to ensure Caddo Parish is getting the funding for COVID-19 issues.

Mr. Cawthorne wanted to know if this would be an ongoing committee. Mr. Jackson said that this is not a disaster committee. He said that the committee will dissolve on January 31, 2022 or after providing an after-action review to the Caddo Parish Commission and public, whichever comes first. The Commission body could choose to extend it, if it so chooses.

Mr. Chavez wanted to know if the \$4M in grant funding would still come to the Parish if this taskforce is not created. Attorney Bernstein stated that it would. Mr. Chavez asked for an exit report or an after-action review on the pandemic.

Mr. Jackson wanted to note that the Commission would still be in the running for the \$4M even if the taskforce is not created, but during the webinar, a health equity coalition was encouraged to be formed. At that time, they were utilizing the Pandemic Committee as that coalition.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that the grant was not to a committee, but to the Parish of Caddo. He also said that if the Committee does stand dissolved, it would fall under the Special Needs & Long Range Planning Committee per the By-Laws. Mr. Johnson also explained that he created an ad-hoc Pandemic Committee because the Long Range Planning Committee has its hands full with the MPC.

At this time, Mr. Jackson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (8). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins and Johnson (2). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Jackson, *that Resolution No. 48 of 2021, a resolution to authorize the Caddo Parish Administrator to consent to the annexation by the Town of*

*Blanchard of a certain right-of-way within the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto be moved to Thursday's agenda.*

Mr. Epperson wanted to know if there were any oil and gas royalties. Mr. Whittington said that he believes the Parish has already leased that portion of the road. Attorney Bernstein said that the Parish would receive the royalties because its lease pre-dates the annexation. Mr. Whittington said that this road is the Parish's by virtue of maintenance.

At this time, Mr. Hopkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (10). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Lazarus**, seconded by Mr. Jackson, *that Resolution No. 49 of 2021, a resolution to authorize the Caddo Parish Administrator to consent to the assignment of State Agency Leases 19509, 20131, 20134, 20133, 19737, and 19740, and otherwise providing with respect thereto be moved to Thursday's agenda.*

**Substitute motion by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *to englobo and move the following resolutions to Thursday's agenda:*

- *Resolution No. 49 of 2021, a resolution to authorize the Caddo Parish Administrator to consent to the assignment of State Agency Leases 19509, 20131, 20134, 20133, 19737, and 19740, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 50 of 2021, a resolution to authorize the Caddo Parish Administrator to request and authorize the Louisiana State Mineral & Energy Board and the Office of Mineral Resources to accept nominations and advertise for oil, gas, and mineral leases, accept bids, and award and execute oil, gas, and mineral leases on certain mineral interests owned by the Parish of Caddo, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 51 of 2021, a resolution to amend Resolution No. 75 of 2020 to change the dates of the July 2021 meetings of the Caddo Parish Commission, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*

At this time, Mr. Jackson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (10). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Cawthorne**, seconded Mr. Jackson, *that Resolution No. 52 of 2021, a resolution in support of creation of the National Commission to investigate the January 6 attack on the United States State Capitol Complex Act, and otherwise providing with respect thereto be moved to Thursday's agenda.*

Mr. Cawthorne said that January 6, 2021 was one of the worst events in American history and on the U.S. Capitol. An officer was killed and 140 officers were injured. Approximately 70% of the American public believes a committee should be formed on a bipartisan basis. He also noted that this was brought before the House and Senate. It passed out of the House and failed in the Senate. There is some conversation that this will be brought back to the table. There is also talk that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi will bring this before a Committee. Mr. Cawthorne also asked that the Clerk play a few videos for the Commission.

Mr. Atkins said that nobody is proud of what happened on January 6 and are being evaluated by law enforcement and national security experts.

Mr. Chavez said that Administration send him the entire verbiage that Congress is proposing. He also said that this is already being investigated.

Mr. Jackson wanted to know if this resolution is independent of Congress. Mr. Cawthorne explained that it would be set up just like the 911 Committee.

Mr. Jackson pointed out that today is the centennial anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre. He said that there were people who took photos standing over dead bodies and burning buildings and put them on postcards. Mr. Jackson said that this is similar to what happened on January 6. People took pictures in the Speaker's Office and in the Hall of Justice and paraded them out on social media. Mr. Jackson said that he has friends who work on Capitol Hill, and they were scared during the January 6 attack. He also talked about 911 and how it affected him. He said that the January 6 attack affected him in the same way.

Mr. Jackson would like to see something truly independent of Congress and have the report presented to the public.

Mr. Taliaferro said that this is already being investigated and does not feel that this resolution is conducive to that investigation.

Mr. Cawthorne said that this resolution is only to admonish those entities to conduct the investigation in a bipartisan way. Mr. Cawthorne also mentioned that the people who incited the Tulsa Massacre were never indicted or brought to justice, but the people who went to defend themselves and defend the man who was incarcerated went to jail.

At this time, Mr. Cawthorne's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Jackson, and Johnson (6). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Hopkins, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (4). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Taliaferro, *that Special Resolution of Recognition for Sir Terrance Mack* be moved to Thursday's agenda.

Mr. Johnson said that Mr. Mack was diagnosed with cancer at the age of two and has trouble remembering, but he was able to graduate. He received this special resolution and a key to the Parish.

At this time, Mr. Johnson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (10). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts, Jackson, and Young (3). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *that the proposals from Caddo Citizen/Shreveport Sun and the Shreveport Times submitted for the selection of the Official Journal for Regular Session meetings for July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022* be moved to Thursday's agenda.

Mr. Cawthorne wanted to know if the Shreveport Sun is also being considered. The Clerk of the Commission explained that the Caddo Citizen and Shreveport Sun submitted a joint proposal.

Mr. Jackson wanted to know who submitted the joint proposal. The Clerk of the Commission reiterated that it is the Caddo Citizen and the Shreveport Sun who submitted a joint proposal.

Mr. Chavez understands that State statute dictates that this has to be posted in the newspaper, but he has received several comments from citizens saying that they do not receive the newspaper. He wanted to know if there were other states that public official notifications in other ways. He suggested that the Commission explore other options aside from the newspaper. Mr. Johnson said that the Commission does post it on the website.

Mr. Jackson understands the State statute says the Commission has to choose one Official Journal. He wanted to know if it is possible that a daily paper could be used in an emergency. Attorney Bernstein explained the State statute says the Commission has to choose a single Official Journal where the official proceedings and official notices are published.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if it was possible to require the Official Journal to provide an electronic copy of the journal that could be posted to the Caddo Parish website. Attorney Bernstein said that the minimum qualifications do not require that. The Clerk of Commission explained that the Official Journal does provide an affidavit as proof of publication. He also said that the public notices and minutes are posted online as well.

Mr. Chavez said that there are so many social media push notifications. He suggested that the Parish purchase ads to inform the citizens that they can go to the Caddo Parish website for meeting dates and agendas.

Mr. Hopkins mentioned that all official ads can be viewed at [www.publicnoticeads.com](http://www.publicnoticeads.com).

Mr. Johnson also asked Ms. Beauchamp, Communications Manager, to provide the media with the meeting highlights from each Commission meeting.

At this time, Mr. Johnson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (10). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

### **COMMUNIQUES & COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Mr. Jackson apologized to the public for his actions that took place after the last Regular Session.

He also announced that the MLK Health Center will host a Men's Day Out on June 14 from 3:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. to highlight men's health.

He commended the citizens for showing their support in our local economy and small businesses.

Mr. Jackson wanted an update on the Juneteenth event. Mrs. Bryant said that Administration has followed with both parties involved.

Mr. Jackson asked to meet with Mrs. McGee and Mr. Walker after the meeting.

- Mr. Chavez announced that the Long Range Planning Committee will meet on Thursday at 11:00 a.m. to introduce the Citizens Advisory Board for planning and zoning for the unincorporated areas of the Parish. There will also be discussions on the D3 trailers.

- Mr. Burrell said that fireworks can be bought, sold, and used from noon June 16 through midnight July 5 and noon December 15 through midnight January 1.

Mr. Burrell also said that Mr. Tim Magner hosted a webinar on April 21 with the core participants of Caddo Parish. It was apparent that the City of Shreveport and the Caddo School Board has a broadband plan in the works. He suggested that the Commission draft a plan as well for the rural areas of the Parish. Mr. Burrell also asked that the President create an ad-hoc committee for broadband.

- Mr. Atkins requested that Administration reach out to NLEP. Mrs. Bryant said that they have reached out to NLEP and are providing them with an application to submit back to the Commission.

Mr. Atkins announced that the Audit & Finance Committee will meet on June 14 at 2:00 p.m.

### **ADMINISTRATION REPORT**

- Confederate Monument Update

Mrs. Bryant said that they are in the process of scheduling site visits to have additional vendors to provide quotes. It is their hope that those visits will be concluded by the end of summer.

- Disparity Study Update

Mrs. Bryant said that they are still working on the contract for that. They still have to have all parties review the contract and provide their comments.

- I-49 Welcome Sign Update

Mrs. Bryant said that they are still waiting on DOTD to approve the permits to proceed.

- U.S. Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Program

Mrs. Bryant said that the program is continuing to progress. Approximately \$2.6M has been sent out to nearly 600 applicants. A report regarding the prioritization process has been submitted to the Commissioners. She pointed out that Caddo Parish is number two in the State regarding the funds that have been disbursed. Based on those numbers, Caddo Parish is exceeding other parishes who started the program prior to the Parish starting its program. They are anticipating that everyone who is in the que to have their documents submitted by mid-June.

Mr. Jackson said that Caddo Parish is actually number three, not number two, in regards to funds that have been disbursed following the State and Orleans Parish. Mrs. Bryant said Administration was looking at the percentage, not the actual amount that was disbursed. She also pointed out that the State has only disbursed 2% of their funds.

Mr. Jackson wanted to know if the applicants are being chosen by a prioritization or a lottery. Mrs. Bryant explained that the applicants are first ranked by need, then in that tier, it is a lottery. She also said that they have finished Priority 1, finishing up Priority 2, and should begin Priority 3 & 4 soon.

Mr. Jackson also wanted to know if there was an appeals process. Mrs. Bryant said that there's a process where they can review the applicants and ask them to provide additional information if they've been rejected through the application process.

- FEMA Update

Mrs. Bryant said that the Parish has submitted their information to FEMA for those COVID expenses. They are waiting to hear back from FEMA on any additional information that they may require.

Mr. Jackson said that he will provide a contact to Administration in regards to FEMA.

### ***PRESIDENT'S REPORTS***

Mr. Johnson said that the American Rescue Plan Committee is recommending to the full body to set aside some funds for broadband.

He also thanked Mrs. Barnett and Mrs. Bryant for their work on the Rental Assistance Program literature. He said that it cleared up several questions the citizens had regarding the lottery process. Mr. Johnson reiterated that the ERAP does not have a lottery system; it has a prioritization system.

Mr. Johnson said that he has a calm demeanor as a person and is willing to debate any issues with anyone, but he will not tolerate being disrespected. He also said that the Pandemic Committee was on its downhill. The last item they were working on was the ERAP, but the process was already in place. He also said that COVID testing and CARES Act was already dealt with. The American Rescue Plan Committee is handling the budget for those funds coming in. He also mentioned that the President has the authority to create and dissolve ad-hoc committees, per the By-Laws.

Mr. Jackson said that he would like the record to reflect that he nor the committee members received any notification that the committee was being dissolved. He would also like the record to reflect that he did not say anything until after the committee was disbanded.

### ***CITIZENS COMMENTS (late arrivals)***

Omari Ho-Sang came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

So, today I wanted to speak a little bit about the rental assistance program. And I appreciate the updates about it. That definitely informs-kind of-my thoughts moving forward. But I still wanted to share that as a community organizer it is my duty to understand statistics and data. So, data such as the amount of poverty that Caddo Parish is in. We're in the top 3 in terms of the state. Also, how COVID19 has disproportionately affected citizens in our parish. And so, I really, really was very excited to hear about the Caddo Parish rental assistance program. But in terms of the program itself, hearing folks talk about being one rental payment away from eviction or one payment away from their lights being shut off, having no water, having no power. I really felt that the emergency rental assistance program is a hero. That everybody needed. And so, as I feel kind of complaints of people who approach me just as a fellow citizen as a neighbor as an organizer and share their concerns for the program, I wanted to kind of pose those here. And see if there can be maybe not a one-off solution, but something that can be more systemic. And so, in this regard, I just want to quickly share how disappointing and nerve wrecking it's been to hear stories like the one of Ms. Jones, for example. Who applied to this program the first day it was made available with the hope that she can avoid eviction. And she had received an eviction notice. And having to brace herself to now be evicted this week which is the first week of June having applied in April because she was never selected. Or the case of an elderly neighbor who is one a breathing machine. And again, I talked about the SWEPCO the utilities piece and possibly being a payment away from losing power. Hoping to avoid disconnection of her electric services, she's not heard anything. And so, I am really, really interested. Because I have been hearing the word lottery and a lot of folks in the community have been hearing the word lottery. And so maybe we replace that word lottery with random selection. And so, I'm very excited to hear that there is a prioritization process and I'm looking forward to the publishing of that information so that we can apprise folks who don't just want to know, but again who are one payment away from being evicted, one payment away from not having any water, one payment away from not having electricity and so on and so forth. Because if this is not done, the deepening of an already deep disparity will occur when there are millions of dollars dedicated to this program that tells us it doesn't have to happen. So, I really look forward to hearing about the prioritization process. And secondly, it's my-and correct me if I'm wrong- it is my knowledge that we now have not just SWEPCO payments that can be mitigated but also water. No? Not true? Okay. So, I'll make sure that we can get an update since water payments can't be made. IT was my knowledge that water payments as well as gas payments could be mitigated. But if that is not true.

Mrs. Bryant advised that current program is only allowing for electric.

Omari Ho-Sang continued:

Electric? Okay, so I'll make sure to let folks know. And then it would be really, really helpful to lastly in terms of a solution if the short-term piece that question it leaves a lot of people who actually completing the application kind of in a weird spot. Because if they're in again a hotel they're going to mark short term and that disqualifies them from the process. And so, if we can have more information in terms of how do people work around that and not just one person, but every single person who applies because \$2.6 million is great. It's necessary. There're still several millions more to go and several million more reside- not million- several thousand more residents that need assistance. So, I look forward to a universal solution. Thank you.

Will James came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Good evening to the Commission. I appreciate the time that you're giving me that you made available. I was coming up to speak before the Commission on issue. I'm a sociologist and a activist that works in the area. I work on different levels within the community. But especially within Allendale and Queensborough and Cedar Grove. But with that being said, I wanted to speak on using community engagement as a deterrent for crime. Especially with the uptick of violence that we witness in regards to gun violence in our communities within the Parish, the City, Northwest La and whichever realm you wish to address it. I grew up in Ledbetter heights back in the 80s and the 90s. So, I've seen the cycle happen before. The things that kept me out of trouble, the things that kept some of my peers out of trouble, the things that actually made it somewhat safer at the time was public community engagement. So, this Friday beginning at sundown at 8:00-8:30-I think it gets dark about no later than 8:35 right now-I'll be at Neef's Coffee Shop, which is where 1958 Milam Street intercepts with Elder Street. For those of you not familiar with that it runs on the side of BTW. The reason why I'm focusing on that area is after sundown that's where you have a lot of your high-speed stuff that happens at that time. I'm familiar with it because I'm the one that painted the logo on the side of Neef's Coffee Shop. I had to do that between sundown to 1, 2 o'clock in the morning. I witnessed a lot of the stuff that was happening. I've called 911 on a lot of the different issues that were happening with either a late to no response. But the thing that actually deterred in the citizens that I walked to and that I talked to, I always played movies, videos, grand images on the side of the building there. So, what I'll be doing from 8:30 until 1 o'clock with the citizen's permission that's around that area is to go ahead light up the area, have some music going, have different movies and videos going. I'm just one person. That's one section where you hear a lot of gunshots happening. We have a lot of high-speed car chases going. I would love engagement from any elected officials, any community leaders that would love to do stuff. We have block parties on Friday and Saturday nights before. Some people thought it was just a fun way to have a weekend at the end of the week. But to me, the way that I saw it, it was a way to deter crime and present sage environments for people that are living in different areas. Thank you for your time.

Jalisa Nash submitted the following comment:

The concern I have with the rental assistance distribution is the not knowing if I would get any help. Once I fill out the paperwork it tells me that I may get a call or a follow up application if selected. I just think it's unfortunate because if I didn't need it I wouldn't be filling out the app to MAYBE get a resolution.

Jimessia Robinson submitted the following comment:

I've gotten selected for the Caddo Rental Assistance Program. I provided information that was supposed to be provided and haven't been approved yet I'm not one month late on my rent and not sure how long the landlord will wait.

Caitlin Douglas submitted the following comment:

ERA Program concerns.

Tamika Hamilton submitted the following comment:

Hello. My mother has been misplaced since the February winter storm. I've been trying to get some form of assistance and has yet been able to do so. I've been told there is some grant that has been given to Louisiana and my mother applied for it and was denied. I need some answers on why was she denied as well as to why was there any assistance living arrangements for her as well as many others. As of today, my mother still doesn't have a place to stay. I've reached out to the mayor and his team but nothing was accomplished! I do have adequate paperwork and emails to provide if needed.

Claudeidra Houston submitted the following comment:

I am grateful for the program. It will truly help me being that I have children and granddaughter. I have been in a situation where I was faces an eviction and I do not want to face that with my children nor grandchild. I am forever grateful that there's something out there to help in aiding so there is no stress or struggle on how my rent will be paid.

Robert Tyler submitted the following comment:

Rent assistance program.

Jermaine Anderson submitted the following comment:

Woodlawn Terrace apts...our living condition etc. mice too the mold etc..

Brittany French submitted the following comment:

Hello is there anyway that the programs to assist those in need be advertised or voice

more? Many of those in need aren't aware of the resources they have because the information isn't made public unless concerned citizens speak out on it.

Beverly Jones submitted the following comment:

I have been working jobs and sending in payments to my landlord to try to keep lines of communication open and my home until I found something concrete. I have even enrolled in the rental assistance program. Well my landlord changed my lease to a month to month because I was behind and then told me that I have till the 27th to get out of the premises. Is this legal right now? I told them I would make payments of \$600 a week and I tried my best to keep that arrangement but working odd jobs and having to pay all other bills had me short and sometimes I couldn't pay it. I told them I signed up for the program to get assistance and asked if they would so I can get the referral code. I just need help. Is there anyone I can talk to. I finally got hired at GDIT and another job so I will be able to get back on track. I just can't have my family homeless right now. I applied on the first day the application was opened and I have not heard one word back. I am not being evicted and I have nowhere to go.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- *Ordinance No. 6067 of 2021, an ordinance to amend Volume II of the Code of Ordinances of the Parish of Caddo, as amended, the Caddo Parish Unified Development Code, to establish the provisions for a Special Exception Use, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6068 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund in the amount of \$17,225 to provide an appropriation for Robison Rescue, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6069 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust Fund for the year 2021, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6070 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the General Fund to provide an appropriation for the Wheelchair Ramp & Roof Repair Program, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6071 of 2021, an ordinance to establish a Parish Planning & Zoning Commission to provide for its membership and to provide for an effective date, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the Commission adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

/s/Michelle Nations  
Assistant Commission Clerk