

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 17th DAY OF JULY, 2021

The Caddo Parish Commission met in an American Rescue Committee Meeting, on the above date, at 11:30 a.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).

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

NEW BUSINESS

The Committee moved onto the first item under New Business: *Continue Discussion on Comprehensive Local Plan for the Use of American Rescue Plan Funds, Review Updates and Clarifications to Federal Guidelines, and Review Applications Received and Discuss Next Steps.*

Mr. Johnson provided the Commissioners with an updated summary of the uses, restrictions, and guiding principles on how to utilize the American Rescue Plan funds:

Uses:

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

Restrictions:

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

Guiding Principles:

1. Avoid creating new programs or add-ons to existing programs.
2. Offset of revenue declines should be given high priority.
3. Investment in critical infrastructure is well-suited use.
4. Be aware of state-level ARPA efforts, Governor Edward's priorities for the first \$1.6B includes:
 - a. Shoring up the Unemployment Trust Fund--\$400M
 - b. Unemployment Insurance loan payment--\$230M
 - c. Infrastructure--\$400M
 - d. Tourism & Convention and Visitors Bureaus--\$125M
 - e. Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism--\$20M
 - f. Louisiana Ports--\$50M
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 costs must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and incurred by December 31, 2026.
8. Expenses must have occurred on or after March 3, 2021.
9. Only premium pay can be associated with dates prior to March 3, 2021.
10. Strategic Plan must be provided to Treasury by August 31, 2021.

Mr. Johnson said that Administration provided a scoring rubric for the applications that were submitted. The scoring matrix rates the need, methodology, outcomes, and requested funds from exemplary to missing. He suggested that a minimum overall score should be decided to determine which projects could be funded.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if there were applications on every project listed. Mrs. Bryant said that the only ones that may not have a direct application are Administration and Commissioners categories; all of the other listed in the ARP Requests Summary have applications.

Mrs. Bryant mentioned that they will probably allocate the Coroner's request in the 2022 Budget process.

The Committee then went down the list of applications that were submitted:

Mr. Burrell said that some of these applications may not fit into the categories. He also said that some of the Commissioners are urban, but these funds are for the Parish. Mr. Johnson explained that the City has \$48M. They conducted meetings throughout the City to determine what the citizens wanted to spend those funds on. He also said that there are projects that will be in collaboration with the City and the School Board.

Dr. Wilson pointed out that the citizens inside the city limits would like the funds to be spent on public safety, infrastructure, technology, and economic development.

Dr. Wilson also mentioned that the Parish had two meetings, one in District 12 and the other in District 1. In the District 12 meeting, the citizens expressed interest in WiFi services/broadband, economic development, and items related to park facilities.

Mr. Hopkins said that economic development was consistent with the meeting in District 1. He also said that the water, sewer, and fire districts will be submitting applications.

Mr. Johnson also mentioned that broadband, which is part of infrastructure, was also talked about. The School Board, City, and Parish will be collaborating on this endeavor.

Mr. Burrell is concerned that there won't be any funds spent in his district. Mr. Johnson explained that there will be funds spent in his district. He mentioned the sporting events that will be held at Independence Stadium, which is in Mr. Burrell's district. Then he talked about the security trailers, tornado sirens, green infrastructure, LSU water testing, etc.—all of these projects are crossovers between the City and Parish and will affect all districts.

Mr. Johnson also explained that there are agencies that the Parish has to fund by state statute that is included in this plan, along with the Parish's revenue replacement which equates to \$21M.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know the objective and goals for today's meeting. Mr. Johnson explained that the goal for today's meeting is to determine which requests are eligible for the program and put those programs into a budget. Mr. Atkins suggested that the Committee peruse the list and determine which ones do not meet the criteria first before moving to the next step.

It was **moved by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *to go through the ARP Requests Summary and determine which projects meet the guidelines.* Motion carried unanimously.

**College Football Games
Festivals & Events
Sporting Events**

Mr. Johnson wanted to know if it fit the guidelines. Mrs. Bryant explained that if it meets the tourism guidelines. There is a mechanism to provide funds that were affected by COVID. She also explained that several of these games were cancelled due to the COVID. She also said that to encourage tourism, the Commission could help fund these football games.

Mr. Atkins said that it sounds like it might be hard to make it fit. Mr. Johnson said that it would meet the guidelines because it falls under tourism.

Mrs. Bryant explained that the biggest criteria is showing that something was impacted due to COVID and now the Commission is trying to bring that back. Football games were obviously impacted due to COVID because there were several cancellations.

Mr. Johnson mentioned that football games will be shared with the City.

Housing Assistance

Mrs. Bryant explained that there is a specific guideline for various types of housing assistance, i.e. rent, mortgage, etc.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if this was viewed as rent contributions or housing improvements. Mrs. Bryant said that it could be rent, mortgage, home improvements, etc. She also mentioned that there is a Mortgage Assistance Program, but the applicants would need to apply through the federal government.

Homelessness Solutions

Mrs. Bryant said that it does meet the guidelines. Mr. Johnson said that there are a few organizations in the community that help homeless people get on their feet and back into society. Mrs. Bryant said that this would need to be connected to COVID.

Mrs. Gage-Watts wanted to know if these funds could be used to purchase tents for the homeless. Mrs. Bryant said that it would need to meet the guidelines. She also suggested that the funds

could be used to buy PPE, vaccinations, and things like that for the homeless, but she is unsure if tents would meet the guidelines.

Sci-Port—Renovate IMAX Theater in collaboration with the City and CPSB

Mrs. Bryant said that Sci-Port can clearly show revenue replacement, and they can use those funds to renovate the IMAX.

Mr. Hopkins wanted to know if the theater was damaged. Mrs. Bryant said that it is not damaged, but the technology is outdated.

Mrs. Gage-Watts wanted to know if this was a part of the \$1.2M project that they are doing. Mrs. Bryant said that it was. Mr. Johnson explained that the Commission is putting in \$400k, the School Board is putting in \$400k, and the City is putting in \$800k. Mr. Burrell pointed out that by his calculations, the total equals to \$1.6M, not \$1.2M.

LSU Health—Water Monitoring System

Mrs. Bryant said that this does meet the guidelines and is before the full body at the next Commission meeting.

TruFund

Mr. Cawthorne said that they've been working with TruFund since the beginning of February. It started off with a loan pool process, but they felt this would be "a little dicey" for the Commission body. They decided that the monies that the Commission is going to put in could be leveraged with loans and technical assistance that's going to be provided by both them and local organizations that are familiar with the companies in Caddo Parish.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know what the money is going to be used for. Mr. Cawthorne said by partnering with them, they need a capital infusion to be able to help companies apply for a loan. They would provide the technical assistance.

Mrs. Bryant said that the guidelines does say that the Commission could do loans or grants for financial hardships, loans or grants for COVID prevention, and technical assistance with business planning. Mr. Johnson said that TruFund would help relieve Administration from trying to do this, along with their day-to-day operations.

Security Trailers

Mrs. Bryant said that the Commission has already approved this.

Tornado Sirens in collaboration with the City and CPSB

Mrs. Bryant said that they are trying to reduce this number. She suggested that this be presented during the capital process because it has been difficult to make this fit the guidelines. She also said that this will be looked at in phases.

Provide direct funding to Caddo Parish citizens in collaboration with the City

Mrs. Bryant said that direct cash payments does meet the criteria. Mrs. Gage-Watts said that she would like to put \$1M towards this program to infuse additional funds in to selected households each month.

Litter Campaign

Mrs. Gage-Watts wanted to know if this needed to be added to the list. Mr. Hopkins suggested that they look at the Public Works Fund for this endeavor. Dr. Wilson said that they have a contract and may need to re-engage the Sheriff's Department.

Mrs. Gage-Watts clarified that she would like an awareness campaign such as billboards or signage. Mr. Hopkins wanted to know if this could be done out of the Solid Waste Fund. Mrs. Bryant said that it could be done out of the Solid Waste Fund, but only in the rural areas of the Parish.

Mrs. Bryant also mentioned that it could be done out of the General Fund. She also pointed out that they could tie it to COVID by saying that because of COVID, the Sheriff's Office could not long pick up litter. Mr. Hopkins said that they were picking up approximately 2,000 pounds of litter per week on Parish roads. He also said that the compactor hours have been cut in District 1. He suggested that Administration look at St. Tammany Parish's litter campaign.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if this was an overlay of the City's program. Mrs. Bryant said that they would add dollars to the workforce and a private company to try to help the Sheriff since he's been

limited with the inmates. She also said that Mrs. Gage-Watts is wanted billboards, tv ads, etc. to remind people not to litter.

Mr. Johnson mentioned that the ordinance needs to be reviewed as well. Mr. Hopkins suggested having a discussion with the constables. Mrs. Gage-Watts suggested adding more equipment to various locations, like the trashcans on South Lakeshore. Mrs. Bryant reminded the Committee that they are limited on what they can do inside the city limits of Shreveport. She also said that they do not have enough staff to go pick up and empty those cans.

Mr. Burrell suggested coordinating this with the City on this matter.

Mr. Hopkins explained that the JPs and Constables could make more money for their office.

Green/Food Infrastructure

Mrs. Bryant said that the infrastructure portion does allow for green initiatives.

Mr. Atkins wanted clarification on Mr. Young's vision for this. Dr. Wilson said that he would like to plant for fruit trees and construct more community gardens.

Black Bayou Watershed

They applied to repair the erosion areas and sea walls in the fishing pier, construct a boat launch, docking station, concrete parking area, access to picnic pavilion and play area, and upgrade the safety features in the park.

Mrs. Gage-Watts wanted to know if there was any federal funding available for this application. Mrs. Bryant said that there could be, but they would need to research it further.

Mr. Johnson wanted to know if this was a Parish park. Mr. Hopkins said that it is the Robert A. Nance Park.

Mr. Johnson then wanted to know if they charge fees or taxes for the people who live in that area. Mr. Hopkins said that there are no fees or taxes related to this. He also pointed out that the Commission does appoint member to the Black Bayou Watershed.

Mr. Hopkins also explained that they work with Wildlife & Fisheries to keep the fishery going because several people come up there to fish.

Caddo Community Action Agency

Mrs. Bryant said that this meets the guidelines. She said that they need tech upgrades in order to prepare for remote work.

Mr. Hopkins asked about premium pay. He understands that some of the centers were not open, because of that, he wanted to know if the employees were then eligible for unemployment. Dr. Wilson said that some of them were still working.

Fire District 3

Fire District 4

Mrs. Bryant said that it does meet the guidelines. She said that payroll expenses because of COVID for public safety is allowed under the guidelines. Mr. Johnson wanted to know if the Commission would be paying on top of them being paid. Mrs. Bryant explained that they did not receive enough CARES dollars. She also said that they did have to pay a lot of overtime as a result of COVID. She said that their application states payroll expenses due to employee overtime and quarantine supplies at the peak of the pandemic.

Fire District 5

Mrs. Bryant said that their request is for thermal imaging equipment. It would enhance their emergency response capability which increased due to COVID. She said that it is a stretch and suggested to look at it during the capital process.

Fire District 6

Mrs. Bryant said that the air filtration system would meet the guidelines because capital can be spent to if it helps respond to COVID.

Fire District 7

Mrs. Bryant said that it would probably meet the guidelines if it were new firetrucks, not

used ones. We need to find a way to get these firetrucks, Mr. Hopkins said.

Fire District 8

Mrs. Bryant said that the training center could fit depending on what they are training for. Mr. Hopkins mentioned that all the fire districts in the Parish would be able to use this training center.

Lakeview Water Pine Hill Water Sewer District 2 Water District 7

Mrs. Bryant said that all of these entities would qualify under the guidelines.

Public Defenders Office

Mrs. Bryant said that they also qualify.

Mr. Cawthorne wanted to know if they were funded by the State. Mrs. Bryant said that they are funded by the State, but most public defenders offices are underfunded. She said that their revenues were down due to the courts being closed.

Mr. Cawthorne then wanted to know who do they report to. Mrs. Bryant said that they report to the State, and they also have a board.

Shreve Memorial Library

Mrs. Bryant said that both of their requests, UV-C Air Purification System and STEM technology purchases, qualify under the guidelines.

Mr. Johnson inquired about the STEM technology purchases. Mrs. Bryant said that they are doing their program in relation to education and lower income students.

Mrs. Bryant also said that the majority of the students who do not have the technology at home go to the library to use the computers, printers, internet services, etc. During COVID, it was an issue because the libraries were not open.

Mr. Johnson mentioned that there would need to be a person teaching the STEM. Mrs. Bryant explained that their application states that they would reach underserved residents, particularly children and teens. The technology purchased would be used to teach STEAM classes throughout the Parish giving children and teens access to robotics, coding, engineering concepts, etc.

Southern University Law Center

Mrs. Bryant said that it does not meet the guidelines, so they are going to look at it through the Economic Development Budget.

Ward II Industrial Development Corporation

Mrs. Bryant said that some of the items in their application meet the guidelines, but some don't. Mr. Hopkins said that their funding request will be reduced.

Mrs. Bryant said that the lighting upgrades, revenue replacement, and possibly the sewer lift station would meet the guidelines.

Southern University—Youth Bill Program

Mr. Johnson explained that this would train students to learn about carpentry, plumbing, electrical, etc. Mrs. Bryant asked how much would be applied to this program. Mr. Johnson said that he would like to put \$1M towards the program.

Fit For Life

Galilee Family Enrichment

Mrs. Bryant said that it can meet the criteria, but the difficulty is that it is an ongoing program. Essentially, the facility will be upgraded with these funds along with staffing and programming, but there is no future funding for it. Mrs. Gage-Watts suggested that this be converted to a pilot program.

Mrs. Bryant further explained that they would like to create a state-of-the-art music and dance studios, band room, piano room, and video editing room and install a security system in order to provide after school tutoring. She said that it is a program that would have to be funded year after year to

try to provide tutoring. The guidelines discourage ongoing programs because there is no funding source for them.

Mr. Johnson suggested that Administration sit down with the organizations that have questions marks and explain to them the guidelines. Mr. Atkins agreed and said that he does not feel comfortable giving these organizations a large sum of money and telling them to figure out how to make it work. He suggested providing them with a reasonable amount of funding. Mr. Johnson suggested that all these organizations come down to the next committee meeting and explain their projects.

Grace Project

Mr. Johnson said that Grace Project is requesting funding to renovate fifty houses in the Allendale, Lakeside, and adjacent communities.

Mrs. Bryant explained that the budget for each structure is \$20k, and the properties would be sold for the amount of resources used to rehabilitate the structures. In doing this, the homeowners will have equity. She further stated that it qualifies for rehabbing the homes, but the re-selling aspect may run into a problem.

Dr. Wilson wanted to know who would get the money if the houses are sold. Mrs. Bryant said that the Parish would.

Mr. Cawthorne suggested that the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust be used for these types of projects. Mr. Atkins agreed with Mr. Cawthorne and suggested that the Committee determine the funding amount and do it through the Housing Trust Fund.

Holy Angels

Mrs. Bryant said that this project qualifies under the guidelines.

Ivy Crown

Mrs. Bryant said that it does qualify. Mr. Johnson wanted to know if the Commission still has masks available. Dr. Wilson said that the Commission does. Mr. Johnson suggested removing this from the list and giving them the leftover masks.

Kennedy Center

Mrs. Bryant said that this project does meet the criteria. They are increasing COVID-19 vaccination rates. They would like to pay for staffing, administration, and outreach that results in COVID-19 prevention.

Lakeside Neighborhood

Mr. Johnson said that this is the same as Grace Project. He also pointed out that Grace Project wants to rehab homes in Lakeside. Mr. Johnson wanted to know how much is the budget for each house. Mrs. Bryant said that they do not give a budget for each house nor the amount of homes that they will be rehabbing.

Mr. Cawthorne suggested that Grace Project and Lakeside be grouped together. He also suggested that the organization which are doing the same project come together and “bring all of their expertise to the table”.

Mr. Burrell said that there are people going door to door encouraging people to get vaccinated. Mr. Cawthorne wanted to know who “they” were. Mr. Burrell said that the President is on a national level. Mrs. Gage-Watts said that Sleeves Up Louisiana is.

MLK CDC

Mrs. Bryant said that it meets the guidelines.

Northwest Louisiana CDC

Mrs. Bryant said that it meets the guidelines. Mr. Cawthorne pointed out that this is for rental property.

Mrs. Bryant said that their application is to rehab ten rental units owned by the Northwest Louisiana CDC, administrative costs, developer fee, and property insurance. She said that it meets the guidelines as far rehabbing, but this would rehab property for a private owner. Mr. Johnson pointed out that the landlords would have substantial income for years.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that they are asking for \$1M, so their budget would be \$100k per

house.

Operation Neighborhood

Mrs. Bryant said that this does meet the guidelines, but this is an ongoing program. She said that their application states that they would like to do a 24-month pilot program. Operation Neighborhood Peace Practitioners is vital to treat the mentally ill and the City of Shreveport to reduce violence. They would assist law enforcement and emergency medical responders with the overload of crime activity situation through SPD.

Mrs. Gage-Watts wanted to know if this was the same program that the City is doing. Mrs. Bryant said that the guidelines state to avoid creating new programs or add onto existing programs.

Red G Enterprises

Mrs. Bryant said that they run the Regal Banquet & Conference Center which will build a program with partnerships and collaboration designed to restore economic growth for the Parish.

Rho Omega & Friends

Mrs. Bryant said that they are wanting help since they had to cancel the 2020 Let the Good Times Roll Festival which reduce the amount of income that they raise for scholarships. Mr. Johnson said that this sounds like revenue replacement.

Sickle Cell Softball Tournament

Mr. Johnson would like to add this event since they had to cancel their 2020 tournament. He would like it to be categorized as Revenue Replacement for \$50k.

Rutherford House

Mrs. Bryant said that they are relating it to COVID because the Rutherford House is the only vocational training program in the State. With COVID issues, the number of youths that could be placed in the house was reduced, reducing their revenue. Mr. Johnson said that this should be Revenue Replacement.

Save Our Sons

Mrs. Bryant said that this meets the guidelines.

State Fair

Mrs. Bryant said that they qualify.

Vivian Athletic Association

Mrs. Bryant does not see how this qualifies.

Volunteers for Youth Justice

Mrs. Bryant is not sure how purchasing a building would qualify.

Volunteers for Youth Justice—locating and re-enrolling students in school

Mrs. Bryant said that they would like to hire people to capture those students who were attending school prior to COVID, but are no longer in the system as a result of COVID. They are asking \$50k per year for two years.

Mr. Johnson does not feel that the Commission should fund this program 100%. He suggested that the School Board be involved.

Dr. Wilson agreed and said that the School Board does have a truancy department to help get those students back into the school system.

Mrs. Gage-Watts would like to hear more about the program before removing it from the list.

At this time, Mrs. Bryant listed the organizations that the Committee would like to schedule small meetings with as: Galilee, Grace Project, Northwest CDC, Operation Neighborhood, Kennedy Center, Lakeside Neighborhood, Vivian Athletic Association, Volunteers for Youth Justice, and Fire District 7. She said that the new total is \$52.8M.

Mr. Johnson would like Administration to meet with those organizations next week, and scheduled the next American Rescue Plan Committee meeting for Monday, July 26 at 3 PM.

Mrs. Gage-Watts asked that iPads/laptops be added for college students.

Mrs. Bryant also explained that the Commission cannot give out direct lump sums because they will have to do periodic reporting. She reiterated that the organizations will have to provide reporting and documentation, so the payments will be periodic payments. Mr. Johnson suggested that be put in the CEA. He also suggested that some type of clause regarding failure to report in the CEA.

There being no further business, the Committee adjourned at 5:10 p.m.


Assistant Commission Clerk