

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S  
ANIMAL SERVICES COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THE 9<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2021

The Caddo Parish Animal Services Committee met in legal session on the above date, at 10:00 a.m., via Zoom teleconference, with Mr. Young, Chairman, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Burrell, Chavez, Johnson, Taliaferro, and Young (5). ABSENT: None (0).

Mr. Young gave the invocation, and Mr. Burrell led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CERTIFICATE OF TELECONFERENCE**

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Louisiana has declared a statewide Public Health emergency, inclusive of Caddo Parish, in Proclamation Number 25 JBE 2020;

WHEREAS, the Governor, has further extended that declaration via Proclamations Number 158JBE 2020 and Number 159 JBE 2020; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 42:17.1 allows members of political subdivisions to participate in its meeting electronically under certain limited circumstances.

THEREFORE, in accordance with the provisions of R.S. 42:17.1, the presiding officer of the Caddo Parish Commission hereby certifies that this meeting is to address matters that are:

- (a) directly related to the public Commission's response to the Coronavirus Pandemic and are critical to the health, safety, or welfare of the public.
- (b) that if they are delayed will cause curtailment of vital public services or severe economic dislocation and hardship.
- (c) critical to continuation of the business of the Commission and that are not able to be postponed to a meeting held in accordance with the other provisions of Open Meetings Law due to a legal requirement or other deadline that cannot be postponed or delayed by the public body.
- (d) critical or time-sensitive and have been determined by the undersigned should not be delayed;\*

\* Consideration of matters under Paragraph (d) will initially require a two-thirds vote of those members present. (This does not affect the vote necessary for adoption or any motion).

Date: September 1, 2021

/s/John-Paul Young  
Chair

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Megan Everett called in and gave the following comment:

Good morning commissioners. My name is Megan Everett and I am a volunteer/transport and foster coordinator for Parish Paws Animal Rescue. We formed in August of 2020 while I was the Rescue and Foster Coordinator for Caddo Parish Animal Services. It became evident on my end that there needed to be an organization set in place to raise awareness of the need for fosters and volunteers in our community, as well as an organization that was able to raise funding for animals that needed extensive medical care. In my time at Caddo I met and formed relationships with over 25 rescue organizations willing to assist with rehoming our animals as there were not enough local adopters for the monthly intake. Since the loosening of the straps on our community due to COVID our intake numbers have skyrocketed monthly. The stats posted over the past 4 months show a dramatic increase totaling over 400 animals monthly with over 100 being owner surrenders. Our other amazing rescues that are local are only able to help with so many because they actually do adopt locally with some adoptions out of state. Most lack an actual facility so they are foster based, which limits their capacity to help. We as a rescue community are struggling to keep our heads above water because every day all of us are asked to help between 5-10 animals a day. Our parish has to start within the community to stop the constant intake of unwanted animals and it cannot be for just pit bulls. I can personally attest to the amount of pit bull types that come in and while it is usually every 1 in 3, they are mixes- you have pit/labs, pit/shepherds, pit/ corgis. Not every single animal is going to fit the criteria listed as the proper name American Pit Bull Terrier (deep chest, block head, cropped ears etc.). Also, will there be DNA testing provided for those required to get their animals fixed?

Education on animal welfare and animal care is the only way a spay and neuter ordinance is going to be successful and that is for organizations like us to step up and help with. Robinsons Rescue has a waiting list of 3 weeks or more and while they do have the SNIP program, there are those that are not aware of it or they don't have rides to and from appointments. Licensing for those with animals would be a better start so that those who have them altered pay a small fee yearly and those that choose not have them fixed pay a breeder's license fee yearly and those funds can be accessible to CPAS to assist with purchasing needed items. Would bringing something like a spay and neuter mobile clinic be something that you could fund? I spoke with Fido Fixers about a month ago and they asked when bringing a clinic like that here a salary and benefits for a veterinarian and a tech per veterinarian plus medical supplies. Potential is there for vets to volunteer their time once a week or once a month to run a clinic like that. Medical supply donations are also a possibility. This can be a really great start of something good for our community with the right tools in place. Thank you for allowing me to speak today.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- The Chair moved to the first New Business item, *Presentation on Mosquito Control Using Drones*.

Mr. Bill Reynolds, Leading Edge Aerial Technology, said that they built a small unmanned aircraft that carried about one gallon of mosquito application. They then went to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and explained their product to them. The FAA referred them to the Agriculture Department. Since then they've done three trials across the country that showed good results in the efficacy of mosquito larvae and pupae control, so they constructed larger systems. The FAA then came back and said that they could not fly the aircrafts in National Airspace without authorization. After a three-year process, Leading Edge Aerial Technology (LEAT) received all the required approvals from the FAA.

Mr. Reynolds also explained that LEAT will help the Parish through the whole process, from defining the Parish's needs, to what aircraft might serve the Parish best, to helping with the FAA requirements in submitting a certificate of authorization to allow the Parish to operate in the National Airspace, to getting local licensing requirements, etc. They also provide training for their aircrafts.

Mr. Kelvin Samuel, Assistant Director Animal Services,

Mr. Burrell said that this would be a perfect application to utilize in the canal behind his neighborhood, which is not navigable. He is in support of this product.

Mr. Chavez wanted to know what type of chemicals are being used in the drones and if it would need to be single sourced through LEAT. Mr. Reynolds explained that there are three different types of payloads that they use. One is the granule hoppers that applies granule larvicides and has treated approximately 15,000 acres in the past year using common mosquito larvicides. There's also a liquid payload system that applies liquid compounds. There's also the adult spray kit for spraying adult mosquitoes who are on wing, but you cannot fly over populated areas yet. It can be used for large properties, such as in the rural areas.

Mr. Chavez also wanted to know if one drone could be outfitted to utilize two different applications. Mr. Reynolds said that can be switched out for any of the three payloads.

Mr. Chavez then talked about the FAA flight restrictions and wanted to know how would they be able to spray in backyards that aren't navigable by mosquito spraying trucks. Mr. Reynold explained that the FAA is currently restricting the systems from flying over populated areas and no applications. He also explained that the Parish would need to submit a public declaration letter to the FAA stating that LEAT will be working in the Parish using an unmanned aircraft for their operations. The FAA then will then recognize the Parish and give a certificate of authorization that will be good for twenty-four months. He also mentioned that this certificate may come with some limitations.

Mr. Chavez then wanted to know if LEAT is limited to Class E Airspace. Mr. Reynolds said that the Airspace Review Committee and the FAA will look at the airspace the Parish will be operating in and request that the Parish coordinate with the local ATC organization. Mr. Chavez said that there are three towers: military base, regional, and a downtown. He also said that North Caddo has lots of Class C Airspace, so utilizing this platform will be ideal. Mr. Chavez has concerns around Barksdale. Mr. Reynolds explained that they have a similar situation in Nevada, but the FAA said that they could fly their aircrafts as long as they coordinated with the local military aerospace, who let them on the property to larvicide quite frequently. Mr. Chavez requested that Mr. Reynolds look at Caddo Parish and provide an airspace review.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if any additional equipment is needed for this product. Mr. Reynolds said that it is a self-contained configuration. Mr. Burrell wanted to know if a generator is needed to recharge the batteries. Mr. Reynolds said that a generator will be needed if the drone will be operating for six to eight hours. The batteries will last for two to three flights, but will need to charge for about 15 minutes before going on another flight.

Mr. Young talked about the example that Mr. Burrell gave earlier with the canal. He wanted to know if they would be able to utilize the drone in the area since the canal backs up to a house. Mr. Reynolds said that they could use it because it is not flying over a populated area.

Mr. Young wanted to know if they should be concerned about the chemicals being used getting into the waterways. Mr. Reynolds said that he is not sure which larvicides are being used by the Parish, but doesn't see any issues since the Parish has been using them for years.

Mr. Young also wanted to know how they could measure the effectiveness. Mr. Reynolds explained that they could do pre-application dip counts to an area, then come back and conduct post-application dip counts of mosquito larvae.

Mr. Young also wanted to know how much this product will cost. Mr. Reynolds said that the budget has been submitted. Mr. Samuel said that it will be about \$51,000.

Dr. Wilson said that this will be an additional tool in the tool bag in response to combatting mosquito control, especially for events in hard to reach areas.

Mr. Taliaferro wanted to know if the drones have geocoding and geofencing capabilities. Mr. Reynolds said that the drones have three flight modes, one being autonomous. The others are manual flights and spot treatments.

Mr. Taliaferro also wanted to know who handles the warranty for the product. Mr. Reynolds said that it is handled through LEAT.

Mr. Johnson said that this is a good program. He was on the Commission when West Nile was prevalent. He said that this program will help combat the mosquito population by getting to the areas that cannot be reached by truck.

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *to recommend to the full body an appropriation of \$51,000 for Leading Edge Aerial Technology for mosquito control. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Chavez, Johnson, Taliaferro, and Young (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

- The Committee then moved onto the next New Business item, *Discussion of Mandatory Spay/Neuter Ordinance for Pit Bulls*.

Mr. Young said that the largest population of dogs in Animal Services are pitbulls and pitbull mixes, who are not getting adopted quickly enough. Since they are not getting adopted, they are humanely euthanized. Mr. Young also mentioned that PETA has proposed a mandatory spay/neuter rule for pitbulls and pitbull mixes because of their observation of the overpopulation of the breed across the country. PETA also claimed that these dogs have been bred to be abused.

Mr. Travis Clark, Director of Animal Services, said that the pitbull intake is one in three; however, they account for sixty percent of the dogs being humanely euthanized.

Mr. Clark also said that there may be some issues from this ordinance being breed specific. For example, how would it be determined that it is a pitbull or pitbull mix? What would be the costs associated with the testing? Who would administer the testing? Mr. Clark mentioned that Denver had legislation regarding pitbulls and pitbull mixes, but those were overturned in this past year. He believes that more discussion needs to be had regarding this ordinance.

Mr. Clark also mentioned that the community still needs access to the low-cost spay/neuter clinic, Robinson's Rescue. He said that they need to be included in the discussion because there would be an increase in their volume of service if this legislation were passed.

Mr. Young said that they could identify by sight if an animal is a pitbull or pitbull mix. He also suggested there be a warning schedule for a pitbull owner. For example, a first offense would be a warning and a voucher. Mr. Young also suggested that the breed testing could be done if the owner disputes it. If the breed comes back as a pitbull or pitbull mix, then the owner would be required to pay for the test.

Mr. Clark wanted to know if the voucher would be for a private vet or Robinson's Rescue. He said that if it would be for Robinson's, then they would definitely need to be a part of this conversation.

Mr. Johnson has an issue with doing an ordinance that is breed specific. He said that there are other breeds, such as Dobermans, German Shepherds, American Bullies, Cane Corsos, Rottweilers, etc., that have the same temperament and a pitbull. He said that there are pitbulls that are not aggressive. It is about how that dog was raised and trained regardless of the breed, he said. Mr. Johnson is not comfortable with singling out a specific breed.

Mr. Samuel said that the biggest problem is, why are pitbulls so plentiful now? They're the choice breed, he said. Mr. Samuel also explained that a blocky head and muscular body could be a Cane Corso, Staffordshire Terrier, Dogo Argentino, etc. He said that it would be difficult to determine what is a pitbull based on just appearance.

Mr. Young explained that the spay/neuter ordinance is not to completely ban pitbulls and pitbull mixes, but to alleviate the overpopulation of pitbulls and pitbull mixes.

Mr. Chavez wanted to know if the Commission could implement a breed specific ordinance. Attorney Frazier said that it could be done, but it would probably be challenged. She said that more information is needed, such as the dangers the breed may pose. Attorney Frazier also explained that there are ordinances on the books currently if an intact dog is picked up, then they would need to get it spay/neutered and vouchers are provided. She also said that there would need to be discussion regarding the enforcement of the ordinance as well.

Mr. Chavez asked that Legal review other communities who have been successful in implementing legislation similar to this.

Dr. Wilson said that it would be difficult for the legislation to be breed specific. He suggested mandatory spay/neuter for all animals. He also pointed out that every animal that comes out of shelter is spayed or neutered. Dr. Wilson also said that the Commission has provided funds over the years to Robinson's Rescue to go into economically depressed areas and offer free or low-cost spay/neuters for their pets. He said that Robinson's has a huge volume of work with those free or low-cost spay/neuters. He agreed that more needs to be done, and the policy needs to be consistent across the board with all animals, not just pitbulls or pitbull mixes.

Attorney Frazier wanted to know if the pitbulls are coming into the shelter as bite dogs or strays. Mr. Clark said that they come in as all types, such as owner surrenders, seizures, strays, abandoned dogs, etc. Attorney Frazier also wanted to know if they are posing a danger to the community at large, and if so, what are those dangers? Mr. Samuel said that there is a stigma with pitbulls that they're dangerous or aggressive, but may not be. Mr. Young wanted to know if the large number of pitbulls coming into the shelter would be enough legal justification for sterilizing the breed.

Mr. Young also said that he is not opposed to canvassing neighborhoods to see if there are intact pitbulls. He would like to continue this discussion.

- The Committee then moved onto the next New Business item, *Discuss Mandatory Microchipping Ordinance for Dogs and Cats.*

Dr. Wilson suggested that a different approach be had regarding this item. He proposed that there be more community chipping events, along with all animals going out of the shelter be chipped.

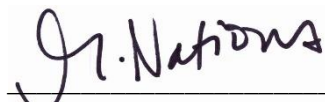
Mr. Young wanted to know how these events are advertised. Dr. Wilson said that it is done via social media, on the website, flyers, etc. Mr. Clark mentioned that they work with Ms. Krystle Beauchamp to get the word out. Mr. Young suggested that they also advertise it on the radio.

Mr. Clark said that it is important that the contact information on the microchips are up to date, so the animal can be returned to the owner without going to the shelter. He also mentioned that the return to owner ratio is extremely low.

Mr. Taliaferro wanted to know if the chips are reprogrammable. Mr. Clark said that the ownership of a microchip is transferable, but it is upon the new owner to re-register the microchip. He said that Found Animals registers any animal for free for life.

Mr. Taliaferro then wanted to know if there is a mandate in the ordinances regarding chipping. Mr. Clark explained that it does say in the ordinance, on the second impound, the animal can be spay/neutered and chipped. He said that any animal that leaves the shelter is microchipped, whether it is owner returned or adopted out. Mr. Clark also pointed out that each officer has a microchip scanner in their truck.

There be no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned  
11:31 a.m.

  
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Michelle Nations  
Assistant Commission Clerk