

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 19TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2022

The Caddo Parish American Rescue Plan Committee met in legal session on the above date, at 2:30 p.m., in the Government Plaza Chambers, with Mr. Johnson, Chairman, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Atkins, Hopkins, Johnson, and Jones (4). ABSENT: Commissioner Gage-Watts (1).

NEW BUSINESS

- *Update from American Rescue Plan Consultant*

Mrs. Barnett introduced consultants from Postlewaite & Netterville (P&N), Mr. Freddy Smith and Mr. Chris Hickman in attendance via Zoom. She explained that Finance and P&N deemed LSU Water Monitoring, Fire District 4, Holy Angels, Volunteers for Youth Justice and SciPort as eligible programs based on federal guidelines. Mrs. Barnett explained that there are many applicants that Mr. Hickman's team is communicating with to get more information, but it is taking some time. She further explained that proving eligibility is quite an undertaking. Mrs. Barnett said that the eligibility process is not swift, but Finance and the consultants are getting the process done correctly. Mr. Atkins wanted to know if there is a deadline. Mrs. Barnett responded that 2026 is the deadline. She stated that Mr. Hickman's team of five people meet with the Finance Department every Wednesday at one o'clock. Mrs. Barnett stated that two organizations, Reggie Enterprises and Fire District 7, have been deemed ineligible. Mrs. Barnett explained that Fire District 7 wants to purchase a fire truck, which is not an eligible purchase, but she is looking into revenue replacement options for them.

Mrs. Barnett stated that Finance is working on the RFP for housing now and that Finance is also working on their projects that require an RFP. She explained that True Fund and Galilee could not be awarded without going through the proper RFP process. Mr. Johnson wanted to know whether other entities could apply for the RFP for a tutoring program. Mrs. Barnett responded that due to the award size the Parish is required to issue an RFP which does not guarantee Galilee or True Fund would be the recipient of the RFPs. Mrs. Bryant explained that the normal RFP process is that the Committee directs Administration to proceed with an RFP, then Administration would work with the Purchasing Department to draft an RFP, receive requests and score them. Mr. Johnson wanted to know if an RFP is not placed then the award money returns to the fund. Mrs. Bryant agreed with Mr. Johnson. The Clerk wanted to know the funding amount that an RFP requires. Mrs. Bryant responded that Galilee's project is about one half of a million dollars and True Fund was about \$975,000. Mr. Johnson pointed out that the Parish had used some of the True Fund dollars and the amount is closer to \$700,000. Mr. Atkins wanted to know the purpose of the True Fund. Mr. Johnson responded that the fund is used to stimulate small businesses.

Mrs. Barnett stated that the sporting events category is broad and challenges entities to meet eligibility within the turnaround time for some of those events. She explained that the Sports Commission does the work already but was hit substantially during COVID and lost about \$2 million in revenue. Mrs. Barnett suggested the Committee allocate the budget of the sporting events category to the Sports Commission to help cover operating costs, which could free up money to be used towards bringing sporting events to the area. Mr. Burrell wanted to know the amount for the sporting event category. Mrs. Barnett responded \$250,000. Mr. Burrell also wanted to know if an RFP is required for the Sports Commission. Mrs. Barnett explained that the funds would be used for revenue replacement and an RFP is not required for revenue replacement. Mrs. Bryant explained that the Sport Commission is not a private organization. Mrs. Barnett stated that allocating funding to the Sport Commission would be the best way to use the funds for sporting events.

Mr. Johnson wanted to know about the special events category, such as Fit for Life. Mrs. Barnett said that the three categories under special events are college football games at \$250,000, sporting events \$65,000 and another amount for festivals and events. She explained that Fit for Life could be eligible for sporting events, and Finance is working through the eligibility process with that entity. Mrs. Barnett explained that for the festivals and events category, Rho Omega suffered a revenue loss, and that they are going through the eligibility process as well. Mr. Burrell wanted to know how many events are under the festivals and events category. Mrs. Barnett responded that, so far, there is only one event. Mrs. Barnett said that it takes time for entities to get their information together and to process their application.

Mr. Johnson wanted to know if there were any applications over \$250,000. Mrs. Barnett responded that there are none that require an RFP. She explained that the State Fair of Louisiana had revenue loss of about \$300,000 and it is on the cusp of eligibility. Mrs. Barnett stated that there are other applications that are close to eligibility, but they are not ready to go public with that information. Mr. Johnson wanted to know if there were any updates for other Commissioner's projects or for green infrastructure projects. Mrs. Barnett explained that Finance is still in the eligibility process with Donna Curtis from Shreveport Green, and their project is less than \$250,000 for green infrastructure.

Mrs. Barnett wanted to know if it is best for Finance to confirm eligibility then present it to the Commission. Mrs. Bryant responded the project should be deemed eligible before it is presented to the Commission for final approval. Mrs. Bryant explained that Finance and Administration are currently

experiencing the Commission approving projects that have yet to be cleared in Finance. Mrs. Bryant further explained that Finance and Administration are having to seek alternative methods to clear projects in a short time frame. Mrs. Barnett stated that entities think that when their project has been approved by the Commission that organizations will immediately receive funding. Mrs. Barnett said that it would be easier to complete the process first to give entities a realistic timeline.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know what eligibility entails. Mrs. Barnett explained that Finance works with applicants to revise their application, because the almost all applications are ineligible as presented. Mr. Burrell said that applicants may not receive their full request amount, but Finance could work out which category applicants could meet eligibility for.

Mrs. Barnett said that entities that have received federal funding, such as a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan or an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL), would be prohibited from additional federal funds. Mrs. Barnett explained that if those two loans did not cover the entity's loss or need, the Parish may be able to allocate some additional funds. Mrs. Bryant said that many restaurants and churches received the PPP loans and are unaware to include that information. Mrs. Barnett mentioned that Finance must do its due diligence to find out whether these entities previously received federal funding.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know what occurs to funds that are unused. Mrs. Barnett said that there are projects and revenue replacement that the Parish could use the funds for. Mr. Atkins wanted to know if the unused funds could be reallocated. Mrs. Barnett explained that the Commission had reduced and approved a certain amount. Mr. Atkins spoke favorably to reallocating funds for in-house needs and wanted to know the process to do so. Mrs. Barnett suggested that Finance first completes reviewing applications then figure out the unused amount of funds. Mrs. Bryant stated that Administration could use ARPA dollars for some projects that could free up funds for economic development projects. Mrs. Bryant agreed with Mrs. Barnett's suggestion to finish reviewing applications.

Mr. Hopkins wanted to know if funds could be used towards a failed millage. Mrs. Barnett said that the Parish would have a revenue loss. Mrs. Barnett stated that the Parish would get revenue loss for the past four years and that she calculates revenue loss until approved funds have been exhausted. Mr. Johnson said that the funds for projects, whose category is in the gray area, could be applied towards lost revenue. Mrs. Barnett said that funds are allocated based on each fund and its revenue stream. Mrs. Bryant said that the funds are restricted for that fund and that the project is subject to state law requirements and other requirements the Parish goes through normally.

Mr. Johnson wanted to know what occurs for a fund that did not lose revenue. Mrs. Barnett explained that each fund is allocated its calculated portion of lost revenue.

Mrs. Barnett stated that the process has been slow, but entities are submitting information that the Finance Department is working through. She explained that the speed of the process depends on how quickly the entities respond back. Mr. Johnson wanted to know when organizations will receive funding. Mrs. Barnett said that Finance and the consultant team are working on sub-recipient training as they become eligible. She explained that subrecipients will know what to expect because Finance must monitor grant recipients are doing what they said they were doing. Mrs. Barnett said that Finance and the P&N Consultants are working together to communicate requirements and expectations.

At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Committee, so the meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m.



Linda J. Montgomery
Administrative Specialist I