

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 7th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2021

The Caddo Parish Economic Development Committee met in legal session on the above date, at 2:30 p.m., in the Government Chambers, 505 Travis Street, Shreveport with Mrs. Gage-Watts, Chairperson, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Burrell, Gage-Watts, Taliaferro, and Young (4). ABSENT: Commissioner Johnson (1).

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

AGENDA ADDITIONS

It was **moved by Mr. Burrell**, seconded by Mr. Taliaferro, *to expand the agenda and add "Discussion of wrist monitors" under New Business.*

At this time, Mrs. Gage-Watts opened the floor for anyone to speak in favor or against adding this item to the agenda. There being no one to speak in favor or against this agenda addition, the Chair closed the public hearing.

At this time, Mr. Burrell's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Gage-Watts, Taliaferro, and Young (4). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Johnson (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Ken Krefft came before the Committee and gave the following comment:

Thank you for calling this meeting because I had a four o'clock appointment in Minden. Now I can say to the appropriate group, which you can forward to the entire group and thank you, the clerk is very generous with his time, as was his predecessor Todd and his predecessor, Jerry. I would like to simply address, again, for the record, the annual deficit in the Juvenile Justice Fund. The 1957 millage is kind of inadequate at a time when first class postage was three cents, it's up about 1800%; when a barrel of oil was \$2 a barrel, it's up however many percent depending on the market. And maybe we'll look at, an ounce of gold at \$32, but the millage is the same, and it's worth about eight cents. Now, about a 12th of what it was some 64 years ago. So at one time I had proposed to this committee, a prior committee, a 1/20 of the percent sales tax, and I did this a penny on a 20, but this is 2000 pennies. So, 0.05%, the last time the Parish voted, it was 06—15 years at most, and that was 0.1% parish wide. It failed by a very narrow margin with about 49% Yes, but we can't really do that now because in the third extraordinary session of 2018, the legislature passed House Bill 10, which became Act One, which capped—which lowered the temporary penny by 55%. So now the state total is 4.45 and the local total is 4.6. It's awfully messy to go through the Legislature, but all is not lost. A small millage of about 2.2 parish wide—a new millage would fund the annual deficit and raise sufficient funds. The beauty of that is that many people—Ted Cox, Clay Walker, and Dr. Wilson—who use the Juvenile System. Fortunately, well unfortunately their homes are not worth \$75,000 but because of that unfortunate fact, they would not be subject to the new millage because of the homestead exemption. But whatever y'all can do to shore up this deficit. The other question looming larger, which I don't care to address to day is whether the twenty-four beds are sufficient. At some future meeting of this committee, maybe in early '22, we can address that. But certainly, at some point next year, I think we have to renew a couple millages which are expiring anyway. So let's look at that, and let's not forget the two Charter amendments. Those need to be voted on someday.

NEW BUSINESS

- The Chair moved onto the first New Business item, *Discussion of wrist monitors.*

Mr. Clay Walker, Juvenile Services Director, said that they looked at four companies for a potential vendor, and one was chosen. The product they are looking at is actually a new thinner watch, and it will blend in better. Mr. Walker also said that they've selected some children they want to test these monitors on.

Mr. Taliaferro is concerned that the monitors may look too much like an Apple watch, which could cause some issues with the children being "too flashy". Mr. Walker said that in speaking with the other companies, that has not been a problem. He also said that this is another tool in their toolbox to use in the appropriate setting.

Mrs. Gage-Watts wanted to know if there was an estimated time to implement the wrist monitors. Mr. Walker said that they do not have an estimated timeframe, but will let the Commission know as soon as they are ready to roll out the program.

- The Chair moved onto the next New Business item, *Review and discuss Ordinance No. 6101 of 2021, an ordinance amending and re-enacting Section 32-46.1 of the Code of Ordinances regarding the Carrying of Weapons, and otherwise providing with respect thereto.*

Mrs. Gage-Watts said that this ordinance was discussed at the Commission's last Regular Session, and there were several questions raised.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if there has been any review on this ordinance. Attorney Bernstein said that there was discussion regarding the term "carry". He said that there were concerns if a person had a firearm locked in the glove box or in a gun safe under the seat. Attorney Bernstein suggested that could be addressed by amending the language in Paragraph G to say "carry on their person", which would more clearly prohibit somebody walking around with a gun on their person as opposed to having one simply locked in the car.

Attorney Bernstein also explained that the Parish building and grounds is Parish property, so the Commission gets to set the rules there. Then there was the question of whether or not a vehicle is an extension of your home, where certain constitutional privileges are granted, i.e. an office cannot come into your house without certain justification or certain formalities, such as a search warrant. He said that automobiles are considered in some situations an extension of your home, so in that regard, the presence of a firearm in the car is a gray area. Attorney Bernstein reiterated that an officer has to have reasonable grounds to search a vehicle. He also suggested the Commission adopt a policy that the Parish will erect signs at the entrance to the parking lots stating entry into this parking lot will be consent to having your vehicle searched. He understands that there are competing interests with this. Public safety interests on the one hand and a private rights interests on the other hand that we have to balance, he said.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if parking along the street by the Juvenile Justice Complex would be subject to this ordinance. Attorney Bernstein said that he is not sure if those parking spaces along the street are technically Parish property or if that's part of the right-of-way.

Mr. Taliaferro wanted to know the intent of this ordinance. Attorney Bernstein stated that it is to prohibit someone to have a weapon on the grounds. Mr. Taliaferro said that this ordinance only applies to the Bickham Building, Government Plaza, and Juvenile Justice Complex. Attorney Bernstein agreed. Mr. Taliaferro wanted to know if this ordinance would apply to other parish owned properties, i.e. parks or other buildings. Attorney Bernstein said this ordinance would only apply to those facilities stated in the ordinance.

Mr. Ted Cox said that there was an incident at Juvenile Court where a person had a gun on his person in his car, and the ex-wife was afraid to leave the building. The Sheriff's Deputy on duty went to the car and saw the weapon and was able to retrieve it. Mr. Cox also said that the incidents do not take place in the lobby of the building, but in the parking lot. He would like there to be a sign stating "no weapons on the grounds". Mr. Taliaferro wanted to know if there were any other incidents like this. Mr. Cox said that there has not been to his knowledge. Mr. Taliaferro suggested that the Juvenile Judges and Legal staff work together to draft language for this ordinance.

Mr. Taliaferro said that he is not comfortable with the language in Section G and as it applies to Government Plaza. He said that this ordinance will affect parish employees or city employees who may possess a concealed weapons permit. He also said that private investigators, off-duty law enforcement officers, bounty hunters, etc. will be affected by this ordinance. He suggested that this be looked at more closely and the appropriate language be crafted to reflect the intent of the ordinance.

Mr. Young wanted to know how this proposed amendment differs from guns on school property. Attorney Bernstein said that he does not know the language right offhand to compare it.

He also wanted to know the penalties for violating this ordinance. Attorney Bernstein said that the person in violation could be fined up to \$500.

Mr. Young also wanted to know if there is any reason to think that this ordinance violates our Second Amendment rights as they're held by the Supreme Court or our State Courts. Attorney Bernstein said that it does not violate the Second Amendment because there is the ability to prohibit weapons in certain places.

I can't think of any reason why someone would carry a gun to court, unless it was through absent mindedness or bad intention; and if it is absent mindedness, I think any judge would be able to tell the difference between that and a violent intention, Mr. Young said.

Mrs. Gage-Watts agreed and said that the incident at the Juvenile Justice Complex may have been an isolated incident, but she does not want to take the risk of that happening again. She also mentioned that gun violence is at an all-time high, so establishing and implementing policies to keep the citizens safe is imperative.

Attorney Bernstein said that he is willing to work on some language and sharing it with the Committee.

Mr. Taliaferro mentioned R.S. 14 95.2 which specifically talks about students and non-students on school property. He mentioned C, item 5, specially states that any constitutionally protected activity, which cannot be regulated by the State such as a firearm contained entirely within a motor vehicle. He said that this language give a little protection for some who has possession of a weapon inside their vehicle. Mr. Taliaferro would like this ordinance to be postponed until Legal can research and craft the right language for the intent of this ordinance. Mrs. Gage-Watts suggested that this be added to the ordinance and the final draft be presented by Legal prior to voting on it. Mr. Taliaferro agreed and said that time should be take to craft the right language to accomplish the Juvenile Justice Complex concerns and maintain the rights of the public.

Mr. Andrew Randall, Assistant Juvenile Justice Director, mentioned that without an ordinance, law enforcement has not vehicle with which to engage a person that is potentially threatening a person that's inside the courtroom.

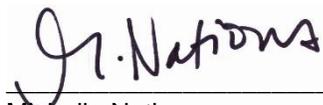
It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *to strike the word "carry" and add "possession" of any firearm, fireworks, or explosives on the parish buildings and grounds unless the person is a duly qualified law enforcement officer while acting in that capacity and adding the requested information from Commissioner Taliaferro from Legal.*

Attorney Bernstein wanted to know if this motion is for Legal to craft the language and present it back to the Committee to vet it. Mrs. Gage-Watts said that was the suggestion from Mr. Taliaferro.

Mr. Taliaferro said that he does not want this ordinance to go anywhere until the language is ironed out to handle the concerns of the Juvenile Justice Complex, but also maintaining the rights of the public.

At this time, Mrs. Gage-Watts' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes:
AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Gage-Watts, Johnson, and Young (4). NAYS: Commissioner Taliaferro (1).
ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

There be no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned
3:21 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk