

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 1st DAY OF MARCH, 2021

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Work Session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., via Zoom teleconference, with Mr. Johnson, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (11). ABSENT: None (0).

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

Due to the passage of Resolution No. 19 of 2021, *a resolution to play patriotic music at the start of Commission meetings in February and March of 2021*, Commissioner Cawthorne chose to play Sharon Jones & the Dap-Kings' rendition of This Land is Your Land.

TELECONFERENCE REQUIREMENTS

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *to approve consideration of items under La.R.S. 42:17.1. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (11). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Jackson (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

CERTIFICATE FOR 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 158 JBE 2020 and Number 159 JBE 2020; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 42:17.1 allows members of political subdivisions to participate in its meetings 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; *

Date: February 25, 2021

/s/Lyndon B. Johnson
Caddo Parish Commission President

* *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).*

CITIZENS COMMENTS

John Settle submitted the following comment:

Caddo Parish Coroner Dr. Todd Thoma periodically provides updates on Caddo Parish Covid-deaths. His most recent email included statistics reported by Friday, Feb. 12. Here is a summary: a. In 2020 there were 472 Covid deaths b. In 2021 there were 102 deaths. c. The average age of all decedents is 73.8. d. There have been 183 black male deaths, 144 black female deaths, 103 white females, 142 while mails and 2 Hispanics (which is an ethnicity, not a race). e. There were 26 decedents whose COVID-19 test results are pending. f. All but a small number of deaths have been of people with known or suspected pre-existing serious health conditions. This information on Caddo Parish is much more relevant than national statistics, especially when urging Caddo citizens to be vaccinated.

Glenda Mathis submitted the following comment:

2020 was an absolutely crazy year for everyone, but the dedicated staff of the Deaf Action Center took the chrome from it offered as an opportunity to work even harder to serve the deaf and hard of hearing community in Caddo Parish. Throughout the pandemic, even though they've had to close their doors to the public, they have worked tirelessly to fulfill their mandate to provide interpreting for any and all who need it. Even while commercial interpreting was far less due to the pandemic and cancellation of lots of appointments they would normally interpret, the staff was always on call, particularly for medical interpreting. As always, we are incredibly grateful to the parish for their continued support of all activists that provide equal access and opportunity to hearing and deaf residents alike, and we appreciate the opportunity to show our support for the Deaf Action Center and the important work it does.

Wendy Coker submitted the following comment:

Even at the height of the pandemic when non-essential gatherings and any kind of appointments were highly regulated if not outright against the law, we were still providing interpreters to the sick and those who needed to be seen at hospitals and clinics, taking our place as front-line workers and making sure that members of our community were treated fairly and given the same information as their hearing counterparts. Covid-19 and it's aftermath have been scary to everyone, even those who have ready access to all of the most up-to-date information, so imagine how it's been for those who have to wait for information to be interpreted. Throughout it all, we have provided the most up to date information available, and have stood beside our deaf and hard of hearing consumers as they navigate the complicated world of pandemic and uncertainty. We truly consider what we do an essential service and we appreciate the Parish's interest in supporting our work as we continue to advocate for the deaf and hard of hearing of Caddo Parish.

VISITORS

- A Moment in Black History

Mr. Johnson asked that this be deferred to the Regular Session.

- Dr. Sushil K. Jain to present Vitamin D Deficiency in African Americans

Dr. Jain expressed his interest with the health of the African American population. His research studies why African-Americans have high incidents of diabetes, heart disease, COVID19, mortality and other health problems. He further found that Vitamin D deficiencies were high in African-Americans with approximately 70% of the population being Vitamin D deficiencies. Vitamin D is an important nutrient and a deficiency can cause health complications regardless of race. Dr. Jain explained that Vitamin D can be obtained naturally with sun exposure. Due to darker skin tone, there is reduced Vitamin D absorption in African-Americans. The active co-enzymes in the body break down Vitamin D from food consumption or from vitamin supplements. Studies have shown that Vitamin D taken with L-cysteine has better absorption than when taking Vitamin D supplements alone. He explained that in the study, one group of African-Americans would receive Vitamin D with L-cysteine and another group of African-Americans would receive just Vitamin D and observe the results. He then spoke about insulin's necessity to support our bodily functions and when it is impaired, known as insulin resistance, leads to health conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. The study will cost approximately \$1.5 million. The goal of the study is to find a new way to treat Vitamin D deficiencies and improve the health of the African-American population. Phase 2 of the study will take a separate study group of about 120 participants involving 5 visits (with compensation), excluding those with diabetes, Sickle Cell Disease, and pregnant women. The participants will be on the Vitamin D supplements for 7 months. Dr. Jain requested the Commissioners to encourage people to participate in this study.

Mr. Burrell stated that African-Americans used to work in the sun all the time and were benefiting from the Vitamin D absorption even though it was thought to be a detrimental situation. He wanted to know which type of Vitamin D supplements will be used in the study. Dr. Jain stated that Vitamin D3 will be provided during the study. He added a Vitamin D supplement will not be effective to treating the deficiency if L-cysteine is low in the body.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if Vitamin D had an effect on the coronavirus. Dr. Jain explained that Vitamin D acts as an immune-modulator and increases immunity and decreases risk of infection. The study is researching how to make Vitamin D more effective in that manner as well. Mr. Cawthorne wanted to know the benefits of Vitamin D and how the body uses it. Dr. Jain stated that this nutrient is especially beneficial for bone growth, fiber growth, and insulin sensitivity and helps prevent diabetes, infection, as well as support many vital processes. He included that his phone number is available for anyone to contact him.

- Master Plan Update

Mr. Alan Clarke provided an update on the Master Plan Great Expectations 2030. He said that they are in eleventh year of the Master Plan. The planning area is 360 square miles of land and 60% of that is in the Parish with 40% being in the City of Shreveport. The Master Plan was designed to craft A Unified Development Code (UDC) to place the codes into law. The Parish UDC was an urban-type code and was deemed ineffective to the rural citizens. They have been re-evaluating and currently working on a planning area development code to replace the UDC. The second draft is of this new planning area development code is on the MPC website and targeted to satisfy the diversity of the Parish.

He elaborated how each different area of the Parish thinks differently and that the drafted code takes this into account. He stressed this code is for recommendation purposes only. Mr. Clarke added that they are trying to address concerns from citizens in the unincorporated areas outside of the City of Shreveport. He added that they plan to put together a Master Plan Advisory Committee, which will represent the MPC board, the Caddo Parish Commission and the City of Shreveport to review ideas of development and planning in areas addressing annexation. He explained that some municipalities do not have the budget to maintain infrastructure of areas and they need to come up with ways to annex or prevent annexation. He concluded that the Master Plan was originally thought to be an Economic Development Plan, but isn't entirely focused on that.

Mr. Jackson thanked Mr. Clarke and their work on the Master Plan. He also explained that the UDC is a product of the Master Plan and recognized that there are elements that needed to be fixed within it.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- Winter Storm Update

Dr. Wilson thanked all of the Caddo Parish employees who helped during last week's winter storm. He also commended the Office of Homeland Security for keeping all of the agencies informed during that time.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if there were people who still need water. Dr. Wilson said that the Parish and Homeland Security is still providing water to the citizens. He also explained that the most of the municipalities and water systems are back up and running, but some of the citizens are still having issues with busted pipes.

Mr. Jackson commended Caddo Parish employees for all of their hard work during the snow storm.

- Confederate Monument Update

Dr. Wilson said that the RFPs are due by 3:00 p.m. on March 25, 2021. The awarding of the RFP is estimated to be completed by April 2021 with approved contract signed by May.

- Disparity Study Update

Dr. Wilson said that the RFP was advertised on February 18 and is due by April 2021.

- I-49 Welcome Sign Update

Dr. Wilson said LADOTD did not approved the plan that were submitted. The design needs to be changed to their desired specifications. They are currently working on reworking the design.

Mr. Johnson said that those designs were not approved if the signs were placed on State property. He wanted to know if the Parish looked into placing the signs on private property. Dr. Wilson said that one of the signs will be placed on private property, but they are looking into placement of the other sign.

- Wording to be added to the sides of the box covering the Confederate Monument

Dr. Wilson stated that the wording on the box is halfway completed and was delayed due to weather conditions.

- U.S. Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Program

Dr. Wilson said that they are still working to get this released in March. They did select the City of Shreveport's Housing Authority to administer this program.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if the Shreveport Housing Authority will administer the program. Dr. Wilson stated that they will. He also explained that they will train all of the other organizations on the process, as well as working with another company to create an online portal. The Housing Authority will be charged with the complete setup and administration of the program, but will not cut the checks. Mr. Burrell then wanted to know who would cut the checks. Dr. Wilson said that the Parish of Caddo will.

Mr. Jackson wanted to know if the Housing Authority was administering the program in regards to Resolution No. 9 of 2021. Dr. Wilson stated that they will be.

Dr. Wilson also mentioned that the community partners have to be trained on the program prior to the release of it.

- Legislative Priorities

Dr. Wilson reminded the Commissioners that the 2021 Legislative Priorities are due back to Administration.

Mr. Jackson wanted to add to his legislative priorities to exempt Economic Development opportunities for 30-90 days from the public meetings. He wanted to be clear that he is not asking to overturn public meeting laws, but to ensure that local government has ample amount of time to vet those opportunities prior to it being made available to the public.

- 2020 SEB Expenditures Report

Dr. Wilson said that the 2020 Small & Emerging Business report was sent to all of the Commissioners via email.

- Reappointment to the Caddo Animal Services Board

Dr. Wilson announced that his recommendations to the Animal Services Board has been attached to today's agenda.

- 2021 January Monthly Financials

Dr. Wilson provided a copy of the 2021 January Monthly Financials to the Commissioners. He also said that there is a copy attached to the agenda.

- House Bill 697

Dr. Wilson also sent an email to the Commissioners on his recommendation regarding House Bill 697. He also said he spoke with Mr. Chavez today and that matter will be discussed in the Long-Range Planning Committee soon.

- Requests of Information from Commissioners

Mr. Jackson asked that the Right-Sizing Program also be apart of the Administrator Report.

OLD BUSINESS

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *that Ordinance No. 5961 of 2020, an ordinance amending and re-enactive Sections 4-61 and 4-61.1 and enacting Sections 4-63, 4-64, and 4-65, all of Chapter Four of the Code of Ordinances of the Parish of Caddo, pertaining to Permits for the Sale of Alcoholic Beverages and Alcoholic Beverage Handling Cards, and otherwise pertaining thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for final passage.

The Clerk of the Commission reminded the Commissioners that this ordinance was introduced on July 9, 2020; and its public hearing was held on October 8, 2020. Due to teleconference limitations, it did not come back up until December 2020, and it was then postponed to the second meeting in February.

Mr. Hopkins explained that this would be a sub-committee to handle the Alcohol Hearings.

At this time, Mr. Hopkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (11). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

NEW BUSINESS

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *that Ordinance No. 6031 of 2021, an ordinance declaring certain adjudicated properties to be surplus and to authorize the Parish Administrator, or a designee, to sell the Parish of Caddo's tax interest in certain surplus adjudicated properties, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Young**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *that Ordinance No. 6035 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund in the amount of \$10,000 to provide an appropriation for the Betty & Leonard Phillips Deaf Action Center, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Young said that this organization serves a very under-served community which suffered tremendously during the pandemic because they rely on seeing people's faces in order to communicate. They reached out to Mr. Young to seek funding for some of their operations. He asked that the Commissioners support this request.

Mr. Atkins said that this is a worthy organization, but he has concerns with funding NGOs outside of the NGO process. Mr. Young said that this organization was a part of the process, but was not in the budget.

At this time, Mr. Young's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *that Ordinance No. 6036 of 2021, an ordinance amending the 2020 Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund to reduce the appropriation for riverboat revenue by \$300,000* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mrs. Bryant explained in accordance with the State Budget Act, the Parish cannot go under more than 5% of the estimated revenues. Since the Parish's revenues came in under more than 5% of the estimated amount, the Budget needs to be amended.

Mr. Chavez wanted to know how this will affect the NGOs. Mrs. Barnett explained that the revenues are down, but because of the COVID restrictions, several of the organizations that the Commission funded did not receive their funding in 2020. She said that the expenses are also down, and there is a small fund balance.

Mr. Jackson wanted to know if an adjustment for the starting fund balance for 2021 is needed. Mr. Johnson mentioned that this is for the 2020 budget, not 2021.

At this time, Mr. Hopkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *that Ordinance No. 6037 of 2021, in regards to Zoning Case 20-22-P, an ordinance to amend Volume II of the Code of Ordinances of the Parish of Caddo, as amended, the Caddo Parish Unified Development Code, by amending the zoning of property located on the northeast and southeast corners of Dixie Shreveport Highway and I-220, Caddo Parish, LA, from 1-2, Heavy Industrial District to NA, Natural Areas District to OS, Open Space District, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Hopkins explained that this would reassign the property as a different zoning category so they can add campgrounds and such to their property.

At this time, Mr. Hopkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Cawthorne, *to amend Ordinance No. 6038 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund for the year 2021 to provide an appropriation of \$250,000 for mental health agencies and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

It was Mr. Taliaferro's understanding that this has already been discussed. Mr. Johnson clarified that the previous discussion on mental health was to establish the Mental Health Hotline. He further explained that this funding is for mental health programs.

Mr. Taliaferro then wanted to know how the \$250,000 amount came about. Mr. Johnson said that the amount was a combination of requests from different organizations and divided up equally. Mr. Taliaferro then wanted to know how the organizations were selected. Mr. Johnson said that United Way provided him with the information.

Amendment by Mr. Jackson, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *to amend Ordinance No. 6038 of 2021 to reflect the following language: "Each participating organization shall enroll clients in Medicaid, Medicare, or VA Benefits if they meet eligibility. Each participating organization shall attest in writing that Medicaid, Medicare, Private Insurance, or Veterans Affairs and were denied before billing Parish program for service provided."* and be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Jackson would like to ensure that if the funds are drawn down, they are drawn down as the secondary payer.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if the organizations have been identified. Mr. Johnson

explained that those organizations are listed in the ordinance.

Mr. Hopkins wants to ensure that there are organizations catering specifically to veterans. Mr. Johnson explained that the intent of this ordinance is focused on at-risk youth and veterans.

Mr. Atkins recognizes that there is a real need for mental health services, especially with the youth. He does have some concerns with the NGO budget being approximately \$1M, and this request being a quarter of that budget. Mr. Johnson explained that this ordinance is an "up to" amount. Mr. Atkins wanted to know if Mr. Johnson envisions decreasing expenditures for other NGOs. Mr. Johnson explained that he would need to get with Finance to determine the actual amount and go from there.

Mr. Chavez asked that Administration provide information regarding how federal dollars are spent when it comes to mental health issues. He agreed that this is much needed in the community, but would like the funding for these programs to reflect what can be managed in the budget.

Mr. Burrell asked for clarification on Mr. Atkins' statement regarding the NGO budget. Mr. Johnson explained that it is projected to have approximately \$1M in the NGO budget, but if the funding requests exceeds that amount, monies can be transferred out of the Oil & Gas Fund.

At this time, Mr. Jackson's motion carried as amended, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that Ordinance No. 6039 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Oil & Gas Fund and the Capital Outlay Fund in the amount of \$75,000 to provide an appropriation to erect a COVID-19 Memorial and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Taliaferro wanted to know the premise for this memorial, as opposed to any other illnesses. Mr. Johnson said that the coronavirus is an ongoing pandemic which shut the United States down for a long period of time. He also explained that the several community leaders and citizens passed away because of this virus. This memorial would be to honor those who died. Mr. Johnson said that there will be several memorials erected across the United States, and he would like Caddo Parish to be one of the leaders in those memorials.

Mr. Atkins agreed that COVID-19 and the coronavirus is a significant event and has affected many lives, but he views this memorial as a discretionary spending event. He personally would prefer to postpone this discretionary spending until after the crisis has passed.

Mr. Cawthorne commended Mr. Johnson for bringing this forward. He said that this memorial would pay homage to those who lost their lives during this crisis.

Mr. Hopkins wanted to know where this monument would be located. Mr. Johnson said that he would like it to be placed in an area to draw tourists, such as the riverfront.

Mr. Burrell pointed out that many people, like himself, did not get a chance to grieve their loved ones who died due to the COVID-19 restrictions. He said that this memorial would be an opportunity to grieve.

Mr. Chavez wanted to know what the memorial would look like. He also said that he is leery about spending money, especially when they had to reduce the NGO budget.

Mr. Jackson suggested that the monument be placed at one or all of the medical centers to pay tribute to the medical staff and to honor the lives lost during the pandemic.

Mrs. Gage-Watts commended Mr. Johnson for bringing this ordinance before the Commission. She believes that it is advantageous for the Parish to have something to memorialize those lives who were lost during the pandemic. She said that this would be an attractive economic driver to this community.

Mr. Johnson said that there are several families who did not get a chance to see their love ones who passed away. He also said that he does not expect that the memorial will cost this much, but he added extra monies for unforeseen expenses. Mr. Johnson also mentioned that COVID-19 almost crippled the United States and several businesses closed down. Hopefully, we are at the end of the pandemic now, he said. He also pointed out that there were 675 deaths in Caddo Parish due to the coronavirus. This memorial would pay homage to those people.

Mr. Cawthorne suggested that this be a public-private partnership between the Parish and the citizens. Mr. Burrell also suggested to get the City's input on this as well.

Mr. Johnson would like the memorial to be in a place where there is a lot of foot traffic,

where it would be easy to access, and where it would be appropriate.

Mr. Taliaferro agreed with Mr. Jackson that the memorial should honor the lives lost as well as to pay tribute to the medical staff.

Substitute motion by Mr. Chavez, seconded by Mr. Taliaferro, *to remand Ordinance No. 6039 of 2021 to the Committee of the President's choice.*

Mr. Chavez believes that this should go to a committee to be further vetted.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that the discussion is talking about the design of the memorial, which is not the intent of the ordinance. He explained that the ordinance is to appropriate funding for the memorial, then the Commission can decide on the design of it.

At this time, Mr. Chavez's substitute motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Hopkins, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (7). NAYS: Commissioners Cawthorne, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jackson, and Johnson (5). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Lazarus**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *that Ordinance No. 6040 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund in the amount of \$25,000 to provide an appropriation for the Shreveport Volunteer Network and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Lazarus said that this organization was instrumental in last week's snow storm. He also said that they did submit an application, but it was late.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know how long the Shreveport Volunteer Network (SVN) has been in operation. Mr. Lazarus said that to his knowledge its been since last year. Mr. Epperson asked for additional information regarding their officers, where they are located, etc. He stated that he has never heard of them before. Mr. Lazarus expressed the same sentiments that he only first heard of them last November.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know why the NGO application was not attached to the agenda. Mrs. Barnett stated that she may have inadvertently left it off, but she will forward the application to the Commissioners now.

Mr. Jackson said that he was happy to hear about citizens getting involved and helping out with the snowstorm. I was not happy to learn that this was the group who came over to my district to raise all types of saying about the conditions and issues about the Canaan Towers, he said. Mr. Jackson said that he does not appreciate how they talked down the Parish. He said that it is his expectation when the Parish gives NGO funding, they enter into a partnership agreement where they have mutual understanding. He wanted to be clear that he is not saying that the Parish is "paying for their allegiance or silence". He would like assurance that this organization is committed to working with the Parish, and he is looking forward to reviewing their application.

Mr. Chavez pointed out that it was not the SVN that was on the Long Range Planning call earlier making those accusations.

Mr. Atkins said that he does have concerns supporting NGO requests outside of the NGO process.

Mr. Cawthorne said that he had a discussion with a volunteer of SVN who distributed water in the Cedar Grove area. He is looking forward to reading their application. He also said that this organization was willing to roll their sleeves up when the community needed help.

Mr. Burrell said that he is unfamiliar with this organization. He would like additional information. He also pointed out that the next application date is April 1, 2021. Mr. Burrell wanted to know if this funding request would be for 2021 or 2022. Mr. Lazarus explained that it would be for 2021.

Mr. Johnson said that a volunteer is someone who does good out of the kindness of their heart. He also has concerns of citizens being on the roads when road conditions are not that great. He also pointed out that if there is not a disaster, then they do not need the funding.

Mr. Cawthorne said that this organization sounds like an excellent concept, but he believes that it needs to be vetted a little further. Mr. Lazarus agreed.

Mr. Chavez pointed out that the SVN started in July of 2019 due to a bad storm and fallen trees in the Western Hills area. He also said that if a disaster does not occur, then they will not receive any funds.

Substitute motion by Mr. Atkins, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *that Ordinance No. 6040 of 2021 be remanded to the NGO Committee for consideration in the 2022 Budget.*

Mr. Atkins said that this is an opportunity for the organization to introduce themselves to the Commission and providing the requested information.

Mr. Jackson pointed out that this organization does not sound like an NGO. He suggested that they may be able to provide a service as a contract under Public Works.

Call for the Question by Mr. Epperson, seconded by Mr. Johnson. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, Mr. Atkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *that Ordinance No. 6041 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund and the Oil & Gas Fund in the amount of \$30,000 to provide an appropriation to Northwest Louisiana Food Bank and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Chavez asked for more information regarding the additional funding request. Mr. Johnson explained that this will be for Caddo Parish feeding its citizens. There will be multiple trucks going out on the same day feeding citizens in different locations.

Mr. Atkins said that this is a high performing need from a well-established organization. He said that he will supporting this ordinance.

Mr. Taliaferro wanted to know if the Commission received a list of needs and wants from the Food Bank. Mr. Johnson said that he went to the Food Bank and asked them for help to put this project together.

Mr. Epperson said that there will be more requests and needs from the citizens to fix their pipes, so people will need to be fed.

Mr. Jackson agreed that the Food Bank is a great organization. He asked how the food sites will be determined. Mr. Johnson explained that each Commissioner will have an opportunity to have a food truck in their district, and that Commissioner will determine where the food truck will be.

Mrs. Gage-Watts commended Mr. Johnson for bringing this ordinance forward. She also cautioned that the citizens will have more needs due the pandemic, busted pipes, and winter storms. The least we could do is feed our citizens, she said.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know the logistics of the program. Mr. Johnson said that the Commissioners would be involved in determining locations, etc.

At this time, Mr. Johnson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *that Ordinance No. 6042 of 2021, an ordinance adopting the Budget of Estimated Expenditures for the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust Fund and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mrs. Barnett said that this ordinance is on the agenda because it needed an expenditure line item. The fund was originally passed with only a revenue line item. She further explained that an expenditure line item is needed for this fund in order to issue an RFP for services.

Mr. Jackson thanked Administration and Finance for all of their hard work with the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust Fund.

At this time, Mr. Jackson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *that Ordinance No. 6043 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust Fund for the year 2021 to appropriate funds received from the U.S. Treasury for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES:

Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Johnson, *to englobo and move the following items to Thursday's agenda:*

- *Resolution No. 22 of 2021, a resolution condemning the January 6, 2021 attack on the United States Capitol, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 23 of 2021, a resolution of the Parish of Caddo urging and requesting the Louisiana Legislature to adopt legislation to increase the minimum wage and to tie future increases to the Cost of Living Standards, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 25 of 2021, a resolution condemning the January 6, 2021 attack on the United States Capitol, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

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

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *that Resolution No. 26 of 2021, resolution amending the Rules & By-Laws of the Caddo Parish Commission regarding time limits of speakers under Communiques & Committee Reports, and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be moved to March 18 Regular Session for consideration.

Substitute motion by Mr. Epperson, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *to englobo and move the following resolutions to the Personnel Policies & Procedures Committee:*

- *Resolution No. 26 of 2021, resolution amending the Rules & By-Laws of the Caddo Parish Commission regarding time limits of speakers under Communiques & Committee Reports, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 27 of 2021, a resolution amending the Rules & By-Laws of the Caddo Parish Commission regarding the re-submission of agenda items by Commissioners, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*

Mr. Epperson said that these resolutions should be vetted in a committee. He would also review all of the By-Laws.

Mr. Jackson agreed with Mr. Epperson. He is hesitant to do structural changes to this body that limits the Commissioners from putting items on the agenda.

Mr. Johnson stated that the reason for Resolution No. 26 is because there is no rule in the By-Laws regarding time limits for the Commissioners under Communiques & Committee Reports. He said that it has always been a gentleman's agreement, and he would like a time limit to be in writing.

Mr. Burrell does not agree with Resolution No. 27 because it may disrupt the legislative process. He would like both of these resolutions to be vetted properly in committee.

Mr. Epperson agreed with Mr. Burrell. He also mentioned that if a Commissioner does not agree with something on the agenda, then they should vote it down; if a Commissioner agrees, then they should vote it up.

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

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that Resolution No. 28 of 2021, a resolution supporting the American Rescue Plan and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda.

Mr. Jackson explained that the American Rescue Plan will do the following: provides critical funding to support vaccine development and distribution, increases COVID-19 testing and contact tracing, provides State and local aid needed to help local governments respond to COVID-19 and economic effects, provides much needed direct payments to struggling low income and middle-class families, provides additional \$25B in rental assistance, provides \$10B mortgage assistance to homeowners, encourages and funds safe school reopening, and starts the process of repealing the Medicaid Exclusion that will save dollars on inmate healthcare costs.

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

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Cawthorne, *that Resolution No. 29 of 2021, a resolution submitting to Governor John Bel Edwards ad name for appointment for membership on the Red River Waterway Commission* be moved to Thursday's agenda. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *to englobo and move the following items to Thursday's agenda:*

- *Reappointment of Sarah Walton and Lorraine Guerrero to the Caddo Parish Animal Services Board. Terms to expires January 1, 2025*
- *Appointment of Bryan Molitor to the Caddo Parish Animal Services Board to replace Margaret Bird as the Parish resident appointee. Term to expire January 1, 2023*
- *Appointment of Constance Griffin to the Caddo Parish Animal Services Board to replace Alfred Barrow as Health Unit appointee. Term to expire January 1, 2023.*
- *Authorize appointment to the Lakeview Waterworks Board*

At this time, Mr. Atkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Cawthorne**, seconded by Mr. Johnson, *that Special Resolution honoring local pioneering African-Americans in law enforcement* be moved to Thursday's agenda.

Mr. Cawthorne said that this Special Resolution is to pay homage to the first fifteen African-Americans who were hired onto the Shreveport Police Department.

Mrs. Gage-Watts would like women to be added to this Special Resolution. Mr. Johnson explained that this Special Resolution honors the first African-Americans, not gender specific, who joined the department.

Mr. Taliaferro commended Mr. Cawthorne for bringing this Special Resolution to light. He said that the majority of the officers being honored were instrumental in his law enforcement career. They were truly pioneers in law enforcement, he said.

At this time, Mr. Cawthorne's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that Special Resolution of Appreciation & Recognition for Hall Builders, Inc.* be moved to Thursday's agenda. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *to englobo and move the following items to Thursday's agenda:*

- *Special Resolution of Appreciation & Recognition for CNC Oil Field Services and Bulldog Oilfield Services*
- *Proclamation for Ernestine Thompson*
- *Authorize Parish Administrator to draft letter of support for Project C*
- *Authorize Southern University Law Center's Off-Campus Instructional Site (OCIS) Team as Visitor for the Regular Session*

At this time, Mr. Johnson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

CITIZENS COMMENTS (late arrivals)

David Hylan submitted the following comment:

First of all, thank you for this opportunity to address the Commission. In the Deaf Action Center's 38-year history, we have provided 100s of thousands of hours of sign language interpreting services in support of the Deaf Community, government agencies, medical community, and private industry. Interpreting services are used in medical, governmental, legal, educational, and personal situations. One of the foremost uses of sign language interpreting services has been in the area of employment. This includes applying for jobs, job acquisition, job training, and job retention. The COVID pandemic has adversely affected the Deaf Community regarding accessing all resources, including sign language interpreting. Deaf individuals, like many hearing people, have lost their jobs due to the economic impact of the pandemic on businesses. However, deaf individuals are mainly hindered by many limitations, including social distancing. In response to this crisis, the Center intends to do two things. First, we will expand our Video Remote Interpreting services so that Deaf people can use their smart phones to access interpreting services through Facetime and similar apps. Secondly, we will develop and disseminate to the Deaf Community materials (such as videos), which will provide in American Sign Language employment information and resources available through government agencies, non-profits, and private businesses. We hope this added assistance will help level the playing field as Deaf individuals learn to cope with the ramifications of the pandemic and its economic impact on their families. We are seeking to partner with the Caddo Commission in addressing this catastrophic situation and help provide some relief to the Deaf citizens of the parish.

CONSENT AGENDA

- *Ordinance No. 6030 of 2021, an ordinance declaring the intent of the Parish under LA.R.S. 47:2236 to acquire full ownership interest in five parcels, namely Lot 5, Block 14, West End Subdivision, Shreveport (GEO. No. 171402-052-0005-00); Lot 11, Block 14, West End Subdivision, Shreveport (GEO. No. 171402-052-0011-00); Lot 10, Block 14, West End Subdivision, Shreveport (GEO. No. 171402-052-0010-00); Lot 20 and the east half of Lot 21, Block 1, Currie Subdivision, Shreveport (GEO. No. 171402-021-0020-00) and Lot 7, Block 9, Currie Subdivision, Shreveport (GEO. No. 171402-029-0007-00), and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6032 of 2021, an ordinance to accept an additional 375 feet of the dedication of Paxton Road into the Parish of Caddo Road System, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6033 of 2021, an ordinance authorizing the sale of surplus fleet vehicles and equipment owned by the Parish of Caddo and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6034 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues and Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund in the amount of \$15,000 to provide an appropriation for the NORWELA Council, Boy Scouts of America 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 7:07 p.m.

/s/Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk