

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S  
LONG RANGE PLANNING/SPECIAL PROJECT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THE 9<sup>th</sup> DAY OF JUNE, 2016

The Caddo Parish Economic Development Committee met in legal session on the above date, at 1:00 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mr. Mario Chavez, Chairman, presiding, and the following members in attendance, constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Bowman, Cawthorne, Chavez, Jackson, and Linn (6). ABSENT: None (0).

Also in attendance were Parish Administrator Dr. Woody Wilson, Assistant Parish Administrator Randy Lucky, Finance Director Erica Bryant, Parish Attorney Donna Frazier, and Commissioners Dominick, Epperson, Middleton, and Smith.

Mr. Bowman gave the invocation, and Mr. Atkins led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Chavez welcomed everyone to today's committee meeting, and stated that this meeting is to discuss the following item:

- Discuss proposed Ordinance No. 5587 of 2016, amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Oil & Gas Fund and the Capital Outlay Fund in the amount of \$300,000 to provide an appropriation for a monument honoring the U.S.S. Golet and to otherwise provide with respect thereto

Mr. Chavez thanked everyone for being in attendance today. He also reminded the citizens that there is a 3-minute time limit for each person to speak. Mr. Chavez now opened the floor for citizens' comments:

Mr. Arthur Carmody, Jr., 255 Forest Avenue, Shreveport, 71104 stated that he has lived in Shreveport all of his life, since 1928. Mr. Carmody believes that Ordinance No. 5587 of 2016 is illegal. He stated that the subject matter of the ordinance is not covered in the title. He also said that the piece of land that the monument sits on belongs to the United Daughters of the Confederacy. He hopes that this ordinance dies.

Ms. Wendy Vance, 414 Dalzell Street, Shreveport, 71104 came before the Commission to discuss the Confederate monument. She stated that most people want to make this about race, but history is history and cannot be changed. She also pointed out that in 1957 by an Act of Congress, all Confederate soldiers U.S. Veterans.

Mr. Jim Lindsey, 8473 Woodlands Trail Road, Greenwood, 71033 was in attendance to discuss the Confederate monument. He stated that the statue belongs to the United Daughters of the Confederacy, along with the small piece of land that it sits on. He also pointed out that the Confederate soldiers are U.S. veterans, and that statue memorializes those veterans that died for this country. He believes that Mr. Epperson is causing divisiveness within the community. You are my representative, Mr. Epperson, and you are not representing me, he said. He also stated that this proposed \$300,000 could be used for other things like fixing roads, drainage, etc.

Mrs. Susan Turk, 8804 St. Claire Drive, Shreveport, 71118 stated that the money proposed for removing the statue and erecting a new one could be used for other priorities in the community. She also said that history cannot be changed, and the statue memorializes those lost in the Civil War.

Mr. Ken Krefft, 157 Archer Avenue, Shreveport, 71105 said he would like the Historic Preservation Committee be informed of issues like this before they come to the Commission body.

Ms. Janie Lipscomb, 490 Ockley Drive, Shreveport, 71105 said that she is against moving the monument that sits in front of the courthouse. She stated that it would be ineffective and costly to move the statue. She also said that the statue does not endorse slavery; it signifies the enormous loss of individuals. In our diverse culture today, it is not possible for us to remove everything that offends someone because, ultimately, everything offends someone, she said. Ms. Lipscomb also said that the war happened and it cannot un-happen.

Mr. Ron Chatelain, 9306 Stonebriar Circle, Shreveport, 71115, stated that the monument honors the lives of those that fought for what they believed. He also said that the Confederate soldiers were of all races, and they too are veterans. Mr. Chatelain said that statue marks the end of the Confederacy.

Mr. Charles McMichael, 9944 Blanchard-Furh Road, Blanchard, 71107 stated that Caddo Parish has been a parish for 178 years; for 110 years, that monument has stood in front of the courthouse. It doesn't just represent our history, it is a part of our history, he said. Mr. McMichael also stated that the statue represents the fathers, sons, and other men in their community that were called to serve; and under U.S. law, they are U.S. veterans. He believes that removing the monument is equivalent

to desecrating the grave of a veteran.

Mr. Lane Calloway, 9967 Catawba Lane, Shreveport, 71115 stated that he is a historian, native-Shreveporter, and a U.S. veteran. The monument is listed in the National Registry of Historical Places, he said. The monument would be delisted if it were removed from its original site. The seven aspects of integrity that a property must maintain in order to stay on the national registry are: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. He explained that the relationship between the monument and its location is lost if it is moved. He stated that the monument was located on the courthouse grounds for two reasons: one, its historic context as a national effort in 1883-1907 to place monuments of this nature near courthouses, and two, it is an authentic place of historic significance that symbolizes the place where antebellum America ended. It is also the start of modern America, he said.

Mr. Jason Brown, 858 Prospect Street, Shreveport, 71104 stated that our forefathers fought in this country, together. He stated that this is a historic monument dedicated to veterans. He believes that this City should move forward and focus on growing and making this City better. He also reiterated that history cannot be changed.

Mr. Gary Joiner, 1039 Blanchard Place, Blanchard, 71104 stated that he is a professional historian. He stated that there are so many issues with moving this monument, and if the Commission were to go forward with moving it, it would take years. He believes that this is a "can of worms". The monument represents the last place that the Confederate flag flew over a public place in the South, he said. It also marks the beginning of the modern era, he said.

Ms. Patricia Becker, 3421 Beverly Place, Shreveport, 71105 stated that she is here to speak in defense of the Confederate monument. She also said that this monument was never meant to commemorate slavery, but to honor thousands of boys and men whose graves are unknown. She also said that preserving our past is the only way to protect our future, and we cannot sanitize or revise history. She then quoted Eric Brock, "For man, Confederate soldiers and unmarked graves around American battlefields, it is the symbolic tombstone. A sacred place that should forever stand and be respected. Those who forget their history, it has been said, are doomed to repeat it. Worst yet, are those who deny history for they doom civilization itself."

Ms. Jackie Nichols, 433 Albert, Shreveport, 71105 stated that she is the current President of the Shreveport Chapter 237 of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. She explained that their objectives are historical, educational, patriotic, memorial, and benevolence. She also said that she wrote the application that placed the Confederate monument on the National Registry of Historical Places. She stated that it is a significant reminder of the Civil War Commemorative Sculpture Movement forty years after the war. It was to honor all of the parishes' Confederate War dead, and it remains a statement of the role those women played in preserving Caddo Parish history. It was designed by women and funded by private donations. Recorded in the minutes of the Police Jury Meeting from June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1903, The United Daughters of the Confederacy Chapter 237 was given, by unanimous vote, the front plat of the courthouse square as the site for the monument, in addition to \$1,000 donation for the construction of the monument. This monument should be looked at as a celebration of the end of slavery and the beginning of freedom.

Ms. Brenda O'Brock, 248 Lake Point Drive, Shreveport, 71109 gave names of her ancestors that were killed in the Civil War. She would also like a monument honoring Marie Threse Metoyer Coincoin. Ms. O'Brock explained that Ms. Coincoin was a black woman business woman who owned slaves. She also said that Ms. Coincoin was able to erect monuments and even built the Melrose Plantation. Ms. O'Brock would like the Commission's focus to be on other things rather than removing monuments.

Mr. John Butcher, 707 Longleaf Road, Shreveport, 71106 believes that the discussion today is misdirected. He believes that this was just a way to divide the community, cause agitation, and create interest in themselves. He would like those who create divisiveness to remove themselves from the Commission.

Mr. John B. Atkins, 126 Centenary Circle, Shreveport, 71104 stated that he is speaking against removing the Confederate monument. He also explained that if this monument is removed, then other monuments such as The Alamo, Washington Monument, etc. should also be removed. He stated that you cannot revise history. He also believes that there are more important things that the Commission needs to focus on.

Mr. John Prime, 745 Rutherford Street, Shreveport, 71104 stated that he is a historian and a member of the Sons of the Union in the Confederate War. He also stated that his great grandfather, Private Israel Day Prime, served in the 37<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry and fought in the Seven Days Battle and was later captured by Stonewall Jackson's Confederate troops. He explained that a person such as himself should be for the destruction of the monument, but instead, he is asking that the Commission preserve it because it is a piece of history. While it is a final monument to the Old South, it is also a tombstone for the Confederacy, a proper and fitting marker for the final surrender, he said. It is on the exact site where the Southern flag last flew, marking the end of rebellion and the beginning of a new era of fellowship and fraternity that we hope to continue today, he said. Mr. Prime asked that the Commission to reject tearing down or removing any monuments on the Caddo Parish public square.

Mr. Henry Walker, 441 Drexel Drive, Shreveport, 71106 stated that there is a sever legal issue with the monument. He would not like the statue to be destroyed, just relocated. He stated that if it sits in front of the courthouse, white and black jurors are affected sublimely. He believes that the monument belongs in the Confederate section of the Greenwood Cemetery.

Mr. John Ratcliff, 8422 Creswell Road, Shreveport, 71106 stated that his ancestors fought in the Confederacy. He suggested that there be a monument honoring the heroes of the Civil Rights Movement. He also pointed out that these monuments were built during a time when Jim Crow Laws were in effect. Mr. Ratcliff stated that the history of this parish needs to be balanced, and by only having that monument there, it is not.

Mr. Benjamin Arnold, 9516 Cinnamon Drive, Shreveport, 71118 suggested that another monument be built on the other side of the courthouse honoring the contributions of black Americans to the construction, reconstruction, and rebirth of this Nation. He also suggested to have the people raise the funding for the monument, and the Commission match those dollars. He believes that it will erase the racial tension in the community. He asked that the Commission table this ordinance, and have a new memorial erected on the other side of the courthouse that is representative of the people.

Mr. Carl Berkhalter, 1713 Irving Pl, Shreveport, 71101 stated that everyone should read the book, "The History of the Negro Race in America from 1619-1880" by George Washington Williams.

Ms. Diane Long, 1214 Whitehall, Bossier City, 71112 stated that she is here today to talk about the removal of the Confederate monument. She stated that it is a dangerous thing to manipulate the facts of history by removing monuments that recall critical and important periods in our history. She stated that the facts of history will still remain regardless of whether the monument stands or not. Ms. Long would like this "bad idea" to be put away and never recalled again.

Dr. Artis Cash, 119 Water's Edge, Shreveport, 71106 stated that the monument represents a time in our history that were "dark days". He also believes that those people that the statue memorializes are "traders". Dr. Cash would like the monument removed and replaced with a different monument. He suggested that a monument of the late Charles D. Scott and fallen police officers replace the Confederate monument. Dr. Cash believes that the monument needs to be removed.

Mr. John David Long, 318 W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street, Shreveport, 71106 stated that he comes from a line of veterans. He also said that his ancestors were poor Irish dirt farmers who defended their homes and families. He also quoted an excerpt of the Emancipation Proclamation and claimed that President Abraham Lincoln was a traitor because he did not free any slaves.

Mr. Andrew Stevenson, 9434 Overlook Drive, Shreveport, 71118 stated that he has family members that fought on both sides of the war. He believes that the focus should be on bigger issues, such as: murder, drugs, prostitution, and child prostitution. Mr. Stevenson said that is where the money should be spent.

Mr. Chavez now opened up the floor for comments from the Commissioners.

Mr. Atkins stated that he was born and raised here in Shreveport. He stated that history and heritage is important to him, and it would be hard for him to vote to do away with the Confederate monument.

Mr. Cawthorne thanked all of the citizens that came out to voice their opinions on this matter. He stated that his biggest concern is the cost to remove the monument. He believes that both sides need to come together right now and do a better job of coming together. Mr. Cawthorne also stated that he does not want to rewrite or eliminate history.

Mr. Bowman stated that his mother, the late Joyce Bowman, helped lead the charge with Mr. Epperson in removing the Confederate flag in 2011. He said that no matter what the decision is regarding this statue, it must be done in the right way and there needs to be peace. Mr. Bowman also said that he does not want to see the City and Parish divided over something like this. He would like everyone to come together and stayed unified.

Mr. Linn stated that everyone views everything differently. He stated that he hopes that we can learn from our past, so that we aren't doomed to repeat. The beginning of civil rights started on that day and we must move forward, he said. Mr. Linn recognizes that it is a courthouse and it should be balanced. He also said that the North Side should have a monument of equal majesty as the South Side. He suggested to put a museum on the top floor of the courthouse and to put another monument on the other side of the courthouse of equal grandeur that represents the move for civil rights. He would like everyone to take this as a lesson.

Mr. Epperson welcomed everyone that was in attendance. He stated that this is his third attempt in addressing this monument in the 20 plus years that he has been on this body. He then recited the Pledge of Allegiance and stated that should be in front of the courthouse. Mr. Epperson then recited the Oath of Military Service. He stated that he would like the statue moved to a place of prominence.

It was **moved by Mr. Bowman**, seconded by Mr. Cawthorne, to extend Mr. Epperson's

time by 3 minutes. Motion carried.

Mr. Epperson continued his debate. He stated his family is full of veterans. He provided copies of the title search done by United Title that shows no conveyance of deeds being deeded over to the United Daughters of the Confederacy. He said that the reason we are here today is to start a peaceful and civil dialogue regarding the monument. He asked to continue this hearing.

Mr. Dominick thanked Mr. Carmoudy for being here today. He stated that he understands that there are differences of opinions. He knows that this is a historical monument and does serve as a tomb for those that were lost during the war. He also understands that there are members of the African-American community that feels a different way. Mr. Dominick has strong concerns of the legality of the ownership of the property, as well as the costs. He also pointed out that there are other expenses that the Commission has, especially since the 17 year olds are proposed to be housed in the detention center. Mr. Dominick suggested to place another monument on the other side of the courthouse. He too asked to review this further, and he is not for removing the monument.

Answering a question from Mr. Chavez regarding the ownership of the property, Attorney Frazier stated that a title opinion was performed by United Title at the request of Mr. Danyne Malone. She explained that the Parish does own the land that the monument sits on. There was a meeting of the Police Jury in 1903 that gave the use of that land to the United Daughters of the Confederacy at that time, however, that is not sufficient to convey title to that plat. That plat shows to belong to the Parish in the courthouse. She stated that the Parish owns the land that the monument sits on.

Answering another question from Mr. Chavez regarding the legality of moving the monument with it being on the National Registry of Historical Places, Attorney Frazier stated the location of the monument is important, and it would be delisted if it were moved. She also explained that the chances of it being relisted on the National Registry, if it were relocated, is slim to none because of the historical context that is related to the location of the monument.

Mr. Chavez stated that he spoke with several attorneys in the community regarding the possibility of an unfair trial due to the monument being in front of the courthouse. He found that in every case, he was told no that statue would not prohibit a person from having a fair trial.

Mr. Chavez understands that this issue is of great magnitude, and it will not be resolved today. He also stated that the two main issues regarding this monument is cost and logistics.

He would like to create a citizens' sub-committee to hear both sides of the issue. Mr. Cawthorne would like to see local historians and citizens on this committee.

Mr. Chavez thanked everyone for coming to today's meeting. There was no further discussion, and the meeting was adjourned.

\_\_\_\_\_/s/Todd Hopkins  
Todd A. Hopkins  
Commission Clerk