

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 28TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2022

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Work Session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mr. Atkins, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Johnson, Jackson, Jones, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (12). ABSENT: None (0).

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

AGENDA ADDITIONS

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *to expand the agenda and add the following items under New Business:*

- *Authorize Linc Coleman/ Urban Land Institute as a Visitor for Thursday's Regular Session*
- *Special Resolution Recognizing the Eden Garden's Class Of 1970*
- *Resolution of Support for Ukraine and the defense of their sovereignty*

The Chair opened the floor for anyone to speak in favor or against this agenda addition. There being no one to speak for or against the agenda addition, the Chair closed the public hearing.

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

VISITORS

- Caddo 4-H Junior Leaders

Ms. Katherine Pace, Caddo 4-H Office, came before the Commission and introduced the 4-H students that were in attendance today. Eva Richardson, Tonya Williams, Jadaya Richardson, and Adaria Brooks shared their 4-H stories with the Commission.

- Community Foundation of North Louisiana's Kristina Gustavson
Update on the Early Childhood Education Caddo Fund

Mrs. Kristina Gustavson said that The Community Foundation has been around since 1961 and currently manage more than \$180M in assets. Last year, the organization has given out \$100M in grants since its inception.

She also explained that 60% of the children in Caddo Parish are not kindergarten ready. In January of 2021, the Louisiana Department of Education said that there were 17,000 less children enrolled in school in the state because of COVID. Over half of those children were either kindergarten or pre-kindergarten. Those numbers have gotten better since then, and they are working on getting most of those children re-enrolled.

In Louisiana, two out of three children have both of their parents or their single parent in the workforce. According to the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, employers lose \$860M a year from employee absences due to turnover and children issues. Louisiana also has a childcare assistance program that provides a stipend of what it costs to send a child to a Type 3 Early Childhood Education Center for the year. This pays for about 80-85% of what they would owe for childcare for the year. On average, it costs about \$1,500 per year to send a child to daycare if they are 3-4 years old. She also explained that 96% of the children who are four years old can access a publicly funded early childcare spot; 48% of three years olds can access a publicly funded childcare spot; and only 13% of two year olds have access to a public funded childcare spot.

In Caddo Parish, there are fifty-five Type 3 Early Childhood Education Centers, but funding is an issue. They need the families to have more either state money, federal money, or scholarship money from this program to enroll the children. In 2017, the State Legislature saw this need and started a fund, but wanted local cities and parishes to take more of any ownership over it. The State Legislature offered local cities and parishes a match or match dollar, but those dollars were not made available until 2021. Between January and April of last year, the Community Foundation raised \$1M, so they received a million dollar match from the State. They are currently giving out scholarships for children 0-3 years in age.

Mrs. Gustavson also mentioned that the Community Foundation hired someone to track the data and see what the outcomes are for these children. She also said that they are only currently working with eight childcare centers, but are looking to expand that moving forward.

Answering a question from Mr. Jackson regarding the names of those childcare centers, Mrs. Gustavson said that she will email those daycare centers to the Commissioners. She also explained that the State gives the centers a grade each year and require them to meet certain curriculum. Mrs. Gustavson mentioned that these are not state-owned facilities, but privately-owned centers.

Mr. Jackson wanted to know if ARP dollars were being used for this. Dr. Wilson said that it is NGO dollars. Mr. Jackson then requested that this be put on the Caddo Parish website and social media. Mrs. Gustavson mentioned that they are putting billboards up all over town to recruit more families to take advantage of this. Mr. Jackson hopes to find a recurring revenue stream to support this endeavor.

Mr. Burrell thanked the Community Foundation for all of their hard work in the community with the youth. Mrs. Gustavson believes that the reason the Early Childhood Fund got funded so quickly was because of the Cares Act.

Mr. Jackson wanted to know if the state source was recurring. Mrs. Gustavson said that originally the state source was supposed to be riverboat/casino revenue. She also said that there has been a lot of discussion about adding the sports betting revenue as a recurring revenue source for it. Mr. Jackson suggested that this be presented to the Citizens Advisory Committee for Juvenile Justice.

- AmTrack
Christina Anderson

The Clerk of the Commission explained that Ms. Anderson asked that she be rescheduled for Thursday's Regular Session.

It was **moved by Mr. Burrell**, seconded by Mr. Young, *that Christina Anderson be moved as a Visitor for Thursday's Regular Session to discuss AmTrack Service. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioner Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (9). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Hopkins, Gage-Watts, and Jackson (3). ABSTAIN: None (0).

COMMISSION REMARKS

- Mr. Johnson said that the American Rescue Plan Committee met today and recommended to the full body the following appropriations: \$150,000 for Community Healthcare Solutions, \$60,000 for Fire District No. 4, \$250,000 for Sewer District No. 7, and \$150,000 for the Blanchard Water System. He said that the ARP funds have all been appropriated for right now.
- Mr. Burrell asked that the Commissioners provide nominations of people who have experience in broadband. They are continuing discussions regarding broadband.
- Mr. Jackson said that there is a property standards issue on Wells Island Road with 18 wheelers being parked across someone's yard.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- Confederate Monument Relocation
Dr. Wilson said that they are going back forth with the contractor fine tuning the details. It is their hope that the contract will be complete this week.
- U.S. Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Program
Dr. Wilson said that they are still waiting on the funds from the U.S. Treasury.
- Juvenile Detention
There are twenty juveniles in the Detention Center; two of which are in OJJ. There are also ten juveniles in CCC.
- COVID-19 Infection Data
There have been no reported cases of COVID in the past few weeks.
- January, 2022 Financial Reports

Dr. Wilson provided the Commissioners with a copy of the January 2022 Financial reports.

- Small & Emerging Businesses

Dr. Wilson provided a copy of the Small & Emerging Businesses report to the Commissioners.

Mr. Johnson asked that a breakdown of Latino and black businesses be provided as well.

- Legislative Priorities

Dr. Wilson asked that the Commissioners provide Administration their legislative priorities for the upcoming session.

- Requests from Commissioners

Mr. Jones is concerned with drag racing on Parish roads. He said that it was originally supposed to be for a movie. He also mentioned that the track in Gilliam is no longer in use, so the racers have nowhere to drag race. Mr. Jones also explained that this is an every three-week occurrence. He said that they are looking to find another place and get a permit to say they're shooting a movie. Dr. Wilson said that he will reach out to the Sheriff's Department because they are the ones who shut the streets down.

Mr. Epperson received several complaints regarding street racing on Antoine Boulevard.

Mr. Young said that the Juvenile Services Committee met and discussed the conditions in CCC where some juveniles are being kept. Mr. Young asked that Mr. Walker describe a typical day for a juvenile at CCC. Mr. Walker said that the juveniles have to be separated because of gang problems, and they're in different housing units with adults. Those juveniles are also in lockdown as much as twenty-three hours per day, but they do have approximately 45 minutes of time out of lockdown. That time is at midnight. Mr. Walker also said that research shows that poor conditions of confinement increases recidivism.

Mr. Epperson requested that Finance explain the new and renewals of the law enforcement district propositions that will be on the upcoming ballot

Mr. Jackson wanted to know if these are Parish millages. Dr. Wilson said that they are not. Mr. Jackson then wanted to know if the Parish is paying for the elections. Dr. Wilson said that the Caddo Parish Commission is not paying for the upcoming election. Mr. Jackson does not want the Parish to pay for millages on a low-turnout election.

Mr. Taliaferro wanted to know if there was an hold harmless agreement with the moviemakers regarding personal injury due to drag racing. Dr. Wilson said that the moviemakers have to apply for a permit, and the Sheriff's Office close down the roads. He also reiterated that the Parish does not condone drag racing on public roadways in any shape, form, or fashion.

NEW BUSINESS

It was **moved by Mr. Young**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *to englobo and advance the following ordinances to Thursday's agenda for introduction:*

- *Ordinance No. 6204 of 2022, an ordinance proposing an amendment to the Caddo Parish Home Rule Charter relative to Section 3-07. Commission Meetings and Rules for presentation to the electorate, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6205 of 2022, an ordinance proposing an amendment to the Caddo Parish Home Rule Charter relative to Section 3-07. Commission Meetings and Rules for presentation to the electorate, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6206 of 2022, an ordinance proposing an amendment to the Caddo Parish Home Rule Charter deleting Section 5-05.2. Department of Fleet Services for presentation to the electorate, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*

Mr. Young said that these are Charter amendments recommended by the Charter Review Committee.

Mr. Epperson asked for clarification on the Home Rule Charter amendments. Attorney

Frazier explained that Ordinance No. 6204 clarifies that in the event of a national or state disaster, the Commission could meet via teleconference to the extent allowed by law until the Commission, as a whole, votes to stop meeting by teleconference. Ordinance No. 6205 is clarifying that the Commission President is the proper actor for purposes of the Homeland Security Act for the State of Louisiana, which references the Parish President. The Caddo Commission has a Commission President. This legislation would take away the confusion if a disaster were declared.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know if this would be placed on the fall election. Attorney Frazier explained that this will be introduced during Thursday's Regular Session, then in two weeks, the Commission could vote to place this on the fall election. Dr. Wilson encouraged placing this on the fall election since the renewals will also be placed on it.

At this time, Mr. Young's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Jackson, Jones, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (10). NAYS: Commissioner Hopkins (1). ABSENT: Commissioner Gage-Watts (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *that Ordinance No. 6207 of 2022, an ordinance amending the Budget of estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund to provide an appropriation for Friends In Unity and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Jackson mentioned that this is budget neutral.

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

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *that Ordinance No. 6208 of 2022, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the American Rescue Plan Fund for the year 2022 to provide an appropriation for a water line extension in Blanchard, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Johnson said that this would allow a 12 inch water line that will be used for Love's Truck and Ivey's. He also mentioned that it pays out in less than a year.

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

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Young *that Ordinance No. 6209 of 2022, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund to provide an appropriation of \$20,000 for Louisiana Urban Gardening and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Johnson said that this is budget neutral.

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

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *that Resolution No. 21 of 2022, a resolution of support for Inferno Manufacturing's continued participation in the ITEP program, otherwise providing with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for consideration.

Mr. Jackson said that this business is over 100 years old. He said that Inferno Manufacturing makes their toll and piping in Caddo Parish and ship it all over the world. He asked that the Commissioners support this ITEP program.

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

It was **moved by Mr. Burrell**, seconded by Mr. *that Resolution No. 22 of 2022, a resolution, to support the development of passenger rail service from Fort Worth, Texas through the City of Shreveport, Louisiana to Atlanta, Georgia along the I-20 Corridor and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for consideration.

Mr. Burrell said that this is a strong possibility, so he is asking for the Commissioners'

support on this resolution.

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

- *Resolution No. 22 of 2022, a resolution, to support the development of passenger rail service from Fort Worth, Texas through the City of Shreveport, Louisiana to Atlanta, Georgia along the I-20 Corridor and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition & Appreciation for Dr. Lena Leviston*
- *Resolution of Recognition & Appreciation for Bruce Wilson for his service with the United Way of Northwest Louisiana*
- *Special Resolution Recognizing March as Women's History Month & Declaring March 8th as International Women's Day*
- *Appoint Roderick T Casey to Caddo Fire District No. 1 to fill the unexpired term of Ed Angel, Term to expire 1/1/2024.*
- *Authorize Appointment of Mr. James Carstensen to the Caddo Parish Broadband Committee*

Mr. Johnson asked that he be a co-sponsor for Resolution No. 22 of 2022.

Mrs. Gage-Watts asked to be a co-sponsor for Resolution No. 22 of 2022, Proclamation for Dr. Leviston, and Proclamation for Bruce Wilson.

Mr. Jackson asked to be a co-sponsor for Resolution No. 22 of 2022, Proclamation for Ukraine, and Proclamation for Eden Garden's. Mr. Jackson said that the AmTrack Passenger Rail has been a long time coming and is excited to see this opportunity to come to fruition.

Mr. Atkins requested that the AmTrack Passenger Rail be added to the Legislative Priorities.

Mr. Burrell asked to be added as a co-sponsor to Ordinance No. 6209 of 2022, Resolution No. 21 of 2022, and Proclamation for Bruce Wilson.

Mr. Epperson asked to be added as a co-sponsor to all of the resolutions.

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

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

- *Authorize Linc Coleman/ Urban Land Institute as a Visitor for Thursday's Regular Session*
- *Special Resolution Recognizing the Eden Garden's Class of 1970*
- *Resolution of Support for Ukraine and the defense of their sovereignty*

Mr. Johnson asked that he be added as a co-sponsor for the Resolution of Support for Ukraine.

Mr. Young said that Eastern Europe politics is not Caddo Parish business, so he will be voting no on the englobo.

Mr. Epperson said that he will be voting yes, "because anywhere a democracy is at peril; its in peril over the entire world".

Mr. Burrell pointed out that there are Ukrainians in Caddo Parish.

Mr. Johnson said that Caddo Parish has been impacted by the conflict in Ukraine. He said that gas prices have gone up, and inflation has gone up 6.8%. He requested that the Caddo Parish Courthouse be lit up in blue and gold.

If faraway events like this that influence us are parish business and that are worthy to be

on the agenda, then everything else that happens on Earth could also be commented on, Mr. Young said. He also commented that this does not seem like parish business to him.

Mr. Jackson mentioned that the Commission voted to use Caddo Parish dollars to support efforts with regards to an international humanitarian crisis. He said that was an international issue that spilled over in the United States, which ultimately spilled in Caddo Parish. We know these things have a trickle down effect, he said.

Mr. Jones said that if someone has a platform to call out wrong, it should be done, whether it is Caddo Parish business or not. He respects the decisions of his colleagues, but would like to have a united front on this particular issue.

Mr. Hopkins respects Mr. Young's decision for the Commission not to get involved, but he is in support of this resolution.

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

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

COMMUNIQUES & COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Mr. Chavez said that the railroad tracks on Bert Kouns need to be repaired. He has received numerous complaints regarding this. Mr. Chavez asked that Administration look into this. Mr. Epperson mentioned that he had the same issue with a railway crossing by the General Motors plant. He mentioned that they could contact the State and have it forwarded to the proper railroad authorities.

He also talked about Dr. Ledet and his accomplishments at LSU. He encouraged all to read the proclamation that was written for him.

Mr. Chavez also announced that there will be a ribbon cutting for the Southern Hills Dog Park this Friday beginning at 11:00 a.m. He encouraged all to attend. He also announced that Southern Hills will be hosting a community cleanup this Saturday beginning at 8:00 a.m.

- Mrs. Gage-Watts said that the Juvenile Justice Committee met today and discussed policies and procedures at Juvenile Services and received an update from the Citizens Advisory Committee.

- Mr. Jackson said that there is an issue on Poleman and would like Administration to look into it.

- Mr. Burrell feels for the people who are in Ukraine. He said that the proposed proclamation is to show those people that they have support in Caddo Parish.

- Mr. Atkins respects Commissioners who want to keep agenda items restricted to parish related business. He said that he adjusted his views to support this proclamation, but still would like to aspire to keep national controversial issues off of the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

- *Ordinance No. 6194 of 2022, an ordinance to accept the streets in Old Towne Subdivision Unit 1 into the Parish of Caddo Road System, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6195 of 2022, an ordinance to accept the streets in Blanchard Lake Estates Unit 4 into the Parish of Caddo Road System, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6196 of 2022, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues For the American Rescue Plan Fund to provide an appropriation for Juvenile Center in Caddo Parish and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6197 of 2022, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund to appropriate funds for the Caddo Parks Grab & Go Feeding Program and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

- *Ordinance No. 6198 of 2022, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund for the year 2022 to provide an additional appropriation of \$15,000 for Robinson's Rescue and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6199 of 2022, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund for the year 2022 to provide an appropriation to provide ballistic vests for Shreveport and Caddo Parish Fire Districts, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6200 of 2022, an ordinance to establish a temporary Parish Planning & Zoning Commission, to provide for its membership, to provide for an effective date, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6202 of 2022, an ordinance to authorize the administrator to execute a Predial Servitude of Passage & Right to use over Parish property located in southwestern quarter of Section 28, Township 22 North Range 16 West and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6203 of 2022, an ordinance to authorize the Administrator to execute an easement and right-of-way agreement with Caddeaux Gathering, LLC regarding a pipeline through and under Parish property located in Section 7, Township 18 North, Range 15 West, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, 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 5:06 p.m.


 Assistant Commission Clerk