

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION OF THE  
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION  
HELD ON THE 5th DAY OF APRIL, 2021

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Work Session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mr. Johnson, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (11). ABSENT: Commissioner Epperson (1).

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

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Laura Sabbath came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Good afternoon. My name is Laura Sabbath. I'm the mother of Casey Simpson, who died in the hands of CCC. I'm pleading to this panel to grant me individual independent investigation on my son's death. My son should not have died. You know, just when you think oh, my son's in jail for doing his time. At least I know where he's at and he's safe. He was not safe in the hands of CCC. My baby suffered a horrible death. I don't wish this on nobody. My baby plead for help. They told him he was faking. My baby begged for his life. He couldn't breathe. Nobody assisted in. It was medical staff and correctional officers were all aware of what was going on with my son. March 16<sup>th</sup>, his body took his toll. He died from neglect. I need y'all to help me. We're not wanting to issue a complaint. I'm issuing a complaint on the same people who's responsible. To me that makes no sense at all. I need y'all to help me. And it's just not my baby. I fear for a lot of inmates who even witnessed this. They're being abused because of what they saw what they know how to do something. I chose Shreveport as my home. I've been here 30 years. This is my home, and I'm not going away. We are going to change something. I mean it now. I'm begging you to help me. Like it was your son. I could go on all day. I contacted the mayor; I've contacted the Attorney General; and nobody answered me. I didn't even see my own city council. Nothing. Nobody. Nobody came to me. Breka Peoples and the Nation of Islam---Wow! I didn't even make a call. They showed up. So these are the people that came to support me. I need you guys.

Fame Robinson came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Hello, everybody. I'm Casey's big sister. I'm also his second mother. So I raised him from a boy, all of his friends babysat more than some of these kids around Shreveport growing up. I also went to high school here. So I grew up here as well, you understand. And I also have helped with prison reform on the west coast in Los Angeles, and helping women to reintegrate from prison. I know how prisoners get treated, I know how inmates get treated, because you're not a person. You're a number as soon as you're in there. So my brother was a number. He was a ward of whatever entity he was being kept and held prisoner. And he did his time. He was doing his time I raise my brother to be accountable out here in this world. We can blame it on color, we can say that's what it is. A lot of us out here are black in Louisiana. There are a lot of us with that. That's not a category for my brother. My brother was also Panamanian. You know, we have a history, we have a culture. I was raised by my grandmothers and great grandmother's. I gravitate to my elders for the wisdom that's out here needs to be reciprocated upon this community. You can't continue to ignore these problems, these issues. Shreveport was always a good place. It can be a better place. But it's going to take some atonement and some accountability. My brother was a human being not even just that his name was Casey. He was a human being. He was a young man, he was a father. He's a brother. He's an elder brother. He's a cousin. He's a nephew. A Godson, a Goddaughter, you got somebody's child that you need to be accountable for. He was somebody's child; he was somebody, only something that can't be brought back. We won't be disrespected with a monetary conception or game. We're fine. But the point is, what I'm not going to do is be quiet and allow this to happen to people prisoners really have no voice. You have no voice in jail. You can make it seem candid on a documentary. But now you're dealing with CEOs that will take somebody's water, you will take somebody's food that they pay for. You will take somebody's mattress because you want to hide things. And for what? My mother never jumpstarted this coming out of the gate gearing towards a lawsuit that didn't fall from our faces. But it was dictated and accountable as factual news. How was that fair in America? For where we are? It's not 1960 but it feels like bloody Caddo parish when we were allowed to be hanged. And it's okay. Because we're going to sweep it under the rug. No, there's seven degrees of separation. Need I remind all of you, you hold a public position, so you know. we will not be silenced. We will not be quieted. You will not go under the rug. So do your just do and beyond that. Not just from our brother, Mr. McLaughlin, Mr. Wavy Austin. You know this is happening. Don't act like it's not. Like I said, I can't make this a color thing. But it's like 80% black in Caddo Parish. basis is human decency. We can all afford it. We can. It don't cost you nothing, I promise. Okay. And it's not going to cost you anything to do right by him. If you find somebody accountable that are guilty. Do like you do the ones that you consider, you know, adding to your recidivism, and being criminals. You're a criminal when you deny somebody antibiotics, you can't die of pneumonia in 2021. Can ya? Not without antibiotics, right? And you can't charge a prisoner who's under your care to pay for medication? How can you do this? Of course you know, there are people in there that can't afford noodles, but you're going to charge them for pills? You're going to take these people's medications from these people you're taking people's psych meds and everything I say I guarantee I can back up factually. I do not make false claims. I will not not on my name and there will be no smut on mine, I guarantee you that. f I'm ever

wrong, I will correct and apologize for myself. That's accountability. Like I said that I did teach my brother. Okay, so yeah, he did what he did he went to jail. He was also working as a plumber in painting and working hard for his two daughters that have no father. Okay? Be accountable that you would help somebody that's a young man. You were a young man in this world. When you left your mom's house, he was a young man out here okay. And somebody helped you. It didn't get to independence in one day. Independence takes a while. You know you all show a position of responsibility being shown accountability and help my mother in regards to her son. That's all I asked him to. We are gonna stand together. I promise. Thank you for your time.

Tommie McGlothen, Jr. came before the Commission and gave the following statement:

On this day last year, it was it was very hard. You know, in this day, I didn't even know what happened. I was notified was, you know, I got the next day. My aunt gave me a number to call. I want to say it was Sgt. Lane Smith. I communicated with him over the phone. All he told me was that my dad got into an altercation with a homeowner. Polices didn't have to use any force. He was telling me anything they did didn't cause his death. It just he just didn't answer my questions that I was just weeks went by. I'm still numb. Something is not adding up. I don't feel like the Shreveport Police Department was fully transparent with my family according to my dad's death. It took weeks later, you know, Chief Ben Raymond, he didn't placed officers on leave. I guess he saw a situation that—he actually said on the video that he doesn't think his officers were accountable in my dad's death. As we know, George Floyd's case, my dad's situation was actually before George Floyd's case. It was the simple fact that we had no answers. It took a long time for the funeral. At the funeral, he had hair in the incident, but when his hair was cut for the funeral, we seen everything under the hair, like skull fractures and is knotted up. When he was in the casket, it was closed like to the point where it was black like someone punched him in the eye. I'm like, okay, they tell me, a homeowner punched him in the face one time. I mean, one time, it's a knot on his head and, and that's all the information that was given to me into time. So we had witnesses, I actually personally, myself, found witnesses that, you know, and I was able to talk to them. They explained to me everything that happened to my father, they explained to me that he was being he was tased. One witness said I didn't even try to handcuff in a first initial response was to tase him. So when you come into a person with force, you know, is I don't feel like it was I had to find out he was tased. Like a lot of times. He was he was beaten in the face. He was maced. I feel like they did everything in the book, but shot him. And to know that he had to leave this way. On this day, April 5 of last year. It was really heartbreaking for my family. And we also like I'm the oldest of his son. I mean, my dad wasn't a criminal. He was he was a really good person. He raised really he raised five kids. We are doing pretty good. He was a he didn't deserve to leave us on this day last year by the Shreveport Police Department. they didn't they it wasn't like I said it wasn't transparent with him. It was really hard not for us to just find out and we did everything they told us. Everything they told me and my family didn't add up like we saw in the video. As you see in the video he was he was detained and an officer still took it among himself and kicked him down after he was detained. they picked him up after he got kicked on the ground, and slammed him head first to a police car and in handcuffs, and then a female officer come and punched him two times in a face. And after that he take another fall on concrete after being tased. As we know, they ruled George Floyd's death excited delirium, but I just feel like that's the way to justify a criminal act. And in the same, they justify my dad's side with excited delirium and they say it is agitated with drugs. My dad didn't use any upper drugs. The only drug that the coroner ruled in his report was marijuana. And that's the only drug was found in his system. It wasn't anything that would up him up to agitated to have a heart attack. As we know marijuana is a downer drug is not something that's going to pump you up and agitate you, to the point you would just die. We all know in that video, he took a beating after being tased and maced. And even after handcuffs that he was still treated like not a human being. I grew up wanting to be a police officer. That was my dream. I did my senior project to be a police officer when Dennis Reed was the Chief. That was my mentor. I looked up to law enforcement. I just really feel like if I was in that position, I wouldn't treat. No one the way my dad retreated. I look in law enforcement to help. And I'm not just saying every law police officer is bad, but the ones that are not doing a job, not being transparent and reporting things, should be held accountable. That's all I wanted to say. I want to thank y'all for giving me this chance to speak. Thank you.

Breka Peoples came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Mr. President Johnson. My question to you commissioners, is how many more Casey Smiths are we going to let die in custody? So you mean to tell me I can be in jail die because of lack of medical treatment? Casey wasn't a monster. He was a father. He was a brother. He was also Miss Laura's son. So when I got the call about Casey from Cherokee Park—the community I grew up in. they asked me, they said, 'are you going to fight for Casey the same way you fought for Tommie McGlothen. We can't scream for George Floyd. We have plenty of George Floyd's on a plantation called Shreveport, Louisiana. Dr. Wilson, our great Parish Administrator, we need the checks and balances. We need to make an outside investigation that don't have any connection with political power here in Louisiana. As we speak, they are ready to beat these streets down. I can't promise it will be peaceful this time because I tried hard with Tommie McGlothen while we was marching. It could have turned left, but we had organizers like Will James to stop it. So I can't promise this one will be peaceful. My people had enough of this systematic system in Shreveport that politicians continue to sweep under the rug. People had enough. With no justice, there is no peace. Thank y'all.

Will James came before the Commission and gave the following statement:

Thank you, commissioners, for this time. Listening to everybody's stories that were told here. I had a student that I used to tutor and mentor. Many, many years ago when I was an army and came back to Shreveport went to a program of Volunteers of America and tutor on a regular basis. He was shot in Allendale a couple of weekends ago. And to see someone that I've known since five or six years old, to no longer being here, seeing the pain and sorrow that these mothers are going through. Some of the things can be attributed to the city. But I feel that with everything that's happening to the city, day and night, it's no longer happening at nighttime like it used to. Surely there's something that can be done to hold everybody accountable. It doesn't matter if it's someone that's on SPD if someone in the sheriff's department, even if it's the shooters in the neighborhoods. So with that, you'll see us as being activists, like most people stated, I'm a peaceful protest. But when you see the anger, when you see the frustration when you see the hurt that's going through these family's eyes. On a daily basis, it's more than just on a Monday or Tuesday afternoon. Friday night, I was at Neves coffee shop from eight o'clock until midnight, projecting the same images that some of you may not have liked that are projected in downtown Shreveport. It focused on police brutality, they focused on gun violence, they focus on the legacy of lynching. Why was I showing this at Neves downtown, outside on the side of their building at night. Because that's one of the heaviest areas that you see gunfire exchanged. It's also an area where you rarely see a police cruiser, or any type of law enforcement vehicle cruising at all. So by putting something random, different abstract in some people's eyes, it deters people from having an altercation at that major intersection of elder in my own Street. I keep hearing different people say, well, the citizens can do something, it's not the citizens jobs to be law enforcement. We can only do so much. The best that I can do is tell people not to let anybody get to put the guns down. But everybody is a peaceful. So what you're hearing today is everybody asking for a solution to where we can all actually work together no lip service. We need to see action we need to see unity, whether it says CCC SPD or the different neighborhoods throughout Shreveport. Thank you all for your time.

Curtis Davis gave the following statement:

First of all, I want to thank you guys for allowing us the opportunity to come and vent our frustrations and format of the front of our governmental bodies. But I've heard a lot across the country about what's going on with police brutality about how our communities are being governed. But I wanted to talk to you guys and have you considered some solutions to the problems that we face. And first of all, we have militarized police departments, right. militarized people are trained to do right so when you talk about war on drugs, war, poverty, war on with whatever these marginalize whistle, dog whistle catchphrases might be, we're really talking about war on marginalized communities. So when they come in our community, it's not really about let's make The people safer. It's more about, look, boy, I see y'all walking together, let me go check and see what's in your pocket. It's about the weaponization of the legal system. I just came back from Angola prison, actually from living there. I lived in Angola resident for 25 years, nine months and 11 days, for a second degree more towards it. I didn't commit. But God be the glory, I had an opportunity to really analyze the world and the system and how this this this takes place? And how, how are our systems actually work? Now in the biggest cities that have less crime rate that we do? They develop systems like broken windows, where it's dark, and where a lot of trenches that you can always find higher crime. It's a psychological thing. It's been studied. They're doing it in Chicago, they're doing it in LA, they're doing it in New York, put some light out there. You understand don't make these dark crevices all the time. And we need to stop allowing the police to police themselves. We need civilian oversight committees because nobody should be allowed to police themselves. Of course, I didn't do it. If you ask me. Right. We want civilians to be able to overlook these situations of police brutality, or the situations that I found myself in when I came back from a golden to go to court in Caddo Parish, CCC, where you had these taskforce with mostly brawny black guys that were attacking mental health issues, like a guy screaming in his cell because he's locked up. Human beings are not supposed to be locked up. So you can for Task Force guys to come in teams and beat him up. Because I mean, what is that about? What about the correction? What about treating this as a social disease? And we started attacking these issues as though we were doctors. If we want to fix a thing, it seems like we don't want to fix these things. So like before I take my three minutes, we're dealing with the militarization of the police. We're dealing with the weaponization of the legal system. If that means you point, your legal system is a gun. If I pointed it towards south Shreveport, it started every three guys and upper middle class and we shake them down, I'm sure they've got Vicadin or Oxycodone in their pocket. When we talk about the weaponization of legal system, we're talking about the district attorney having the ability to choose who gets what charge how much time and it's too arbitrary. So if we only police the guys on the corporate road, or only police, the guys in Allendale, then, of course, you're going to have the higher crime rates over there. But if you want to really deal with the client, we can spend a little bit of money on the lighting systems and or picking up the trash that's around there. People will think different psychologically about their environment. And it won't be as many scatter psych drugs, situations, they turn into these robber murders or the need for the police to come down, put their foot down on the people that are actually committing these crimes. I want to help you guys work with this. And we can figure out a way that you guys can reach out to the real participants in the community that are doing this good because they're not in this role right now. You guys are gonna have to have a game summit, you're gonna have to have trust in the community where we can bring the right guys in front of y'all and see what the alternatives might be. I'm not going to take up any more your time. I appreciate this. Thank you.

Marvin T. Muhammed gave the following statement:

I'm here today not representing myself here representing the Ministry of Justice of the Nation of Islam. And also I'm here representing the Shreveport Chapter of the NAACP, under the authority

of our president elect Michael Lafitte, II and our over 400 members. We're here today to stand with the mother of Casey Simpson in a quest for a clear and transparent investigation into the loss of life of his. We have documentation from inside the jail—letters that went out with inmates, Mr. Casey in his dorm. There were many more letters that were sent out. But they were intercepted. But the ones that we do have gives us a timeline of a young man crawling out of his cell, pleading and begging for his life only to be turned back and open over and over again by the deputy in charge for that [inaudible]. Not just on one shift, but on the shifts in a 24 hour period. In Bossier City, there was an in-custody passing of a gentleman as he was being arrested and the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Department immediately requested an outside investigation. I say they were wise and prudent. The mother is asking for nothing more. She's acting than an agent of the Caddo Parish Commission and Parish, which is responsible for housing those who have been called by the citizens of Caddo Parish to its core system to be accountable and responsible for their violations of acts against the law of order. She is asking that agent to also be willing to be responsible and show accountability. In 1996, the federal government passed the Hippie Law that made it illegal or to protect the sensitive information of medical patients. The Department of Health was the agent that administered that law throughout the country. Yet, the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Department and Caddo Parish Sheriff Steve Prator decided that they would put out information that Mr. Simpson refused his medication. hey had documentation that he refuses medication over 100 times. They also while saying that, they also mentioned about that he was arrested in June of 2020 and was later transferred to CCC to July of 2020. And that he had been sentenced to a year in jail. So he had been in jail for approximately eight months. They also disclosed that he had an outstanding fugitive warrant in the State of Texas. Why? We say why? We say it was the style, [inaudible], fashion Mr. Simpson was one who was not obligated to common decency. I ask the twelve of you to stand behind Commissioner Jackson's resolution because as Breka Peoples said, 'we don't want a re-enactment of what we had this time last year'. Especially since we have a national audience looking at the George Floyd incident. Caddo Parish now has the opportunity to be the epicenter of good decisions by moving quickly to bring justice to the family of Casey Simpson.

Rosalyn Johnson came before the Commission and gave the following statement:

I'm here to discuss my friend about her son. It's not Casey I'm here to talk about. I'm coming to talk about the mother of Casey. Now, all of us are parents; all of us have kids. If yours get hurt, you're gonna want to know what happened. Why it happened. Everybody knows this. I'm just concerned about why she can't get her questions answered. Why they can't show her what happened. We want to see what happened because when we see it will feel better. I'm not just speaking on behalf of me. He has sisters. He has kids. He had a wife. You know, it's a lot of us worried about what happened in Caddo. You know we can hear how the wild stories go on up there. We don't know what's going on, but we know for a fact Casey went in there alive. We know one thing, we wasn't sick when he went in there. On the streets, he was fine. All of a sudden he comes out and he isn't alive no more. He's got two little girls worried about him. A wife. Lord, all of us. But his mom especially. I hate to see Laura. She's aging everyday behind this. If y'all can't do nothing, just answer her questions. Let her know what happened to her child. You would want to know what happened to your baby. I know I would if mine was in there and came out like this. I'm gonna spend the night in front of it—of Caddo. I'm going to pitch me a tent. I ain't going home. They gonna have to tell me something. They gonna have to arrest me or something. That's the type of mom I am. Laura ain't got that spirit. I know she didn't wanna hear me up here saying that, but that's the way I am with mine. That's how I was about Casey. If he did anything wrong, I wanted to find out if it was really him before I let the police get a hold of him. I wouldn't just give him to the police. This time is very hurtful. I'm disappointed in Caddo. I lived in this city for 55 years, and I have never experienced anything like this before. I've never thought about anything like this year, not in our state. We hear about this all over the world. Oh, somebody died in jail or an officer killing somebody, but you would never think it would happen here in Louisiana. Just like this young man and his daddy. I give him all the glory for what he said today. I feel his pain because something we can't figure out what's going on around here today? People killing each other and now the police—what is happening? There's always a story to be told. Let's tell the truth and let it shine. We won't worry about the truth once it comes out. It will be over with. Laura will be ok. She can finish living her life. But as long as you're keeping a secret—it's killing her. I watch her dissolve everyday. Everyday is taken something from her, and I hate to see it. I know y'all don't care about it or understand what she is going through, but one thing everybody—almost everybody in this room is going to see what we are going through. Everybody. I promise you that because God makes a way for you to walk in every man's shoe. You feel like you do something like oh, it can't happen to me. That's a lie. It will happen it will happen tomorrow. don't ever say oh we can't get away with this because you never get away with anything. God's got a say in it, and when you go up there, He's got to judge you too. I ain't going down to the ground baby, I'm going up to the top. I'm going to make sure everything I say be real, and I ain't holding no secrets for nobody. This is not a joke. This is something real. March 16 ain't been no good. It's sad. We're hurting, and we want to know what happened to Casey. Y'all have a good day.

Cheryl George came before the Commission and gave the following statement:

Good afternoon. I'm here on behalf of Casey and justice for him. I'm also here, myself 22 months ago, my own child, along with another young lady was killed downtown on Texas street at a club called Royalty. I had to get answers myself. It's not that the police department didn't investigate. But my question was, how is the city allow an establishment to run without any insurance. They had no insurance. And in my child was an only child. He also was a father of three young men that are left behind. Casey which was a best friend of my son. Now they reside in the same cemetery. My son is here. Casey is right there. So I went to the funeral home, I mean, to the graveyard yesterday. I not only visited my child's grave,

but I visited Casey's grave. It's just like the crime is getting worst. Everyone wants to blame everyone. But we have to be the blame as citizens for not opening our mouths. And saying, you did this. I saw you. I'm calling it in. until we get on the same page, we're gonna continue to have a killing every day. The snow was just barely off the ground. Crime after crime after crime. And I have spoke with several mothers saying, you know, how do you get through this. And I tell them, the grace of God, I stand up and I try to be strong because I have to still worry about three young black men that are in these communities. And they're my grandkids. Three of them are in the Martin Luther King area. they're in sports, they do all type of stuff. But it's like, I have to worry still. Even though my child is buried. But until we as people need to come together and find a resolution get things done because the police is not the best thing. I have a brother the police killed in 1993. They still lied. They still covered up things. We never found a answer. But do I say that the police is this or that? I have friends that are in law enforcement. We have good, bad, and ugly, and they need to be weeded out. And that's all I have to say. You have a good day.

Barbara Smith-Iverson gave the following statement:

I'm here to speak on resolution 35. To establish an independent third-party review into deaths in parish facilities. I'm trying to catch my breath. Just listening to all of the things that the citizens are speaking about is just hurts my heart. I thank God today that we have a resolution to actually bring transparency and accountability to the public at large for families who may lose loved ones in Paris facilities. This resolution is a great resolution. It is in line with providing the public with basic human dignity. When you look at the latest death of 31-year-old Casey Lewis Simpson, who died and CCC custody. His mother, Ms. Sabbath, was not notified as she mentioned about the conditions of her son's death. Furthermore, she has failed to receive any kind of information from the coroner's office. A lot of times when you mix the sheriff's office in the coroner's office together, there is a great possibility that the families will not get inaccurate calls of death for their loved ones. And this has got to stop. This is one of the fundamental reasons why nothing ever gets solved. When it comes to these deaths, this resolution passes, it will take, I'm happy that it will take effect immediately. And there will be an independent third-party inquiry. This resolution is the resolution that the citizens need. I'd say it's a long time coming. I want to send a special thanks to Commissioner Steven Jackson for offering such competent. Such a competent resolution. It is a long time coming. And I say to the other commissioners, hashtag tag a long time overdue. Thank you.

Lester Smith gave the following statement:

Good afternoon. I'm here to speak on behalf of the Casey Simpson family as well. I don't want to come in to bash and say this at that point that elected officials. But we have to do something this has gone on for much too long. every instance, with a young black male dying at the hands of police officers are in custody. The police walk free. There's never any accountability. we as a people, we call it town hall meetings we pray. We have candlelight vigils. And the results are not there. I believe in the Bible, the Bible say 1 righteous man can put 10,000 to flight. And maybe that's why we're not getting the desired results. We have to come together as a community, the elected officials and the community we have got to come together and work together to seek solutions. To resolve these issues, we can no longer continue to believe that they're going to work themselves out. When the cameras are hot and rolling. We are out there on the front line in marching and picketing and doing what we do. And people watch tendencies and they know once it becomes cooled off, we're going to go sit. Nothing is resolved, nothing is done it just another lost black man. We can ill afford to continue to allow black man at the hands of those whose job and duty is to serve and protect to continually die in their possession. To come up dead by one of them, and they have no consequences to kill a black man in this city. you get your vacation paid time off, and you come back to work as if nothing has happened. It is time that elected officials, organizations, and us as men—we're going to have to do something to deter and correct his problem. We can no longer sit around and allow this to happen. This young man has no reason to be dead today. When he was in a facility that we pay taxes for, and we pay these people's salary to help. He can't get help, and that's a sad state of affairs. And he's not the only one. He's not the only one. I had a brother in law. Who was there. He was a weekend inmate. He was on dialysis, had kidney cancer. He had diabetes, and they allowed this man to sit. And let's say from Friday night to Sunday night, just leaving dialysis on Friday. This is the treatment that he got at CCC and nobody liked it. We have to hold our Sheriff accountable. Just like we cry about Chief Ben Raymond not doing his job. What is so special about Sheriff Prator that nobody will call him out. We as a people have got to get some backbone and call this thing what it is. They can say racism and prejudice all day long. People don't care about that. We need some actions that are community, and it starts with us. The black preachers and black people, you got to get up off you're a and have to start doing something and creating some opportunities for young people with the tax dollars that benefit and pay salary for the elected officials. We have got to do something to help ourselves! Nobody is going to help us, other than us. Thank you.

Jade Sabbath came before the Commission and gave the following statement:

Hello, my name is Jade Sabbath. My mother is Laura Sabbath. My father is David. My brother was Casey Simpson. Yes, I am a child. I know you guys tend to not listen to children, but look at it as a person that knows human decency. And I know someone needs to be heard. And I know when they need to be taken care of. My brother was in the system where he was not taken care of, and my mother has not been listened to. It hurts to see my mother cry and scream because she knows her only son was in pain. And I know my brother was in pain because I know everything with the symptoms of having diabetes because I have diabetes. he tried. He tried to be heard. All I want you to do is for my mother to be heard. And I want you to hear her story. And I want to her to be heard! Thank you.

Mei Drakes came before the Commission with the following comment:

I'm here to discuss the ongoing case of my older brother, Casey Simpson. I am here to simply say that we are not asking for a GoFundMe or any financial assistance for the family that Casey was taken from. All we desire are answers, footage, proof, evidence, etc. Simply an explanation of what happened. Our goal is not only to win a simple case, but to reach closure of what happened to my brother. I pray that this isn't another piece of paper to add to a stack of irrelevance on anyone's desk. So thank you for your time. And God bless you.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

- Confederate Monument Update

Dr. Wilson stated that they received several RFPs that are being evaluated for technical competency to see if they can complete the work soon.

- Disparity Study Update

The disparity study is due back this Thursday, April 8.

- I-49 Welcome Sign Update

A location has been found up north to install the sign, but DOTD wants it placed 100 feet off the right-of-way, and that may cause a problem with visibility. So they are working with DOTD to see what else they can come up with.

- U.S. Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Program

In the first five day, 1,735 applications were received. They hope to serve up to 6,000 families.

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. Johnson commented on the citizens who came to speak before the Commission today. He researched how to bring about an independent study at CCC. After speaking with the superintendent of the Louisiana State Police (LSP), he discovered that outside investigations begin with the Sheriff making a request for them to come in. If the Sheriff does not make the request, the Mayor or President of the Commission could request LSP to come in and investigate. Today, Mr. Johnson formally requested Sheriff Prator to do an independent investigation on the death of Casey Simpson. If he does not receive a response, he and Mayor Perkins will write a letter to the Governor requesting LSP to conduct an outside investigation.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *that Resolution No. 26 of 2021, a resolution amending the Rules & By-Laws of the Caddo Parish Commission regarding the time limits of speakers under Communiqués & Committee Reports, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to the April 22 Regular Session for final passage.

Mr. Jackson pointed out that the attachment is incorrect, and he would like the motion to reflect the proper motion made in Committee, which is *to amend the resolution for a seven-minute time limit for Commissioners under Communiqués with an option for a three-minute extension by approval of the full body*.

The Clerk of the Commission stated that the correct version of the resolution would be attached to the next Regular Session agenda.

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

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

It was **moved by Mr. Cawthorne**, seconded by Mr. Johnson, *that Ordinance No. 6047 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Economic Development Fund to provide an appropriation of \$25,000 for the Shreveport Bossier African American Chamber of Commerce, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Cawthorne explained that this came out of the Economic Development Committee,

who voted to move this to the full body.

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

It was **moved by Mr. Cawthorne**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *that Ordinance No. 6048 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Economic Development Fund and Riverboat Fund to provide an appropriation of \$35,000 for Gameport Exhibition at Sci-Port, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Cawthorne said that this also came out of the Economic Development Committee unanimously.

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

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Jackson, *that Ordinance No. 6049 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures of the Oil & Gas Fund to provide an appropriation of \$100,000 for the ESO Fire Reporting System, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Hopkins explained that this appropriation would allow all of the fire districts and the City of Shreveport to be on one system. He said that they asked the City to appropriate \$100,000 to match the Parish's \$100,000, and the 911 will pay the \$100,000 annual recurring fee.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if the Parish's funding was contingent upon the City of Shreveport's funding. Mr. Hopkins stated that it was.

Mr. Johnson reiterated that this would allow the fire districts and the City of Shreveport to communicate on one system, so it will benefit all citizens of the Parish.

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

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that Ordinance No. 6050 of 2021, an ordinance adopting the Budget of Estimated Revenues for the American Rescue Plan and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Johnson explained that this would put the monies in a separate fund, so the revenues and expenditures can be traced easier.

Mr. Jackson wanted to know if this was to create a fund. Mr. Johnson said that it was. Then Mr. Jackson wanted to know where the enabling legislation to create the fund was. Mr. Jackson also pointed out that this ordinance is to adopt the revenues for the fund, not to create it. Mrs. Barnett said that they do not need enabling legislation to create the fund. The Finance Department created the fund, the Commissioners adopt the budget. Mr. Jackson said that normally when a fund is created, priorities for that fund is established.

Mr. Jackson then stated that this is to create a fund, but to put the monies in another fund. Mrs. Barnett explained that Federal Grant is the account the money is going in, not the fund. Mr. Jackson then wanted to know if there was a Federal Grant Special Revenue Fund. Mrs. Barnett said that there was not. She also explained that there are special revenue funds for other federal grants, but there is no Federal Grant Special Revenue Fund. She further explained that there is a Section 8 Fund that handles federal funds for Section 8, a Head Start Fund that handles funds for CCAA, and now there is an American Rescue Fund that will handle federal funds received from the American Rescue Plan. Mr. Jackson wanted to know where the enabling legislation was to set up those funds. He also explained that as he understands the Louisiana Government Budget Act, there has to be enabling legislation to establish special revenue for the governing authority. Mr. Jackson said that there needs to be parameters, guidelines, and rules of engagement for these funds. Dr. Wilson mentioned that this is only a one time funding source, not a recurring one. Mr. Jackson said that there are several AG opinions says that the governing authority sets the guidelines by which the funds are dispensed, what they are used for, and there is supposed to be a comprehensive budget for that fund. He pointed out that there needs to be enabling legislation to create the fund.

Mrs. Bryant explained that Administration can set up the fund based on adopting these revenues. She pointed out that there are no expenses associated with this ordinance, only revenues. At some point, the Commission can set up parameters as it so desires. She also mentioned that they have set

up multiple funds without enabling legislation, but to expend those funds, they would need to get approval from the Commission body.

Mr. Jackson wanted to know if the funds have been received. Mrs. Bryant stated that they have not, but the budget can be adopted based upon the anticipated revenues. Mr. Jackson said that he has never seen a public body accept the revenues without creating the fund. It is out of order, he said.

Mr. Cawthorne explained that this ordinance is to receive the funds. Once the funds are received, the Commission can set up the parameters in which the funds are expended.

Attorney Frazier said that she reviewed the Budget Act, and it does not mandate enabling legislation. She also asked Mr. Jackson for the AG opinions he spoke of. Attorney Frazier said that the Commission created the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust Fund to establish a specific purpose in which to use those funds. The Commission also created the Oil & Gas Fund because it wanted a specific purpose for those funds as well. The Commission also created the Reserve Trust Fund to establish the number of votes needed to be able to transfer money in and out of it. She also explained that this ordinance is setting up a fund to receive the revenues from the federal government, and a separate piece of legislation is not required.

Mr. Burrell suggested that this maybe be sent to a committee to continue to vet the questions that need to be answered. Mr. Johnson said that there is a two-week layover to discuss and review the questions that the Commissioners have. He further explained that this ordinance creates a fund, so the revenues are not co-mingled with any other monies, similar to the Oil & Gas Fund, Reserve Trust Fund, and Riverboat Fund.

Mrs. Bryant reiterated that this is not appropriating any expenses or stating any purpose. Mr. Cawthorne said that this is a mechanism in which the Commission will receive the fund. After the funds are received, the Commission can set up the parameters in which the funds are expended.

Mr. Jackson pointed out that the ordinance does not state to create or to accept, it says that the Commission is adopting the budget. He understands the funds have to be accepted, but the fund has not been created.

*Mr. Jackson will be abstaining from this vote because the title does not state that the Commission created the fund, and he feels that this ordinance would violate the Budget Act.*

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

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

- *Resolution No. 31 of 2021, a resolution urging and requesting the United States Congress to pass the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act of 2021, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 32 of 2021, a resolution proclaiming and supporting April as National Autism Awareness Month and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 33 of 2021, a resolution declaring April as National County/Parish Government Month in Caddo Parish*

**Substitute motion by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *to englobo and move the following resolutions to Thursday's agenda:*

- *Resolution No. 31 of 2021, a resolution urging and requesting the United States Congress to pass the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act of 2021, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 32 of 2021, a resolution proclaiming and supporting April as National Autism Awareness Month and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 33 of 2021, a resolution declaring April as National County/Parish Government Month in Caddo Parish*
- *Resolution No. 34 of 2021, resolution declaring the month of April 2021 as Minority Health Month in Caddo Parish, recognizing the health inequalities facing minorities, and encouraging the Parish of Caddo to promote and support programs and activities that promote healthfulness in minority communities and other health disparity related to COVID-19, and otherwise providing with respect*



*thereto*

- *Resolution No. 35 of 2021, a resolution to establish an independent third-party review process at Caddo Parish owned properties or facilities, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 36 of 2021, a resolution amending unsuspending 2020 funds to Grace Project and amending the scope of Grace Project Agreement, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*

At this time, Mr. Gage-Watts' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Cawthorne, Chavez, Gage-Watts, Jackson, Johnson, and Young (7). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Hopkins, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (4). ABSENT: Commissioner Epperson (1). ABSTAIN: None (1).

### **COMMUNIQUES & COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Mr. Jackson wanted the Commissioners to be mindful of individuals who still cannot make the meetings because of the in-person meetings. He also cautioned the Commissioners and citizens that the virus is still here, and social distancing, mask wearing, and other safety precautions should still be practiced.

He also asked that Administration provide an update on the status of the Housing Trust Fund.

Mr. Jackson also talked about the citizens who came to speak about Casey Simpson. He said that a resolution to LSP would suffice.

Mr. Jackson also stated that the Legislature does not run the day to day operations of LSU. He mentioned that there are at least five or six bills filed within the legislature regarding hazing and sexual assaults because they have a responsibility to the public and a responsibility for oversight. His resolution is to put a practice and procedure in place to ensure that there is a process and procedure going forward. He asked that the Commissioners adopt this resolution.

- Mr. Johnson explained the process once again for requesting an external investigation. It starts with the Sheriff, if the Sheriff says no, then the Mayor or the President of the Commission could forward a request. He said that he submitted a formal request to the Sheriff to start the process. The President or the Mayor could send a letter to the Governor to request LSP to conduct an external investigation.

Mr. Young wanted to know if this was law or a tradition. Mr. Johnson said that he did not ask Colonel Davis if it was law, but he did state that it was the process. Mr. Young asked that Legal research this and find out if this is a state law. Attorney Frazier said that it is an internal policy of the Governor of State Police Office. It is not a statute.

- Mr. Burrell said that there is another variant of COVID-19 that is twice as contagious and twice as deadly. He mentioned to those who chose not to vaccinate that they are putting others at risk. Mr. Burrell also encourage safety precautions to protect themselves and their families from the coronavirus.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- *Ordinance No. 6044 of 2021, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues and Expenditures for the Capital Outlay Fund, the Oil & Gas Fund, and the General Fund for the year 2021 to provide an appropriation of \$333,000 to support the Medical Education & Emerging Viral Threats Building, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6045 of 2021, an ordinance amending the 2020 Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Economic Development Fund to provide an appropriation of \$50,000 for the Port City Fest, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6046 of 2021, an ordinance to amend Article III of Chapter 18 of the Code of Ordinances relative to provisions for Flood Hazard Protection, to meet revised standards regarding Class 8 Flood Standards in accordance with Community Rating System and Federal Emergency Management Agency requirements, and to otherwise provide respect thereto*

At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the Commission adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

Work Session Minutes  
April 5, 2021

/s/Michelle Nations  
Assistant Commission Clerk