

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 4TH DAY OF MAY, 2020

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Committee Meeting, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., via Zoom teleconference, with Mr. Lyndon B. Johnson, Chairman, presiding, and the following members, constituting a quorum, in attendance: Commissioners Burrell, Hopkins, Lazarus, and Chavez (4). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1).

Also, in attendance were Director of Finance Hayley Barnett, Parish Administrator Dr. Woodrow Wilson, Assistant Parish Administrator Erica Bryant, Parish Attorney Donna Frazier, and Commissioner John-Paul Young and Commissioner Stormy Gage-Watts.

Invocation was led by Mr. Hopkins and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Lazarus.

Mr. Johnson opened up the floor for Citizens Comments. There were none.

At this time, there were no agenda additions.

Mr. Johnson moved to the first New Business item, *Certificate for Teleconference*.

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Louisiana has issued Proclamation Number 33 JBE 2020, stating that, due to the current Public Health emergency declared in the Governor's Proclamation Number 25 JBE 2020, and citing the provisions of La. R.S. 29:721, et seq., granting him the authority to control the "ingress and egress to and from a disaster, the movement of persons within the area, and the occupancy of premises therein; and

WHEREAS, the Governor, in Proclamation Number 33 JBE 2020, has limited all gatherings of 10 or more people, for public safety purposes; and

WHEREAS, Governor has issued a general stay at home order "unless performing an essential activity," 33 JBE 2020, Section 3; and

WHEREAS, attendance at a Caddo Parish Commission Work Session meeting is not stated in the list of essential activities, listed in 33 JBE 2020, Section 3; and

WHEREAS, the usual conduct of the meeting would require travel and the presence of a number of persons in excess of ten (10); and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State, in Proclamation Number 30 JBE 2020, Section 4, issued on March 16, 2020, has invoked the aforementioned statutes authorizing him to allow attendance at essential governmental meetings via teleconference or video conference during the pendency of this emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State, in Proclamation Number 41 JBE 2020, Section 13, issued on April 2, 2020, has extended the Stay-At-Home Order until Thursday, April 30, 2020; and

THEREFORE, the Caddo Parish Commission hereby certifies that it will not be able to obtain a quorum and convene a meeting in a public forum on May 4th, 2020 due to the Governor's proclamations, and will be required to meet by video conference, and, if necessary teleconference, on that date as allowed by law and the Proclamations of the Governor listed above.

Date: April May 1, 2020

/s/Mario Chavez, President

Mr. Johnson moved to the last New Business item, *review and discuss NGOs from the 2020 Budget*.

Mr. Johnson stated the reason for the meeting is to review the non-government organizations (NGO) that were approved in 2019 for 2020. Since Riverboat funding has been suspended due to the shutdown the committee must assess what organizations have been funded, how much was funded and what should be funded for the rest of the year. He mentioned that some programs have been hampered by the corona virus and time lapse of funding that was requested. Mr. Johnson referred the committee to review revenue analysis from 2019 to 2020, which included the riverboat gaming, oil and gas, video poker, and sales tax for each month year to date and how much money has been accrued. He added this will gauge the average revenue, once the city reopens people will spend money. He forecasts a rounded revenue of about \$100,000 per month on riverboat gaming.

Ms. Hayley Barnett clarified that the revenue depends on when and at what capacity the Casinos get to open up and at what capacity. She referred to an email sent to the committee that the revenue for March was only \$30,000 with no revenue from April or May. She projects that unless riverboat gaming resumes in July, and they may receive at least half of budgeted revenue through December. She estimates they will receive \$500,000 less than anticipated this year, according to her

analysis at this time.

Mr. Johnson mentioned that riverboat gaming will be changing in lieu of distance requirements- the capacity and spending will be affecting the revenue.

Mr. Burrell has concerns regarding non-government organizations (NGOs) that were already funded and whether the funds were budgeted to be appropriated or if they were paid from funds on hand. Mr. Johnson confirmed that based on their projected revenue from 2019-2020, the NGO budget was \$987,750.00.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know what the fund balance was in January before funds were paid out. Ms. Hayley clarified beginning in 2020 their fund balance was \$800,000 and their goal was to fund NGOs from current revenues to refrain from decreasing their fund balance.

Mr. Burrell assumed that the \$987,750.00 amount was budgeted based upon the applications that were sent in and what their determined appropriations. Ms. Barnett explained that the budget was based on the amount of approved appropriations for 2020.

Mr. Burrell has concerns regarding NGO that were already funded and what they were used for. Mr. Johnson mentioned that they had received about \$3,000,000 worth of requests.

Mr. Burrell is also concerned organizations are not able to fulfill their program in the pandemic and many of the organization will not be able to do their work because of corona virus. He continued to state he has questions regarding how the commission will address these issues. Mr. Johnson acknowledged his concerns and addressed that those are reasons behind this meeting and there will be more meetings after this meeting. He explained that they need to review the ones that have allocated funds and applications that have not received funding to make adjustments as necessary. Mr. Johnson also advised that any new NGO will have to submit an application and be reviewed in order to receive any funding.

Mr. Burrell expressed how he did not understand the new legislation and sought to identify if the NGOs that will be discussed in the next meetings are new or existing applicants who have not been funded. Mr. Johnson stated he is referring to is on the agenda for a different meeting and will not discuss it during this meeting. He added that there are existing applications that need to be voted on and there are some reasons they did not receive funding at the time in 2019. The NGOs are able to request funding again in the current year, which is what they are reviewing in this meeting.

Mr. Johnson advanced to the next item on the list and informed the committee that they can continue funding and recommend it to the body or to reduce fund amount or not fund at all.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know whether the first item, A Quiet Place in the Woods, have been paid already. Mr. Johnson confirmed that the NGO has already been paid.

Mr. Chavez recommended to follow Maslow's hierarchy of needs to review what is most important to Caddo citizens. Mr. Johnson advised that the committee could postpone education NGOs until a later date.

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *a move to delay and to postpone unfunded education programs at this time.*

Mr. Burrell had concerns that organizations may need an opportunity to explain their need for appropriations to fund their education programs during or after the pandemic. Mr. Johnson acknowledged Mr. Burrell and presented an amendment to Mr. Hopkins motion to postpone education programs for them to submit a letter that explains their current position during the period until the casinos resume operations.

Friendly amendment by Mr. Johnson *to postpone all unpaid education appropriations, send them a letter and reassess their need based on their response.* Mr. Hopkins accepted this amendment.

Mr. Burrell requested a point of clarification on how each organization's purpose are classified, which was one of the questions he messaged to the committee and administration. Ms. Barnett confirmed that she had responded to his email and restated that she had addressed the classifications are for internal uses and that as application objectives may change their category may change. She that economic development could be funded from riverboat fund or the economic development fund and is driven by the Commission.

At this time, Mr. Hopkin's motion carried as amended, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Burrell, Hopkins, Chavez, and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *to postpone appropriations to the Community Renewal International, Inc. until the summer months.* Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *to appropriate \$90,000 to the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana.*

Mr. Burrell has concerns that programs are being funded or have received funds and may not have the urgency that un-funded programs may have. Also, that some programs that have received funds may not be operating due to the corona virus pandemic. Ms. Frazier acknowledged Mr. Burrell's concerns explaining the process of appropriations. She states that existing organization reports are reviewed by the administration in the order they are received. For applications that does not meet specifications they request additional information and are returned to queue. Once an application is reviewed and approved organizations must submit a signed CEA, then they can send an invoice to request their funding. Ms. Frazier advised that the Food Bank have completed their process prior to the closing of Government Plaza, but did not request their funding. Funding is appropriated by thorough process and not necessarily by urgency. She added that some were not funding by either waiting for information, process incomplete prior to pandemic, or the process was completed and they have not requested for funding.

Dr. Wilson commented that the Food Bank is providing food to the welfare groups in the community every day and a letter or report for urgency is not needed for their program.

At this time, Mr. Johnson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Chavez**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *to delay and postpone economic development NGOs to the summer.*

Mr. Burrell expressed concerns that the economic development classification for the aforementioned programs did not match their descriptions. Ms. Barnett agreed to review and update the classifications on the economic development NGOs to social welfare and will send out an updated spreadsheet.

Friendly amendment by Mr. Johnson *to review each NGO separately to reduce confusion and postpone the Grace Project and Harmony Faith Ministries, Inc. until the summer.* Mr. Chavez accepted this amendment.

Mr. Chavez's motion carried as amended, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Chavez requested to have the 2020 NGO Budgeted Funding list posted for public access. Mr. Johnson acknowledged that the budgeted funding list is viewable in the budget book on the parish of Caddo website.

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *to appropriate \$15,000 to Hope Connections.* Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Johnson informed the committee that IVY Crown Community Services is on the agenda for the regular session and will not be reviewed in this meeting.

Mr. Burrell requested information on the description of Ivy Crown. Mr. Johnson explained that it is social welfare

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *to appropriate \$25,000 to Martin Luther King-Community Development Center.*

Mr. Burrell commented he is unsure whether the organization will be able to use the funds and how will the Commission know their programs are operating. Mr. Johnson recognized that the programs who are postponed will receive a letter, which they are able to correspond whether they will need the funding and their urgency. He referred to Ms. Frazier's explanation on the process of appropriations and the NGOs have not received funds because the process is incomplete or they have not requested funds.

Mr. Burrell still had concerns regarding whether the NGOs should inform the committee that they are operating with the requested funding. Mr. Johnson acknowledged that if Mr. Burrell knows that an organization that is operating then he could support them in this committee.

Mr. Chavez requested to retract his second or may not vote for the Martin Luther King-Community Development Center (MLK) because their general purpose description does not seem paramount for appropriations. Mr. Johnson clarified that MLK provided masks to senior citizens in the area and have expended funds before school was released for virtual tutoring and hot spots.

Mr. Burrell commented that the process seems to be flawed without commissioner

personal knowledge or support. Mr. Johnson recommended Mr. Burrell to get to know the organizations in the Parish.

Mr. Burrell related that each commissioner is familiar with their district, but only five commissioners represent this board to decide who will receive funding. Mr. Johnson clarified that commissioners who are not on the committee are able to sit in on the meeting to support funding an organization in their district. He continued to inform that the appropriations are not finalized in this committee and is forwarded to the full body to vote on.

Mr. Burrell commented that he is uncomfortable with the process of forwarding the funding of organizations that he didn't want to wait until the regular session to discuss the NGOs which would slow down the full body meeting. He suggests once again stated that the organizations should send in a letter to identify their actions in the pandemic and the urgency to assist the committee in knowing what to prioritize and make funding fair for all organizations. Johnson conceded that at this time NGOs were suspended and the Parish is waiting for the economy to return to normal. Mr. Johnson stated that the idea could be considered for future meetings since NGOs has been suspended due to the pandemic

Mr. Burrell reiterates that he is concerned about the fairness of which organization will receive funding. Mr. Johnson confirms again that this meeting will prioritize appropriating funds for NGOs with the information they currently have then have another meeting for the second round. The postponed groups are able to correspond with their urgency of funding for the second round.

Mr. Hopkins requested whether there are any invoices from Martin Luther King-Community Development Center at this time. Ms. Barnett confirms there are no invoices from them.

Mr. Johnson also commented that NGOs are different from for profit organizations, in which NGOs request for funding, then they submit an expense report on what the funds paid for.

Ms. Frazier confirmed she had received all the requested additional information from Martin Luther King-Community Development Center before the shutdown, but they have not sent out the corporate endeavor agreement (CEA) yet. She also informed depending on the action the committee makes they will receive one when they resume reviewing applications.

Mr. Burrell pointed out again that the organizations that are being prioritized are not being held responsible for submitting confirmation of ongoing operations during the pandemic. He mentions the Inner City Entrepreneur Institute has completed the application process but are not funded. Ms. Frazier reiterated that organizations are reviewed in the order they are received and due to shortages from the shutdown.

Mr. Burrell once again states that organizations are not expected to submit a letter stating whether their program and activity level will be ongoing during the shutdown. Mr. Johnson restates that these organizations have already submitted applications and have been approved. He further restates what has occurred in the meeting thus far- the education purposed organizations have been postponed, economic development purposed organizations are going to be reclassified, and they are currently discussing the social welfare purposed organizations. Mr. Johnson recommended Mr. Burrell make substitute motions or if he does not agree with a motion he could vote no.

Substitute motion by Mr. Burrell, seconded by Mr. Johnson, *to appropriate \$10,000 to Martin Luther King-Community Development Center and the remaining \$15,000 will be allocated based upon the response to a letter that will be sent to the Commission.*

Mr. Burrell restates that the process is unfair since organizations do not have to submit documentation that they are still operational or to determine the whether their expenditures and activities are considered an urgent need. Mr. Johnson explains that these organizations have submitted applications in 2019 for funding in 2020, however, the postponed programs are able to request funding for the rest of the year. He reiterates that they have postponed education purposed organizations and are reclassifying the economic development purposed organizations. He posed for example the Martin Luther King-Community Development Center may receive appropriation of \$10,000, contingent on the motion, and may submit a request for the remainder \$15,000 based upon previous approval. If they do not have a need for it and do not request the \$15,000, then they will not receive the funds.

Mr. Burrell was also concerned as to how the committee will know if the organization will need the total request of \$15,000 instead of the \$10,000. He explained that these organizations are receiving funds up front and could try to justify their expenses even if they are not currently operating. Mr. Johnson stated that an NGO who receive the funds will have to return the money if they do not use it. Also, that they must submit a report on what the funds were used for.

Mr. Chavez requested for the motion to be repeated. Mr. Johnson restated the substitute motion.

Mr. Burrell's substitute motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *to postpone the Mission Project Foundation until the next meeting*. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Burrell requested a copy of the budgeted list from either Ms. Nations or Ms. Barnett. Ms. Nations confirmed she is responding to his request.

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *to postpone the Pamoja Art Society until the summer*.

Mr. Burrell had concerns that the program was education and not economic development. Ms. Frazier confirmed that Pamoja Art Society has submitted impact information for economic development.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know whether the organization should be reviewed by economic development committee or the appropriations committee. Ms. Frazier clarified that she does not make that decision she is only information that they have supported documentation. it is up to the commission.

Mr. Burrell commented that the chairman has informed him with proper documentation each NGO would be sent to the proper committee. Mr. Johnson clarified that there are some economic development purposed organization in the NGO and the economic development committee, as long as the mistake isn't repeated in the future.

Mr. Johnson requested Mr. Burrell confirm his original motion. Mr. Burrell confirmed it was to postpone.

Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *to postpone the Robinson's Rescue*.

Mr. Chavez requested whether the organization is still providing services to the Parish. Dr. Wilson validated that they are still operating and have been on this NGO for about 18 years.

Substitute motion by Mr. Chavez, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *to appropriate \$25,000 of the \$50,000*.

Mr. Chavez stated that the service directly impact the well-being of the Parish and assist in decreasing stray animals populations. He suggested funding half to the program and reassess the situation to fund the second half.

Mr. Burrell states that he has received nasty statements regarding animal services department. Mr. Johnson recommended Mr. Burrell visit Animal Services Department to see firsthand what they are doing.

Mr. Johnson commented there is a need to control animal population however, with the stay at home order citizens could better handle their pets. However, so far they have postponed several human need organizations and wanted to refrain from placing animal needs above human needs. Mr. Burrell stated that Mr. Johnson's statement makes sense.

Mr. Lazarus wanted to know the total commitment to Robinson's Rescue and the substitute motion, so that he could withdraw his second motion to support Mr. Chavez's substitute motion. Mr. Chavez confirmed that he has a second motion.

Substitute motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (4). NAYS: Commissioner Johnson (1). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Johnson, *to appropriate \$25,000 to Salvation Army (Merkle Center of Hope)*. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Chavez**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *to appropriate \$7,500 to Shreveport Green*.

Substitute motion by Mr. Burrell, *to postpone Shreveport Green*. Motion died due to the lack of a second.

Mr. Chavez stated that Shreveport Green provides seeds to the community and sprouting plants to help citizens start home gardens.

Mr. Burrell stated that Shreveport Green receives funds from other sources and was unclear whether the funding will be used for relief efforts. Mr. Chavez acknowledged that the organization has many purposes but has gone above and beyond during the pandemic by providing free sprouting plants and seeds within the Parish.

Mr. Burrell was concerned whether the seeds were donated by a home good store. Mr. Chavez declined that he could confirm the source of the seeds.

Mr. Johnson requested Ms. Barnett to update the purpose of Shreveport Green to social welfare.

Mr. Hopkins commented that Shreveport Green is going to be helping with the community gardens, which was discussed during last week's Natural Resource Committee. Mr. Johnson confirmed that they will assist with the Parish community gardens.

Mr. Chavez's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Johnson informed the committee that Southern University at Shreveport is on the agenda for the next meeting.

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *to appropriate \$6,750 to St. Luke's Episcopal Mobile Medical*. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Chavez**, seconded by Mr. Johnson, *to postpone SuperMen for Christ to the summer*.

Mr. Burrell commented that this social welfare purposed organization to be postponed raises concern. Mr. Johnson states that postponement does not deny funding. He explained that they will review again at a later time.

Substitute motion by Mr. Burrell, seconded by Mr. Johnson, *to appropriate \$5,000 to SuperMen for Christ and re-evaluate the other \$5,000 based upon the return response from the organization*.

Mr. Burrell's Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Johnson requested a new total from Ms. Barnett. Ms. Barnett brought to the committee's attention that the item, Family Resources of Education and Empowerment Inc., was missed.

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Johnson, *to delay the Family Resources of Education and Empowerment Inc. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Ms. Barnett revealed they have delayed a total of \$443,000, which includes the education and economic development programs. She added that a total of \$488,000 of the fully and partially postponed NGOs. She stated the total of NGOs already paid or agreed to pay is \$539,750.

Mr. Johnson stated he has calculated a different total of \$499,750 Ms. Barnett mentioned that she is going to correspond her spreadsheet to match Mr. Johnson's spreadsheet.

Mr. Johnson was concerned whether they have funds in the account worth either total amounts for fully and partially funded appropriations or will funds need to be transferred to cover their total. Ms. Hayley confirmed they are within the fund amount and do not need to transfer funds at this time.

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *to send a letter to the partially funded, funded but have not received funds, and postponed NGOs to base their responses on whether to appropriate funding*.

Friendly amendment by Mr. Burrell, *to require a letter of urgent need for funding and to outline priority spending or existing spending and a time project will commence*. Mr. Johnson accepted this amendment.

Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Johnson, Hopkins, Burrell, Chavez and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Cawthorne (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Ms. Bryant validated that the NGOs have to submit a report on June 30rd and wanted to know whether to send out the letter with a reminder for status updates sooner. Mr. Johnson agreed to have the letters sent out sooner and thanked Ms. Bryant.

Mr. Burrell thanked the committee for being patient with him in the meeting. Mr. Johnson understandably concurred.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Emson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Commission Clerk
