

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
QUADRENNIAL CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THE 11th DAY OF AUGUST, 2020

The Caddo Parish Charter Review Committee met, on the above date, at 9:00 a.m., AT Blanchard Walker Conference Room, Regions Tower, 333 Texas Street, Suite 700, Shreveport with Mr. Tom Arceneaux, Chairperson, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Tom Arceneaux, Ken Krefft, Randall Liles, Commission President Mario Chavez, Parish Administrator Dr. Woody Wilson, and Attorney Donna Frazier (7). ABSENT: Major Rolland Coleman, RJ Johnson, and Calvin Lester (3).

Also, in attendance was Commission Clerk Jeff Everson.

Mr. Arceneaux said that he prayed over the Committee today, and would skip over the Pledge of Allegiance due to not having an American flag present.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Jimmy Couvillion sent the following statements:

July 25, 2020 Consider adding parish authority to set salaries of J P's and Constables. See state statute attached RS 13: 5802- Salary for constables and justices of the peace The police jury in all parishes having a population of over five thousand shall fix the pay or constables and justices of the peace and said salary shall be not less than thirty dollars per month.

August 5, 2020 Please in your review of Section 3-01 (C) discuss removal of domicile requirements. This requirement by ordinance can be amended. Purpose is to give the electors a better and wider choice of candidates. See Title 18 Sections 4S1 and 451.1 below. In a historical agenda review, I find few votes by a commissioner that affect a single district. Section 3-10 (A) The passage of actions for or against a Commission Clerk should be the same as the Administrator and require a 2/3 vote instead of simple majority.

Commissioner Ken Epperson sent in the following comment:

August 6, 2020 All: Please submit to Sec. 3-07- Commission Meetings Rules In the event of a natural, act of God, accidental, Health Pandemic, or any other adverse situation that could jeopardize the, safety, health, life and well being of our citizens, employees and commissioners to meet or congregate in person. The Commission then shall meet via teleconference, video conference, or any technical digital means to conduct all Caddo Parish Commission business until it is declared to be safe for all to return to in person meetings by the commissioners. Please forward to all concerned for the August 11th meeting. Thanks, Ken Epperson, Sr.

**OLD BUSINESS**

The Committee moved onto the Old Business, *discussion and response to previous public comments.*

Mr. Arceneaux talked about the composition of the Charter Review Committee. He said that there was clarification on whether or not the Parish Administrator and the Parish Attorney were voting members. He said that the Mr. RJ Johnson pointed out that the Charter says who the committee members are, but does not say that the Parish President, Parish Attorney, and Parish Administrators are ex-officios. He further explained that the Committee has an understanding on who the voting members are and who are on the committee in connection with the formation of the Committee. Mr. Arceneaux also pointed out that the Charter says that this Committee is to submit a report to the full body, and the Commission can make their amendments to the Charter. Mr. Arceneaux said that the information that Mr. Couvillion is suggesting is already mentioned in the Charter.

Attorney Frazier pointed out that the last Charter Review Committee in 2016 decided that the Parish President, Parish Administrator, and Parish Attorney were ex-officios, so they did not vote.

It was **moved by Mr. Krefft**, seconded by Dr. Wilson, *that an amendment to Section 9-11 of the Charter not be recommended to the full Commission. Motion carried by acclamation.*

Mr. Arceneaux then talked about the next suggestion in regards to the Louisiana Public Bid Law establish contract limit which is adjusted each year per the consumer price index. He mentioned that the Parish Attorney advised him that the Parish does not have the authority to be less stringent than public bid law, but if it chose to be more stringent, it could. Mr. Arceneaux does not feel that this should be a part of the Charter, but rather the Commission deal with this issue as a matter of legislation.

It was **moved by Dr. Wilson**, seconded by Mr. Krefft, *that an amendment regarding Louisiana Public Bid Law not be recommended to the full Commission. Motion carried by acclamation.*

The Clerk of the Commission then advised the Committee that the next suggestion is that the Parish reserves be maintained at a rate equal to 1.32 annual expenses. Mr. Arceneaux explained that the Constitution already requires that the budget be balanced.

It was **moved by Mr. Krefft**, seconded by Mr. Liles, *that a provision to establish any level Parish reserves in the Charter not be submitted to the full Commission.* Motion carried by acclamation.

The Clerk of the Commission then stated the next suggestion regarding LA R.S 18:1299, that propositions, question beyond constitutional and state statute requirements, can be placed on a ballot if such proposition or question is adopted in a Home Rule Charter. Mr. Arceneaux said that there are certain items that have to be placed on the ballot, such as taxes, etc. His interpretation of the suggestion is the local legislative bodies are not permitted to submit something for a vote of the people before that they are permitted to vote on. Mr. Arceneaux believes that this is a bad policy and could possibly be an expensive one. He said that people are elected for a reason and “we ought not to permit them not to do their job”.

It was **moved by Dr. Wilson**, seconded by Mr. Liles, *that this recommendation not be submitted to the full Commission.* Motion carried by acclamation.

The Clerk of the Commission then stated that the next suggestion also came from Mr. Couvillion, at some point soon the Parish is going to need to spend public funds to inform voters on financial matters. Dr. Wilson pointed that the Parish can provide facts to the citizens, but cannot tell them how to vote. Mr. Arceneaux mentioned that the Parish is already doing what the Parish needs to do to inform citizens.

It was **moved by Attorney Frazier**, seconded by Mr. Liles, *that this recommendation not be forwarded to the full Commission.* Motion carried by acclamation.

The Clerk of the Commission then stated that the next suggestion is in regards to the Caddo Parish Historical Code Committee Districts. Mr. Arceneaux said that the Charter ought not to be cluttered. Dr. Wilson pointed out that this would be redundant.

It was **moved by Mr. Krefft**, seconded by Mr. Liles, *that this recommendation not be forwarded to the full Commission.* Motion carried by acclamation.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Arceneaux thanked everyone for attending the meeting and stated that the Committee will be discussing the following items:

- Response to today's public comments
- Set next meeting date

Mr. Arceneaux moved onto the first New Business item, *response to today's public comments*. He said that he would like to peruse the comments further.

Attorney Frazier pointed out that the domicile suggestion cannot be taken out per state statute.

It was **moved by Attorney Frazier**, seconded by Dr. Wilson, *that the suggestion regarding the removal of the domicile requirement not be forward to the full Commission.* Motion carried by acclamation.

Attorney Frazier also talked about the issue in regards to the Constables and JOPs supplemental pay. She explained that there is a state statute that deals with this. She also said that the Parish already set the amount.

It was **moved by Mr. Krefft**, seconded by Mr. Liles, *that the recommendation regarding the Parish having the authority to set the salaries of the Constables and JOPs not be forwarded to the full Commission.* Motion carried by acclamation.

Mr. Arceneaux moved onto the next suggestion regarding Mr. Epperson's comments. Attorney Frazier pointed out that the Commission cannot contravene state laws. She suggested that if this is forwarded to the full body it should be amended to read, “the Commission would meet via teleconference video conference or any technical digital means to the extent allowed by law to conduct all Caddo Parish Commission business until it is declared safe to return to in-person meetings by a majority of the Commissioners”.

Mr. Arceneaux pointed out that Mr. Epperson is on the Commission, and can take this matter up while reviewing the recommendations from this Committee. He also said that he would like to have actual language to vote on.

It was **moved by Dr. Wilson**, seconded by Mr. Krefft, *that the Parish Attorney draft Charter amendment language regarding the suggestion made by Mr. Epperson that the Commission would meet via teleconference video conference or any technical digital means to the extent allowed by law to conduct all Caddo Parish Commission business until it is declared safe to return to in-person meetings by a majority of the Commissioners* to be voted on at the Charter Review Committee's next meeting. Motion carried by acclamation.

The Committee then moved onto the next New Business item, *set next meeting date.*

Mr. Arceneaux said that he would like the Committee members to peruse the Charter and submit to the Clerk of the Commission their suggestions a week from today's meeting, August 18, 2020.

Mr. Krefft would like the Fleet Services Department be realigned with Public Works. He said that this was on the last ballot, and it did not pass. Mr. Arceneaux would like to consider this at the next Charter Review Committee.

Mr. Arceneaux would like to schedule the next Committee meeting for August 25 at 9:00 a.m. at the Government Plaza Chambers. This meeting will be the conclusion of the Charter Review Committee for this year.

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

Michelle Nations  
Assistant Commission Clerk