

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
NGO APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 15TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2022

The Caddo Parish NGO Appropriations Committee met in legal session on the above date, at 12:00 p.m., in the Government Plaza 1st Floor Conference Room, with Mr. Johnson, Chairman, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Johnson, and Lazarus (7). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts (1).

Mr. Hopkins gave the invocation, and Mr. Epperson led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Discuss Appropriation Process and Funding for NGOs Regarding the 2023 Budget Cycle*

Mr. Johnson asked Mrs. Hayley Barnett, Finance Director, what the forecasted budget is for next year. Mrs. Barnett responded that revenues is forecasted of \$800,000 with \$165,000 of that being budgeted for summer employment. She recommended \$600,000 for NGOs. Mrs. Bryant explained that some American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars were used to fund the summer internship program but the Parish had budgeted from the Riverboat Fund for the traditional summer program. Mr. Johnson wanted to know if the summer program is the program where each Commissioner could recommend a student. Mrs. Bryant explained that ARPA dollars for the summer program has been exhausted unless Commissioners appropriate funding for next year's summer program. Mr. Johnson also wanted to know if Mrs. Barnett's forecasted \$600,000 includes the programs for Caddo Community Action Agency, Council on Aging and the Food Bank. Mrs. Barnett responded that the Food Bank will not be included in her forecasted budget of \$600,000.

Mr. Epperson requested a total on all of the requests. Mrs. Barnett acknowledged that she is working on that total. Mr. Chavez wanted to know how many employees could be hired on a budget of \$165,000. Mrs. Barnett responded around 46 employees. Mr. Johnson wanted to know the hourly salary for the summer employees. Mrs. Bryant explained that due to summer job competition the salary for high school students \$9 to \$10 per hour and the hourly salary for college students is a little more than that. Mrs. Bryant stated that the Parish hired less students because other jobs offered more.

Mr. Johnson stated the Committee is tasked with a \$605,000 budget. Mr. Lazarus pointed out that if the Committee goes over budget, there would not be funds left over for any requests or emergencies during the year. Mrs. Bryant stated that she has calculated over \$2.2 million from requests. Mrs. Barnett pointed out that the score sheets calculate the award amount for each application. Mrs. Barnett explained that the Committee scores each application that is input into a spreadsheet to calculate an award amount based on the applicant's request amount. Mrs. Barnett further explained that the Committee could adjust an award amount but it must be justified. Mr. Johnson stated that the Committee could potentially be over budget if the award is calculated based on an application's requested amount. Mrs. Barnett requested the Committee to allow Finance to follow the scoring process to let the formula do the work. Then, correspond with the Committee to make adjustments. Mr. Johnson wanted to know when Finance needs to publish the budget. Mrs. Barnett responded that Finance has to publish the budget by the end of the month. Mr. Johnson stated that the Committee would have their scores submitted to Finance and that the Committee would need to hold another meeting to review the award amount. Mrs. Barnett pointed out that scores are not a group score and each Committee member would have to complete a score.

Mr. Hopkins wanted clarification on whether the Food Bank and the Caddo council on Aging would be awarded from the \$600,000. Mr. Johnson responded that those two organizations will receive funding outside of the \$600,000.

Mr. Barnett clarified that the total requested amount from NGO applications is \$2,031,325. Mr. Johnson reviewed how to use the score sheet using Acadiana Legal Services. Mrs. Barnett stated that the summary sheet is based on the responses organizations were able to provide and that the questions on the score sheet are to help Commissioners through their thought process. Mrs. Barnett explained that the Commissioners must determine the score. She stated that the score is subjective.

Mr. Burrell pointed out that some information isn't provided in the summary sheet. Mrs. Barnett reiterated that if an answer is not in the summary then the organizations did not provide it. Mr. Burrell stated that Finance asked a question, but the organization did not answer it. Mrs. Barnett stated that the applications did not change and that organizations were not required to answer the questions listed on the score sheet. She explained that organizations were asked to define their capacity and that the Commissioners are to make an educated score based on the information provided by the organizations. Mrs. Jalisa Thomas, Grant & Project Coordinator, stated that organizations had to attend a Zoom meeting where she explained organization capacity and what the Parish expects. Mrs. Barnett stated that Finance reviewed the application process with organizations several times. Mrs. Stephanie Rico, Assistant Finance Director, explained that organizations provided a narrative of their organization and Finance summarized information from that narrative.

Mr. Chavez pointed out that the Parish offers annual expungements. Mrs. Bryant explained that the Parish hosts an expungement summit to give information on how to get something expunged, whereas Acadiana Legal Aid actually helps with expungement. Mr. Johnson wanted to know if the Acadiana Legal Services was awarded. Mrs. Barnett responded that the organization was awarded last year, but the funds were not used. Mrs. Rico explained that Acadiana Legal Services plans to use the 2023 awarded funds to market their program and provide the service they are proposing. Mrs. Barnett confirmed that a portion of the awarded funds will be allocated towards a salary for the program. Mr. Burrell recalled that the Parish does not fund salaries except for consulting services. Mrs. Bryant clarified that the Parish allows an allocation of employee expenses towards to the program, but an employee's full salary. Mr. Johnson wanted to know whether the service district is statewide or parish wide. Mrs. Barnett responded that she was unable to clarify that with Acadiana Legal Services' prior to the meeting, but their narrative states that their program serves Caddo Parish.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that Irma Rogers from the Martin Luther King Community Development Center contacted him about their submitted application, but Mr. Johnson did not see it included with the packet. The Committee and Finance reviewed entities whose applications were submitted, but were not included with the other score sheets. Mrs. Barnett explained that this is the first time the system is being used. Mrs. Barnett stated that some applications were hung up in the system and that their score sheet will be provided to the Committee after the meeting.

Mr. Johnson called the next Appropriations Committee meeting on Monday, September 26, 2022 at 10:00 am. The Committee agreed to return their score sheets by Monday.

Mr. Chavez requested a list of programs that were awarded last year.

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *to pull Caddo Council on Aging, NWLA Food Bank, and Christian Services from the process and fund their request outside of the NGO budget.* Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Johnson, and Lazarus (7). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Gage-Watts (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

The Committee discussed how to review applications that could have slipped through the cracks.

Mr. Jackson pointed out that the \$700,000 request from Southern University Law Center may be premature. He explained that funding may not be needed in 2023.

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *to pull Southern University Law Center's \$700,000 request.* Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Johnson, and Lazarus (7). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Gage-Watts (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Committee, so the meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.



Linda J. Montgomery
Administrative Specialist I