MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
VETERAN'S AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 21st DAY OF MARCH, 2023

The Caddo Parish Veterans Affairs Committee met in legal session on the above date, at 10:00 a.m., in the Government Plaza Chambers, with Mr. Epperson, Chairman, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, and Lazarus (5). ABSENT: Commissioners Chavez, and Jones (2).

The invocation was given by Dr. Wilson, and Mr. Cothran led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

NEW BUSINESS

- Presentation from US Navy Rear Admiral Dion D. English

Read Admiral (RADM) English discussed the purpose of Navy Week and the Navy's activities throughout the nation, and introduced the first female in history to be a Navy Chief of Boat on a submarine, the Navy staff and members of the USS Louisiana in attendance. RADM English reviewed the Navy's purpose to protect freedom of the seas, stabilize global economy, global competition and deterrence, national defense, partnerships and allies of the Navy, and the challenges of the Navy to conduct its mission. RADM English discussed the diversity of talent and recruitment in the Navy.

At Mr. Epperson's request, the Navy's staff in attendance stood and introduced themselves.

- Question and Answers Related to The Navy Rear Admiral English's Visit

Question from Francine Brown regarding citizens participation in strategic planning. RADM English explained that the Office of Small Business announce contracts and the military hosts industry days to promote outreach.

Question from Krystle Beauchamp regarding climate change and how it impacts the Navy. RADM English explained that the Navy seeks alternative means to sustain water supply to certain areas and discussed looking into clean energy sources that would minimize emissions.

A citizen complimented the Navy for the work that they do.

Question from Dr. Wilson regarding deployments and participating in NATO. RADM English explained the process of global force management related to allocating coverage in different areas of the globe. RADM English discussed the strength of the NATO organization and compared the North Atlantic organization to the lack of a NATO-like organization in the Indo Pacific.

A citizen enquired about the challenges that sailors face. RADM English explained how life inside the military is not much different from life outside of the military, such as food insecurities and mental health. RADM English discussed the support and resources provided to military individuals so that military individuals are focused on their job while on the job.

Question from Mr. Cothran regarding RADM English's military career and what a day in the life of Chief of the Boat (COB) is like. RADM English reviewed his career story from recruitment to education and to continued entry into positions within the military. COB Angela Koogler explained how life on the off crew would include preparing and training sailors to return to sea, and how going back to sea would isolate communications for periods of time. COB Koogler discussed dealing with personnel problems and compared a day in her life as being a parent.

Question from Mr. Atkins regarding the complexity and sophistication of the Navy supply chain. RADM English discussed using partner nations to locate resources, which may contradict climate change concerns, and the need to domesticate microelectronics. RADM explained challenges of the supply chain, such as COVID and people's attitudes towards democracy.

Question from Mr. Burrell regarding provocation of foreign ships on the seas and how it is negotiated, and the recent controversy of sexual harassment and assaults in the military. RADM English explained the international rules for navigation and the challenges faced on the seas. RADM English discussed mutual agreements with allied countries. RADM English discussed how harassment and assault are taken seriously and there is zero tolerance attitude put into leadership.

Question from Mr. Epperson regarding the marketing for next generation of submarine designers, and about military individual's protesting a covid vaccine. RADM English discussed the people who spend more time playing video games have an IQ for simulation-type technology is higher so the advertisements cast a wide net. RADM English confirmed that Rear Admiral rank is equivalent to a U.S.

Army Brigadier General one stop. RADM English explained that individuals were discharged without taking a COVID vaccine shot, but the courts ruled that the Navy could not do so. Now, the Navy allows anyone who was discharged to return to the military.

- Presentation of The Caddo Parish Navy Week Proclamation

At this time, the Committee presented the Navy Week Proclamation, a key to the Parish and a gift from Mr. Epperson to RADM English.

- Closing Remarks from Administration and Commissioners

Mr. Epperson recognized the military individuals in attendance.

There was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the meeting was adjourned at 11:12 a.m.