

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF  
THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION  
HELD ON THE 8th DAY OF JUNE, 2023

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Regular Session, on the above date, at 3:40 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mr. Burrell, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, Cothran, and Young (12). ABSENT: None (0).

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

**AGENDA ADDITIONS**

It was **moved by Mr. Chavez**, seconded by Mr. Gage-Watts, *to expand the agenda and add the following items:*

- *Special Potential Agenda Addition: Adopt Special Resolution Recognizing Men's Mental Health Awareness Month*
- *Special Potential Agenda Addition: Resolution 27 Of 2023, a resolution urging Governor John Bel Edwards' Administration, Division of Administration, to include, as a basis of award for contracts on the Northwest Louisiana State Building Project, the utilization of local and minority businesses, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Special Potential Agenda Addition: Special Resolution Recognizing World Sickle Cell Awareness Day*

The Chair opened the floor for anyone to speak in favor or opposition to the agenda addition. There being no one to speak in favor or against the agenda addition, the Chair closed the public hearing.

Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, Cothran, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Public comment by Theron Jackson, Susan Caldwell, Josephine Davis Wade, Woody Myers, and Maxine Davis in support of the solar hub Ordinance No. 6317 of 2023.

**ADOPT REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Jones, that Regular Session Minutes May 3, 2023 be adopted. Motion carried.

**SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS**

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *to englobo and adopt the following resolutions:*

- *Special Resolution for African American Music Month*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition for Chris Giordano*
- *Special Resolution for MLK CDC*
- *Special Resolution for Let the Good Times Roll Festival*
- *Special Resolution for Juneteenth*
- *Special Resolution for Terrence Trammell*
- *Agenda Addition: Special Resolution Recognizing Men's Mental Health Awareness Month*
- *Agenda Addition: Special Resolution Recognizing World Sickle Cell Awareness Day*

Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, Cothran, and Young (10). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Hopkins, Jackson (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Young, *that Special Resolution for Pride Month* be adopted. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Cothran, Epperson, Jackson, Jones, and Young (8). NAYS: Hopkins, Lazarus (2). ABSENT: Gage-Watts, Johnson (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

**COMMUNIQUES AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Update from SWEPCO

Mr. Epperson introduced the Resilient Technology Park in West Shreveport-Caddo area. Mr. Mike Corbin, AEP/SWEPCO, reported that the anticipated move in date to the park is May 2024 and operation date is late 2024/early 2025. Mr. Corbin explained that the construction is at 60% completion. He explained that a roadway project is out for bid with funds coming from City of Shreveport. Mr. Corbin indicated that the site was chosen because there was not a remote transmission site in the northwest Louisiana region. He indicated that the NLEP is marketing the park for interest and clients to the park and invited the Commission to tour the facility for a hard-hat tour in the fall 2023. Answering Epperson, Mr. Corbin explained that there are 20-25 highly-skilled jobs in the six-figure range. Answering Mr. Burrell, Mr. Corbin explained job growth in and out of the area and a transfer or hiring from within SWEPCO hiring.

- Update from Cedric Floyd, Demographer

Dr. Wilson discussed phase two of the redistricting work, which Mr. Cedric Floyd, President Data Center, indicated the development of a consolidation plan that would be consistent with the adopted redistricting plan. Mr. Floyd explained that an ordinance would need to be adopted by the state deadline on July 12 and that he would return to the Commission with an ordinance by June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Floyd discussed the Parish's responsibility of establishing voter precincts which would be approved by the Clerk of Court and the Registrar of Voters. The Clerk advised that on the caddo.org website there is a digital tool that would reflect the current district maps and the new district map using a toggle.

- Attorney Frazier addressed Mr. Epperson's request to locating a filed suit of the parish lines when the casinos were established.

- Mr. Johnson discussed citizens receiving voter registration cards with incorrect information regarding state-level district lines and suggested that the ROV office corrects the confusion.

- Epperson announced the NWLA Veterans Cemetery Director Karen Carlton and the new Administrative Coordinator Crystal Baxter. Mr. Epperson requested that the new members be welcomed by calling the cemetery at 318-925-0612. Mr. Epperson announced a Flag Retirement Ceremony on June 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM on American Legion Post 14 on Lakeshore Drive. Mr. Epperson announced the monthly meeting of the Pines Road Area Business Association at 6:00 pm at the Gracepoint Church of the Nazarene 6825 Pines Road regarding their annual fan drive and requested for any fan donations to call 318-510-0166. Mr. Epperson announced the Vet Celebration Meeting will be held on June 21<sup>st</sup> at LA State Fairgrounds in the Round Up Room. Mr. Epperson presented an award to Mr. Kelvin Samuels, Assistant Director Animal Services, on behalf of the Veterans Award Ceremony.

- Mr. Cothran announced the ribbon cutting of the new Starbucks on Mansfield Road.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

- Mr. Burrell discussed flooding on Hearne Avenue and discussed drafting a resolution to send to the State. Mr. Burrell requested that the Administration follow up on the responsibility of Hearne Avenue/State Highway 71, which Dr. Wilson acknowledged.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCES**

The President of the Commission opened the public hearing for the following ordinances:

- *Ordinance No. 6317 Of 2023, an ordinance amending the budget of estimated revenues and expenditures to appropriate funds for a Caddo Community Lighthouse Pilot Project and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6329 Of 2023, an ordinance amending the budget of estimated revenues and expenditures for the Capital Outlay and the Oil and Gas Fund in the amount of \$140,000 to provide an appropriation for the rehabilitation of the Village of Hosston's water stand pipe, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6331 Of 2023, an ordinance to authorize the purchase of property located at 4862 Dixie Garden Loop Rd, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

There being no one to speak in favor or against these ordinances, the President closed the public hearing on ordinances.

**ORDINANCES (for final passage)**

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *to amend Ordinance No. 6317 of*

2023 that the ARP Funding for Green Infrastructure in the amount of \$200,000 and for True Fund in the amount of \$50,000 be appropriated to the Lighthouse Project.

**Substitute motion by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *that Ordinance No. 6317 of 2023 be delayed.*

Mr. Hopkins explained that he would like to delay for two weeks to review more information. Mr. Johnson indicated that the Lighthouse Project received matching funds per the American Rescue Plan Committee request.

Mr. Hopkins withdrew his motion.

**Amendment by Mr. Young** to include the water provision from the American Rescue Plan Committee. Mr. Johnson accepted the amendment.

Mr. Jackson discussed consistency and how the Commission must be straightforward with its decisions. Mr. Atkins discussed the fiscal return of the project and the poor allocation of resources.

**Call for the Question by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mr. Jackson. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Hopkins, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, (8). NAYS: Chavez, Gage-Watts, Jackson, and Young (4). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Young discussed Caddo Parish investment into its community and the failure of infrastructure of Shreveport. Mr. Cothran discussed the match that the Lighthouse Project received. Mr. Jones discussed the need of the Commission to be straightforward. Mrs. Gage-Watts discussed the need for back up utilities in the event of a crises.

**Call for the Question by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Young.

Mr. Chavez discussed the need to gather more information. Mr. Burrell discussed the ability to decide.

Call for the Question motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, and Young (10). NAYS: Hopkins, Jackson (2). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Johnson's motion carried as amended, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Johnson, Jackson Jones, and Young (8). NAYS: Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Lazarus (4). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *that Ordinance No. 6329 Of 2023, an ordinance amending the budget of estimated revenues and expenditures for the Capital Outlay and the Oil and Gas Fund in the amount of \$140,000 to provide an appropriation for the rehabilitation of the Village of Hosston's water stand pipe, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto be adopted.*

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Gage-Watts, *to englobo and adopt the following ordinances:*

- *Ordinance No. 6329 Of 2023, an ordinance amending the budget of estimated revenues and expenditures for the Capital Outlay and the Oil and Gas Fund in the amount of \$140,000 to provide an appropriation for the rehabilitation of the Village of Hosston's water stand pipe, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6331 Of 2023, an ordinance to authorize the purchase of property located at 4862 Dixie Garden Loop Rd, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, Cothran, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

#### **ORDINANCES (for introduction by title)**

- *Ordinance No. 6332 Of 2023, an ordinance setting the parish millage for the purpose of paying principal and interest, due in 2023 on outstanding parish bond issues and to instruct the Assessor to include said millage on the tax roll of the Parish of Caddo for the year 2023, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6333 Of 2023, an ordinance to adopt the values fixed, or to be fixed by the Louisiana Tax Commission on all assessments for railways and other public*

*service corporations, and to instruct the Assessor to extend such assessments and values on the tax roll of the Parish of Caddo for the year 2023, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

- *Ordinance No. 6334 Of 2023, an ordinance to set the general purpose and special purpose millages providing for millage rate adjustments, as allowed by article VII, section 23 of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974 and LA R.S. 47:1705 (b), levying and imposing taxes and assessments for 2023 on all the property subject to taxation in the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6335 Of 2023, Ordinance to set the 2023 assessment for property classified as timberlands at eight cents (\$.08) per acre. There is an annual tax of eight cents per acre on each acre of timberland in the State of Louisiana to be paid by the owners known as the forest protection tax. This tax is in addition to the assessment of timberland at its use value. The Commission must adopt an ordinance each year to set the forest protection tax at eight cents per acre. The revenue from this tax is remitted to the Louisiana Forestry Commission.*

### **WORK SESSION MINUTES**

It was **moved by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that Work Session Minutes from June 5, 2023 be ratified.* Motion carried.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that Resolution No. 26 Of 2023, a resolution to authorize the Parish Administrator to seek proposals for an automated traffic enforcement system to be operated on roads in the unincorporated areas of the parish, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be adopted.

Mr. Jackson inquired whether the approved RFP would receive final consideration from the Commission. Dr. Wilson explained that an RFP does not receive a final approval from the Commission, because the Administration does not usually return any RFP processes to the Commission. Answering Mr. Jackson about the time frame on an RFP, the Administration explained that once the Commission complete the legislative process on an ordinance then the Administration would try to implement the legislation as quickly as they could. Mr. Jackson indicated that the City of Shreveport's appeal process for their traffic enforcement automated system was flawed and that the Caddo Parish citizens could take their frustrations out on the Commission at the ballot box. Mr. Jackson indicated that the resolution only discussed the RFP and that there needs to be clarity on what would happen after the RFP process. The Administration explained that the RFP would choose the vendor, and not the policies or fees.

Mr. Johnson invited Mr. Russell Sarpy, from Emergent Enforcement Solutions, to discuss the automated traffic enforcement system. Mr. Sarpy discussed two types of speed radar cameras, a case study of excessive speeding in Bethany, LA, the results of a traffic study in one Caddo Parish location, and the public safety benefit of traffic enforcement on parish roads. Mr. Sarpy explained that the Commission would dictate to Emergent Enforcement Solutions how the service would be set and that there were numerous municipalities that use the traffic enforcement system. Mr. Atkins indicated that speed limit enforcement is law enforcement. Answering Mr. Young, Mr. Sarpy explained the automation of the cameras and how the system is a pathway into identifying locations that should require other advanced resources to help law enforcement. Mrs. Bryant indicated that the Parish may need to set up a special revenue fund for the collected fees of the automated traffic enforcement system. The Administration, Mr. Young, Attorney Frazier addressed the RFP process, and that the Commission to determine a fee schedule that would cover the cost of the program.

**Call for the Question by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mr. Atkins. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, and Young (9). NAYS: Chavez, Hopkins, Jackson (3). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Johnson's motion failed, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jackson, Johnson, Jones (6). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Atkins, Chavez, Cothran, Hopkins Lazarus, and Young (6). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that Resolution 27 Of 2023, a resolution urging Governor John Bel Edwards' Administration, Division of Administration, to include, as a basis of award for contracts on the Northwest Louisiana State Building Project, the utilization of local and minority businesses, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be adopted.

Mr. Jackson discussed supporting local minority business to grow the Caddo Parish economy. Mr. Atkins indicated that the resolution includes local minority businesses and local contractors. Mr. Lazarus indicated that the resolution body included that the City of Shreveport and Caddo Parish receiving Cares Act.

**Amendment by Mr. Jackson** to strike the language at the fourth whereas of Resolution 27 of 2023.

Motion carried as amended, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

### **NEW BUSINESS**

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *to accept the Caddo Citizen Shreveport Sun for the official journal for the calendar year July 1 2023 to June 30, 2024.*

**Substitute motion by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mr. Young, *to confirm the Shreveport Times for the official journal for the calendar year July 1 2023 to June 30, 2024.*

Mr. Chavez inquired about the cost of the official journal and suggested selecting both of the publications, which Attorney Frazier addressed the Commission could only select one official journal. Mr. Chavez discussed using new technology to communicate with the times. The Clerk addressed the budget of the official journal and announced that the Louisiana Police Jury Association is reviewing requirements of the official journal publication on digital and print media. The Clerk addressed that the Caddo Citizen share publishing and distribution with other small local papers.

Substitute motion failed, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Lazarus, and Young (3). NAYS: Burrell, Chavez, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Jones (9). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Jackson requested that the Caddo Citizen publicize the Shreveport Parks and Rec and other Parish highlights in the official journal.


Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Chavez, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, and Young (11). NAYS: Atkins (1). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *to Adopt the Recommendations of The Property Standards Hearing Board.* Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, and Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

### **COMMUNIQUE AND REPORTS**

- Mr. Epperson discussed Facilities and Maintenance's help with the Memorial Program.
- Mr. Jackson announced Juneteenth week of events and a joint press conference on Monday, June 12, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. in Government Plaza to recognize and celebrate Juneteenth.
- Mr. Burrell announced that the State Governor declared July 3<sup>rd</sup> a holiday. Mr. Burrell discussed the passenger rail press conference.
- Mrs. Gage-Watts announced June 19<sup>th</sup> as World Sickle Cell Awareness Day and requested that the Courthouse be lit red to support it.

There was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the meeting was adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

  
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Linda J. Montgomery  
Administrative Specialist I

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Roy Burrell  
President