

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION  
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION  
HELD ON THE 22nd DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2024

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Regular Session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mr. John Paul Young, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (12). ABSENT: None (0).

The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were given during the previous committee meetings, so the Commission moved onto Agenda Additions.

**AGENDA ADDITIONS**

It was **moved by Mr. J. Young**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *to expand the agenda and add the following items under New Business:*

- *Authorize Commissioner travel to Baton Rouge*
- *Appoint Roy Morris to the Children & Youth Planning Board*

Mr. J. Young explained that this travel would allow the Commissioners to meet with the Governor and discuss issues that are affecting Caddo Parish. Mrs. Gage-Watts said that this appointment would complete the Parish's appointments to the Children & Youth Planning Board.

The President opened up the floor for anyone to speak in favor or against adding these items to the agenda. There being no one to speak in favor or against the agenda additions, the President closed the public hearing.

At this time, Mr. J. Young's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (11). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Burrell (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Nancy Treadwell came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I'm a veterinarian who works in Shreveport, and the whole region actually. I'm mobile, so I know a lot about Caddo Parish. I wanted to start off by thank you again for letting me speak. I hope to be here often, and I've been watching online as well. I am encouraged and hope that maybe we can get off on a better foot because I had a tough time last time after I spoke with y'all. I don't want it to be that way. I want to be part of the progress of this area—it's my home. The thing I wanted to bring up today mostly was yesterday—watching, I'm concerned that some people don't consider illegal immigration a crisis in our country and our state and locally. I looked up some statistics and got crazy busy today, so I don't have them with me, but it's impacting our community already and our state. I grew up in South Texas. My friends who still live there—it is a huge impact for people's safety. It's impacting our education and health systems. If we honestly don't consider illegal immigration to be a huge problem right now locally, in our state, and in our nation, then I encourage you to rethink that. I promise you this, for me, it is not a political thing—I'm no political hack. I care about my community; I care about people's health and well-being. We have to consider this serious. How we make statements or beliefs—I don't even really know why we were discussing if this Commission has any impact on whether the state decides to use the National Guard in Texas—I don't know. What concerned me about what I heard yesterday was just the same level of concern that I have for illegal immigration. Another thing would be the voting is sacrosanct in the United States of American, and everyone who has a legal vote to cast, who wants to, should be able to. That include the incarcerated who have not been convicted. I do not know the laws about that. Except I know if you have not been convicted of certain crimes, you have the right to vote, and that is sacrosanct. We must make that available. What I don't want to see is something that's more like a 'get out and vote' within prisons. Because we know there are such things as ballot harvesting. We know that, especially mail-in ballots—that became very apparent in our last election—that those are not always properly processed. So, if you're not a legal voter, your vote should not be counted. When we have schools that we could be educating our young people about voting and the benefits of it and the priority and the responsibility of it. Or trade schools or places where we have people actively trying to help our community compared to people who have or could have committed a crime—I would hope we put our efforts into educating others.

**VISITORS**

- Robert Jump  
Homeland Security

Mr. J. Young said that Mr. Jump will come to a later meeting. The Commission then moved onto the next agenda item.

- Ken Kreft  
Recitation of Dr. Martin Luther King's Speech, *I Have a Dream*

Mr. Burrell said that Mr. Kreft also recites the Gettysburg Address. He appreciates and amazed at Mr. Kreft's recitation of the lengthy, yet important, speeches by memory alone.

Mr. Kreft thanked Mr. Burrell. He said that it is his bucket list to recite the Constitution at the Washington Monument, then the Declaration of Independence at the Jefferson Memorial, then Gettysburg Address at the Lincoln Memorial, and finishing with Dr. King's *I Have a Dream*. He would like to bring some unity throughout the nation.

Ms. Blake thanked Mr. Kreft for coming in today and reminding the Commission the importance of the community working for unity.

Mr. Cothran thanked Mr. Kreft for everything he does throughout the community. It is being noticed, he said.

Mr. Epperson also thanked Mr. Kreft for the recitation of Dr. King's speech.

### **ADOPT REGULAR SESSION MINUTES SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS**

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *that the following actions be taken:*

- *Adopt Regular Session Minutes from February 8, 2024*
- *Presentation of Special Resolution for Calvary Baptist*
- *Adopt Special Resolution proclaiming Black History Month*
- *Adopt Special Resolution Honoring Maxine Sarpy*
- *Adopt and present Special Resolution for Quinn Echols*

Mr. Echols thanked the Commission for honoring him today.

Mr. Burrell congratulated Mr. Echols, who has been his friend for many years. He thanked Mr. Echols for keeping the community informed over the many years.

Mr. Epperson also congratulated Mr. Echols. He thanked Mr. Echols for his support when he started his Grassroots Forum. He appreciates all of the continued support and keeping the community informed.

Mr. Giles agreed and thanked Mr. Echols for the many years of radio service.

- *Adopt Special resolution for Ronald Jefferson*

Mr. Jefferson thanked the Commission for honoring and recognizing him today. He said that he represented Shreveport wherever he went.

Mr. Burrell, Mr. Thomas, and Mr. Giles all congratulated Mr. Jefferson for all of his accomplishments in the entertainment industry.

- *Adopt Special Resolution for Jacqueline Scott and present at a later date*
- *Adopt and present Special Resolution for Lashonda Diouf*

Ms. Diouf thanked God for all of her accomplishments. Her motto is: "Someone needs me, so, therefore, I teach".

Mr. Burrell and Mrs. Gage-Watts congratulated Ms. Diouf for all of her hard work with the youth in the community.

- *Adopt Special Resolution for Steffon Jones and present at a later date*

At this time, Mrs. Gage-Watts' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

**RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION & APPRECIATION  
STATE DIVISION III CHAMPION CALVARY BAPTIST CAVALIERS**

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission continues to observe with a growing sense of awe and admiration the annual demonstrations of gridiron prowess exhibited by the football teams fielded by Calvary Baptist, as their achievements reflect great honor and pride upon Caddo Parish; and

WHEREAS, the Calvary Baptist Cavaliers have now earned the school's 4th State Division III Football Championship by defeating the St. Charles Catholic in the Caesar's Superdome in New Orleans on December 9; and

WHEREAS, St. Charles came into the game with as reigning champions for the last 2 years and a 20-game winning streak, but their success and talent were not enough to best the Cavaliers who clinched 15 points in the last 3 minutes of the game to maintain their perfect record in state championship games of 4-0; and

WHEREAS, with the win the Cavaliers expanded a legacy of football excellence that has made their name known statewide. The Cavaliers captured their 4th Division III title, their first since 2020; making this a season to remember for Coach Rodney Guin and his Cavaliers; and

WHEREAS, the hard work, sportsmanship, and perseverance displayed by the Calvary Baptist football team have brought pride and honor to our community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission this 4th day of January, 2024, that it does hereby express its heartiest congratulations to Coach Rodney Guin and the coaches and players of the 2023 DIVISION III STATE CHAMPION CALVARY BAPTIST CAVALIERS for their demonstrations of football excellence, and for the tremendous example they provide as representatives of their school, their City and their Parish.

**PROCLAMATION  
BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

WHEREAS, the month of February is intentionally observed as Black History Month, also referred to as African-American History Month in the United States and Canada, an effort that has the purpose of focusing attention upon a long-neglected and overlooked, but important and consequential segment of the historical record of the United States and more broadly, the Africa diaspora; and

WHEREAS, this celebration of the role and contributions of African American and Black citizens of the Parish, state, and country throughout its history is a fitting and beneficial process that serves to enlighten all citizens, and to strengthen the fibers of the national fabric; and

WHEREAS, the observance of Black History Month calls our attention to the continued need to battle racism and build a society that lives up to its democratic ideas as well as to celebrate the many achievements and contributions made by African Americans to our economic, cultural, spiritual, and political developments; and

WHEREAS, Black History Month grew out of the 1926 establishment of Negro History Week by Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of African American Life & History, and has blossomed into today's month-long observance, the theme of which is Black Health & Wellness; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission, meeting in legal and regular session this 8<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2024 that it does hereby proclaim February 2024 as:

**'BLACK HISTORY MONTH'**

in Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and urges all citizens to join with the Parish in recognition of this important month.

**SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION & RECOGNITION  
MAXINE SARPY**

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Caddo Parish Commission to give appropriate acknowledgement and recognition to individuals and organizations who have rendered invaluable service in its behalf to the citizens of Caddo Parish, especially during Black History Month, which is a time to celebrate and honor the contribution of African Americans to our history and culture; and

WHEREAS, Maxine Sarpy, a steadfast advocate for civil rights and social justice, has dedicated her life to promoting equality, equity, and inclusivity for all individuals regardless of race, gender, or background; and

WHEREAS, Maxine Sarpy has fearlessly confronted systemic injustices, tirelessly championing the rights of marginalized communities and striving to create a more just and equitable society; and

WHEREAS, Maxine Sarpy's unwavering commitment to civil rights activism has inspired countless individuals to stand up against discrimination, oppression, and inequality, igniting positive change in communities across the nation; and

WHEREAS, Maxine Sarpy's leadership and courage in the face of adversity have been instrumental in advancing the cause of civil rights, leaving an indelible mark on the fabric of our society and shaping the course of history; and

WHEREAS, Maxine Sarpy's lifelong dedication to advocating for the rights and dignity of all people serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for future generations, reminding us of the importance of perseverance, empathy, and solidarity in the fight for justice; and

WHEREAS, Maxine Sarpy's remarkable contributions to the civil rights movement have enriched our nation's cultural heritage and strengthened our collective resolve to build a more inclusive and equitable world for generations to come.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission hereby recognizes and honors Maxine Sarpy for her extraordinary achievements as a civil rights icon, trailblazer, and visionary leader.

#### **SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION & RECOGNITION QUINN ECHOLS**

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Caddo Parish Commission to give appropriate acknowledgement and recognition to individuals and organizations who have rendered invaluable service in its behalf to the citizens of Caddo Parish, especially during Black History Month, which is a time to celebrate and honor the contribution of African Americans to our history and culture; and

WHEREAS, Quinn Echols has served as a prominent figure in urban radio for over twenty-five years, captivating the hearts and minds of listeners in Shreveport/Bossier with his distinctive voice and magnetic personality; and

WHEREAS, as Program Director and afternoon drive personality at KDKS and KBTT, Quinn Echols has demonstrated unwavering dedication to entertaining, informing, and connecting with his audience, establishing himself as a pillar of the community; and

WHEREAS, Quinn Echols' journey in radio began at a remarkably young age, showcasing his innate talent and passion for broadcasting as the youngest radio personality on air in Dallas at the age of 19, while simultaneously pursuing his education at the University of Texas-Arlington; and

WHEREAS, Quinn Echols' professional endeavors have taken him to various cities across the United States, yet his profound connection to Shreveport remained steadfast, leading him to make significant contributions to the local media landscape; and

WHEREAS, Quinn Echols' impact extends beyond the airwaves, as he has played an integral role in bringing renowned celebrities and cultural events to Shreveport/Bossier, fostering community cohesion and enriching the cultural fabric of the region; and

WHEREAS, Quinn Echols' entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to community engagement have led him to establish nightclubs, restaurants, and a comedy club in downtown Shreveport, further solidifying his status as a visionary leader and advocate for local prosperity; and

WHEREAS, Quinn Echols' illustrious career has been recognized with numerous awards, including Radio Programmer of the Year, Radio Station of the Year, a Game Changer Award, and induction into the Shreveport Wall of Fame, underscoring his unparalleled contributions to the broadcasting industry' and

WHEREAS, Quinn Echols' proudest achievement lies in the success of his children, who have followed in his footsteps and are now pursuing their passions in the film and music industries, embodying his legacy of excellence and inspiring future generations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission does hereby recognize and honor Quinn Echols for outstanding achievements and enduring impact on the Shreveport/Bossier community, particularly during Black History Month, honoring his remarkable legacy as a trailblazer in urban radio and a champion of cultural enrichment and community empowerment.

#### **SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION & RECOGNITION RONALD JEFFERSON**

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Caddo Parish Commission to give appropriate acknowledgement and recognition to individuals and organizations who have rendered invaluable service in its behalf to the citizens of Caddo Parish, especially during Black History Month, which is a time to celebrate and honor the contribution of African Americans to our history and culture; and

WHEREAS, Ron "Slack" Jefferson, a native of Shreveport, LA, began his remarkable journey in the music industry at the tender age of six, under the mentorship of his accomplished father, Charles Ray Burton, and his beloved uncle, igniting a passion that would shape his life's work; and

WHEREAS, Ron "Slack" Jefferson's early immersion in music within the church cultivated not only his talent but also his unwavering faith, serving as the cornerstone of his illustrious career and propelling him to new heights of success; and

WHEREAS, the invaluable guidance and mentorship provided by Mr. Spencer and Mr. Cleveland White during his formative years further fueled Ron "Slack" Jefferson's love for music, inspiring him to pursue his dreams with determination and perseverance; and

WHEREAS, Ron "Slack" Jefferson's professional journey led him to play drums for renowned acts such as Archie Bell and the Drells, and later with multi-platinum group H-Town, showcasing his exceptional talent on global stages and television screens alike; and

WHEREAS, Jefferson's transition into music production in 1998 marked the beginning of a prolific career, during which he collaborated with a plethora of esteemed artists, including Big Hawk, Lil Flip, Scarface, and many others, earning him well-deserved recognition on the Billboard charts; and

WHEREAS, Jefferson's establishment of Slack Traxx Entertainment, LLC, in 1999 exemplifies his commitment to providing a platform for aspiring artists, bridging the gap between talent and opportunity with integrity and excellence; and

WHEREAS, Jefferson's dedication to his craft and his community is evident in his efforts to showcase the talent of his hometown of Shreveport, LA, through projects like the "Hood Representas" compilation, demonstrating his belief in the power of music to uplift and unite; and

WHEREAS, Jefferson's enduring legacy in the music industry, characterized by over two decades of experience, continues to inspire and uplift aspiring artists, leaving an indelible mark on the cultural landscape.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission hereby recognizes and honors RON "SLACK" JEFFERSON whose talent, dedication, and unwavering faith have enriched the world of music and inspired generations to pursue their dreams with passion and perseverance.

#### **SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF APPECIATION & RECOGNITION JACQUELINE SCOTT**

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Caddo Parish Commission to give appropriate acknowledgement and recognition to individuals and organizations who have rendered invaluable service in its behalf to the citizens of Caddo Parish, especially during Black History Month, which is a time to celebrate and honor the contributions of African Americans to om history and culture; and

WHEREAS, Attorney Jacqueline Scott has exemplified excellence, leadership, and advocacy in the legal profession, making significant contributions to the advancement of justice and equality; and

WHEREAS, Attorney Jacqueline Scott has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to fighting for the rights of marginalized communities, serving as a beacon of hope and inspiration for future generations; and

WHEREAS, Attorney Jacqueline Scott has consistently exhibited dedication, integrity, and compassion in her legal practice, championing causes that promote social justice and empower individuals to access their rights; and

WHEREAS, Attorney Jacqueline Scott's remarkable achievements and tireless efforts have not only enriched the legal profession but have also left an indelible mark on society, inspiring positive change and progress; and

WHEREAS, Attorney Jacqueline Scott retains her humility even with tremendous success as a lawyer, an entrepreneur and a media icon whose stylish command of social media, marketing and television have made her one of the most recognized faces in our community; and

WHEREAS, Scott's has been recognized with the NAACP Award of Recognition, the African American Woman Trailblazers Award, L.L. Brandon Role Model & History Maker Award, Shreveport

Bossier Black Lawyers Association's Appreciation Award, been inducted into the Southern University Law Center's Hall of Fame, and been named on of SB Magazine's top attorneys too many times to count; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper to honor Attorney Jacqueline Scott during Black History Month for her outstanding contributions, leadership, and dedication to advancing the principles of equality, justice, and civil rights.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission hereby recognizes and honors ATTORNEY JACQUELINE SCOTT for exemplary service, leadership, and advocacy, and extends its deepest appreciation for her invaluable contributions to the legal profession and society at large.

**SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION & RECOGNITION  
LASHONDA DIOUF**

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Caddo Parish Commission to give appropriate acknowledgment and recognition to individuals and organizations who have rendered invaluable service in its behalf to the citizens of Caddo Parish, especially during Black History Month, which is a time to celebrate and honor the contributions of African Americans to our history and culture; and

WHEREAS, on February 21st, LaShonda Diouf showcased her latest endeavor, Polished Vision, wherein she led a transformative visioning session aimed at empowering participants to manifest the divine purpose in their lives; and

WHEREAS, LaShonda Diouf, a native of Shreveport, Louisiana, has been an integral part of the community since 1969, demonstrating unwavering commitment and dedication to its betterment; and

WHEREAS, for the past 19 years, LaShonda Diouf has served with distinction within the Caddo Parish School Board, currently holding the esteemed position of Principal at Midway Professional Development Elementary School; and

WHEREAS, LaShonda Diouf's academic achievements include a Bachelor of Arts from Northeast University, a Masters of Education from the University of Phoenix, and an Education Specialist Degree from North Central University, reflecting her steadfast pursuit of knowledge and excellence; and

WHEREAS, in her personal life, LaShonda Diouf exemplifies love, devotion, and leadership as the proud mother of two daughters, Morgan King and Marie Diouf, and as the cherished spouse of Papa Diouf for 13 years; and

WHEREAS, beyond her professional and familial duties, LaShonda Diouf is the esteemed founder of the non-profit organization, #BecauseWeCare2020, which tirelessly serves families affected by the challenges of Covid-19, showcasing her profound compassion and selflessness; and

WHEREAS, Lashonda Diouf's pursuits extend beyond her professional and philanthropic endeavors, as she finds joy in reading, cherishing moments with her family and friends, and nurturing a deep and intimate relationship with God, demonstrating her commitment to spiritual growth and connection; and

WHEREAS, amidst her multifaceted accomplishments, Lashonda Diouf humbly aspires to be remembered most for her devotion to serving God first and foremost, embodying the highest virtues of faith, humility, and service.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission hereby recognizes and honors LaShonda Diouf for her exceptional leadership, dedication, and contributions to her community during Black History Month and beyond.

**SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION & RECOGNITION  
STEFFON D. JONES**

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Caddo Parish Commission to give appropriate acknowledgment and recognition to individuals and organizations who have rendered invaluable service in its behalf to the citizens of Caddo Parish, especially during Black History Month, which is a time to celebrate and honor the contributions of African Americans to our history and culture; and

WHEREAS, Steffon Jones has exemplified outstanding leadership and dedication to uplifting his community and served as a beacon of hope and inspiration through his various roles and endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Steffon Jones was appointed to the Caddo Parish Commission in 2021, where he tirelessly advocated for the interests and well-being of Caddo citizens, particularly those of District 6; and

WHEREAS, Steffon Jones, as the Senior Pastor at New Morning Glory Church, has provided spiritual guidance and support to his congregation, fostering unity and resilience in times of adversity; and

WHEREAS, Steffon Jones has demonstrated his commitment to community organizing, bringing people together to address pressing issues & create positive change through service on the board of esteemed organizations such as Kadash House of Hope and C.A.R.E., Inc., and as a member of Loving Little Ones, showcasing his passion for serving those in need and fostering community development; and

WHEREAS, Steffon Jones has volunteered for over 15 years with SPAR, dedicating his time and energy to enhancing recreational opportunities and facilities for youth and families in Shreveport; and

WHEREAS, Jones' professional career includes, serving as the Director of Diesel Driving Academy, the Director of Durham Transport Academy, and roles with Sportran and Caddo Parish Schools; and

WHEREAS, Steffon Jones's outstanding contributions have been recognized and celebrated, as evidenced by his nomination as KOKA Radio's Public Official of the Year for 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission hereby recognizes and honors STEFFON JONES for his exceptional leadership, dedication, and contributions to his community during Black History Month and beyond.

#### **ADMINISTRATION REPORT**

- Absentee Ballots at CCC

Mrs. Bryant explained that there has only been one request for the March 23, 2024 election. The majority of the requests typically are for presidential elections. Mrs. Bryant said that it is up to the inmate to request the absentee ballot.

Mr. J. Young wanted to know if any absentee ballots were declined or denied. Mrs. Bryant said that she is not aware of any.

Mrs. Blake reiterated the fact that pre-trial incarcerated inmates are allowed to vote, so as long as they request the absentee ballot.

Mr. Epperson said that there couldn't be voter harvesting if only one request for an absentee ballot was made for the upcoming election, and only twenty were requested for the 2018 Presidential Election. Mr. Epperson suggested that there be a class to educate inmates about voting in conjunction with literacy and religion.

Mr. G. Young wanted to know how voting is conducted in prisons. Mr. J. Young said that they use the absentee ballot process.

Mr. Giles agreed that there should be a person in the jails to educate the inmates on how to vote. Mr. Kracman said that Compassion For Lives goes into the jails and does this. He also wanted to know if there was any signage in the jails letting prisoners know to ask for a ballot.

- SNAP Benefits

Mrs. Bryant explained that these benefits are related to the additional summer benefits. She further explained that it is an additional \$40 per month for the months of June, July, and August. The Governor chose not to participate in the extra monies for SNAP. She said that the State can elect to participate in the program in the future. Parishes/counties cannot administer the program, only the State can administer SNAP benefits. Mrs. Bryant said that they are working with the Food Bank to offer some type of alternative plan to assist those youth who may need the extra benefits over the summer months. She also said that the economic impact ranges from \$1.6M to over \$6M, depending on how many children are impacted by it.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if the State has the right to propose legislation to restrict local governments from using funds to provide food services. Mr. Burrell further stated that the USDA has long since reported surplus food being destroyed. He believes this is a political assault on poor people, especially the children. Mrs. Bryant said that the State can pass laws that impact local communities. She further explained the SNAP program is a federal program in which each state can opt in or opt out; and unfortunately, the State of Louisiana opted out.

Attorney Frazier explained that as a Home Rule Charter, Caddo Parish will have the same rights that they do have now regardless of any subsequent legislation.

Mrs. Gage-Watts would like a resolution opposing the Governor's rejection of the summer benefits for the SNAP program. She would also like an ordinance on the agenda for supplementing the Food Bank for the loss of summer benefits for the SNAP program.

Mr. Kracman pointed out that the State is not taking anything from anyone. This was put into place during COVID-19, and we are no longer in a global pandemic, he said. The Food Bank does a great job of providing food to those in need.

- Lobbyist

Mrs. Bryant said that the lobbyist will provide periodic updates on the Special Session, as well as the Regular Session.

- CCC Tour

Mrs. Bryant announced that there is a tour scheduled for March 8 at 10 a.m. Any Commissioner interested in attending should let Administration know.

### **COMMUNIQUES & COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Mrs. Gage-Watts said that the Juvenile Justice Committee met today to discuss providing education initiatives and alternative prevention strategies to address concerns regarding youth and gun violence. She also said that a public health presentation will be proposed during the next Work Session meeting. The Juvenile Justice Committee will reconvene on March 4 at 11:30 a.m.

Mrs. Gage-Watts mentioned that it is never too late to register to vote. She is in support of voter education in the jails.

- Mr. Thomas said that the Animal Services Committee met today to discuss the sunset of the mandatory spay/neuter ordinance. He reminded the public about distemper and to be vigilant with their pets. Mr. J. Young also mentioned providing fresh water sources for their animals.

- Mr. G. Young said that the Economic Development Committee met today to discuss various iterations of a living wage ordinance for the Parish. The conversation will be continuing.

Mr. G. Young announced that District 2 will have a District Information Meeting on March 1 at the MLK Neighborhood Association Building.

Mr. G. Young also wished his 90-year-old mother a Happy Birthday.

- Mr. Epperson talked about Sergeant William Henry Johnson, a Black WWI hero, which the former Ft. Polk has been renamed after. He was on the frontline in France and killed several German soldiers despite running out of ammunition. When he returned to the States, he was recruited to help sell war bonds. Sgt. Johnson complained about the conditions of how black soldiers were treated in the military, so the Army did not award him any medals and all of his records were lost. Posthumously, he was awarded the Purple Heart and the Congressional Medal of Honor by President Obama.

- Mr. Atkins asked for a brief update on the veterinarian situation at Animal Services. Mr. Travis Clark, Director of Animal Services, came forward and said that a new vet started this past Monday. He is currently doing relief work in the area, so he is only in one day a week. Dr. Bishop is still with CPAS twice a week for a limited number of hours; the other surgeries are being directed to Robinson's Rescue.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if the new vet will work more than one day per week. Mr. Clark said that he will be working two days once he figures his schedule out. Mr. Clark would like to have at least four days per week, and they are currently looking for someone to come in and fill that gap.

- Mr. Burrell talked about incarcerated persons being allowed to vote. He said that the United States suffers from voter apathy. Encouraging pre-trial incarcerated people to vote is a good idea, he said.

- Mr. Cothran mentioned that the deadline for registering to vote online is March 2, 2024.

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

- *Ordinance No. 6418 of 2024, an ordinance to accept the streets in North Trace Boulevard into the Parish of Caddo Road System, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6419 of 2024, an ordinance amending and re-enacting Section 40-7 of the Caddo Parish Code of Ordinances, and to otherwise provide with respect*

thereto

**WORK SESSION MINUTES**

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *that the Work Session Minutes from February 20, 2024* be ratified. Motion carried.

**RESOLUTIONS**

It was **moved by Mr. Burrell**, seconded by Mr. G. Young, *that Resolution No. 4 of 2024, a resolution approving the amended 2023 and proposed 2024 budgets of the North Louisiana Criminalistics Laboratory Commission, and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be adopted. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (11). NAYS: Commissioner Atkins (1). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

**RESOLUTION NO. 4 OF 2024**

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE AMENDED 2023 AND PROPOSED 2024 BUDGETS OF THE NORTH LOUISIANA CRIMINALISTICS LABORATORY COMMISSION AND TO OTHERWISE PROVIDE WITH RESPECT THERETO

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened this 4th day of January, 2024, that it hereby approves the amended 2023 and proposed 2024 budgets of the North Louisiana Criminalistics Laboratory Commission, as presented.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if any provision or item of this resolution, or application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end, the provisions of this resolution are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall become effective immediately.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

This resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

MEMBERS:	YEAS:	NAYS:	ABSENT:	ABSTAIN:
Chris Kracman	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Gregory Young	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Victor L. Thomas	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
John-Paul Young	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Roy A. Burrell	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Handy Giles	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Stormy Gage-Watts	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Grace Anne Blake	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
John E. Atkins	_____	<u>X</u>	_____	_____
Ron Cothran	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Ed Lazarus	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Ken Epperson, Sr.	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____

And this resolution was declared adopted on this, the 22nd day of February, 2024.

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that Resolution No. 11 of 2024, a resolution opposing Louisiana HB 37 of the Regular Legislative Session, and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be adopted.

Mr. Kracman asked for the numbers on abatements the Parish gives to organizations. He received most of them, but has not received the numbers for the Port nor Pilot Programs. Mr. Kracman explained that the loss to the Parish for this tax break is about \$2.5M. He said that if the Parish did not give tax breaks to the big corporations, then it could afford to give the sales tax break to the working class.

Mr. J. Young agreed that "it seems a little cruel to tax people for food, especially since we spend a lot of time talking about how we could get them more food". At the same token, he is not sure how they would fill the gap in the budget that would eventually result in a reduction of services.

Mr. Atkins respects Mr. Kracman's desire to be supportive of the working family, but he is not in favor of how these proposed tax deductions came directly from Baton Rouge with no discussion at the local level on a matter that directly impacts the Parish's budget. He is not in favor of HB 37.

Mr. Kracman appreciates the Administration with the dollars that's left over with what this body has not taken. He further said that the Commission votes on items with expensive price tags, such as the pavilion at Earl G. Williamson. Mr. Kracman said that he would much rather see people save that 4% so they can put food on their tables.

Mrs. Gage-Watts said that the Commission is not fraudulently spending dollars, but are providing ways for better qualities of lives for the citizens.

Mrs. Blake agreed with Mr. Kracman, but would like to see how to bridge that gap so that services could still be provided to citizens.

Mr. J. Young asked if the sales tax the Parish collects primarily funds Public Works and Solid Waste. Mrs. Bryant said that it does. Mr. J. Young then wanted to know the fund balances in each of those funds. Mrs. Bryant explained that they do have a higher level of fund balances, but those monies are non-recurring monies, and these sales taxes are recurring dollars. She also pointed out that Public Works spends several dollars on the Parish roads which are funded out of the Public Works Fund.

**Call for the Question by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (12). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, Mr. Epperson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Lazarus, G. Young, and J. Young (10). NAYS: Commissioners Kracman and Thomas (2). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 11 OF 2024**

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING LOUISIANA HB 37 OF THE REGULAR LEGISLATIVE SESSION AND TO OTHERWISE PROVIDE WITH RESPECT THERETO

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish recognizes that food prices are higher than they have been in recent years; and

WHEREAS, HB 37 proposes to exempt certain food items from local taxation; and

WHEREAS, these items are already exempt from state taxation; and

WHEREAS, an exemption from local taxation of these items would cause severe financial hardship to parishes; and

WHEREAS, this financial hardship to parishes would result in decreased parish funding for other projects and activities upon which citizens rely.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened that the Caddo Parish Commission hereby opposes HB 37, and requests that it not be approved by the Louisiana Legislature.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution is effective immediately upon its passage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution will be forwarded to the Speaker of the Louisiana House, the President of the Louisiana Senate, the Caddo Parish legislative delegation and Governor Jeff Landry.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

This resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

MEMBERS:	YEAS:	NAYS:	ABSENT:	ABSTAIN:
Chris Kracman	_____	<u>X</u>	_____	_____
Gregory Young	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Victor L. Thomas	_____	<u>X</u>	_____	_____
John-Paul Young	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Roy A. Burrell	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Handy Giles	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Stormy Gage-Watts	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Grace Anne Blake	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
John E. Atkins	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Ron Cothran	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Ed Lazarus	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Ken Epperson, Sr.	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____

And this resolution was declared adopted on this, the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of February, 2024.

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *that Resolution No. 12 of 2024, a resolution opposing the Governor of Louisiana sending National Guard Troops to the border of Texas and Mexico, and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be adopted.

Mr. Epperson reminded the Commissioners that they have always praised the military and National Guard. He mentioned that he has several family members who were in the military, including himself. Mr. Epperson said that this is not a national declared emergency, nor is it in the State of Louisiana. He explained that morale will go down; housing will become an issue; and those National Guards will lose seniority pay. Mr. Epperson said that the State of Texas spent \$124M as of February 5, 2024 bussing migrants to sanctuary cities. He explained that Texas has monies they can utilize to deputize more law enforcement agents to help protect the borders.

Mr. Burrell mentioned that Senator Cassidy agrees with opposing sending Louisiana National Guards to Texas because it would cost Louisiana too much money. He said that the Texas is drenched with money, and it does not make sense to send Louisiana there.

Mrs. Blake said that the National Guard is to protect citizens nationally, as well as being in place to help out statewide. She said the State of Louisiana is going to spend approximately \$300M on protecting the borders. She said that there is a gun problem; there is a fentanyl problem; and there is a cartel problem. Mrs. Blake stated that guns and drugs are crossing the borders freely. There are sicknesses and diseases crossing the borders as well. Mrs. Blake said that her son is a National Guard member who understands what his duty is. She respects Mr. Epperson for his dedication for this community and for this country, but this is a national crisis that is coming to Caddo Parish. Mrs. Blake does not support this resolution.

Mr. J. Young shared a text conversation that he had with Dr. Kevin Murnane with regards to meth and fentanyl deaths in America. He asked Dr. Murnane if meth and fentanyl is entering the United States through the Mexican borders. Dr. Murnane said that a lot of it does. Mr. J. Young said that people are crossing the borders without permission, and that is brining danger and death into Caddo Parish. He is concerned about the integrity of the borders.

Mr. Atkins shares the same concerns with Mr. J. Young and Mrs. Blake. He believes that the huge volumes of illegal immigrants coming to America is a threat to the safety and security of this country. He is not opposed to anyone who wants to access this country to better their lives, so as long as it is done in a legal manner.

Mr. Giles is in support of this resolution because this is the Louisiana National Guard, not the Texas National Guard. He believes that this is a political kickback.

Mr. Cothran said that there are 11,500 soldiers in the Louisiana National Guard. There are 19,000 soldiers in the Texas National Guard. He would not have an issue with this, if it were a federal emergency, but it has not been declared as such. For this reason, he will be voting for this resolution.

Mr. Kracman talked about the immigrants who came to Shreveport last year. He said that a representative from The Highland Center assured the citizens that Shreveport was just a pitstop, and those people were going to New York City. Mr. Kracman said that New York and Chicago have recently declared state of emergencies because they are “busting at the seams” and overflowing with refugees. Mr. Kracman wanted to know if Caddo Parish has the means or a contingency plan to allow these people to come and be citizens of this Parish if they have nowhere else to go because those sanctuary cities are in a State of Emergency. Mrs. Bryant said that there is not a contingency plan from the Parish. Mr. Kracman said that this Parish should have a plan in place. To say that we’re under an invasion would be an understatement, he said. Mr. Kracman suggested figuring out a contingency plan for these people, i.e. food, shelter, funds, etc.

**Call for the Question by Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, and J. Young (10). NAYS: Commissioner Blake (1). ABSENT: Commissioner G. Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, Mr. Epperson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Thomas, and G. Young (7). NAYS: Atkins, Blake, Kracman, Lazarus, and J. Young (5). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

**RESOLUTION NO. 12 OF 2024**

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA SENDING NATIONAL GUARD TROOPS TO THE BORDER OF TEXAS AND MEXICO, AND TO OTHERWISE PROVIDE WITH RESPECT THERETO

WHEREAS, Governor Jeff Landry has stated a desire to deploy Louisiana National Guard troops to Texas to assist with border security between Texas and Mexico; and

WHEREAS, that deployment would have to come out of the budget of the State of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, that deployment would not be reimbursed under the federal government as have other deployments; and

WHEREAS, this would lead to pay cuts for guard members because while the federal government pays them housing and "separation pay," the state does not; and

WHEREAS, these pay cuts would be highly detrimental to Louisiana National Guard members, many of whom are Caddo Parish citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened that the Caddo Parish Commission hereby opposes Governor Landry sending Louisiana National Guard Troops to the border of Texas and Mexico, and requests that the budget for such a deployment not be approved by the Louisiana Legislature.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution is effective immediately upon its passage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution will be forwarded to the Speaker of the Louisiana House, the President of the Louisiana Senate, the Caddo Parish legislative delegation and Governor Jeff Landry.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

This resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

MEMBERS:	YEAS:	NAYS:	ABSENT:	ABSTAIN:
Chris Kracman	_____	<u>X</u> _____	_____	_____
Gregory Young	<u>X</u> _____	_____	_____	_____
Victor L. Thomas	<u>X</u> _____	_____	_____	_____
John-Paul Young	_____	<u>X</u> _____	_____	_____
Roy A. Burrell	<u>X</u> _____	_____	_____	_____
Handy Giles	<u>X</u> _____	_____	_____	_____
Stormy Gage-Watts	<u>X</u> _____	_____	_____	_____
Grace Anne Blake	_____	<u>X</u> _____	_____	_____
John E. Atkins	_____	<u>X</u> _____	_____	_____
Ron Cothran	<u>X</u> _____	_____	_____	_____
Ed Lazarus	_____	<u>X</u> _____	_____	_____
Ken Epperson, Sr.	<u>X</u> _____	_____	_____	_____

And this resolution was declared adopted on this, the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of February, 2024.

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. J. Young, *that Resolution No. 13 of 2024, requesting the Secretary of State to authorize adding an additional early voting location in Caddo Parish and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be adopted.

Mrs. Gage-Watts this is proposing an additional site to increase the participation in early voters. She asked the Commissioners for their support on this resolution.

At this time, Mrs. Gage-Watts' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, and J. Young (11). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner G. Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

**RESOLUTION NO. 13 OF 2024**

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION

REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO AUTHORIZE ADDING AN ADDITIONAL EARLY VOTING LOCATION IN CADDO PARISH AND OTHERWISE PROVIDING WITH RESPECT THERETO.

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission recognizes that early voting is an important part of elections; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Caddo Parish Commission to ensure that early voting is as convenient as possible for citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission believes that adding an additional early voting location to the two current Caddo Parish locations will increase convenience to the citizens, thus increasing voter participation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Caddo Parish Commission, in due, legal and regular session convened, that the Caddo Parish Commission does hereby request the Louisiana Secretary of State to authorize adding an additional early voting location in Caddo Parish.

BE IT RUTHER RESOLVED that if any provision or item of this resolution or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items, or applications of this resolution which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications and to this end the provisions of this resolution are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall take effect immediately.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

This resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

MEMBERS:	YEAS:	NAYS:	ABSENT:	ABSTAIN:
Chris Kracman	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Gregory Young	_____	_____	<u>X</u>	_____
Victor L. Thomas	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
John-Paul Young	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Roy A. Burrell	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Handy Giles	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Stormy Gage-Watts	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Grace Anne Blake	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
John E. Atkins	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Ron Cothran	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Ed Lazarus	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Ken Epperson, Sr.	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____

And this resolution was declared adopted on this, the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of February, 2024.

**OLD BUSINESS**

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. J. Young, *that Versa Clark, Steven Coleman, Mike Johnson, Dr. Jimmy Jones, Curtis Joseph, and Mavice Thigpen* be appointed to the Charter Review Committee. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Kracman, Thomas, and J. Young (9). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins and Lazarus (2). ABSENT: Commissioner G. Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. J. Young, *that Honorable Karelia*

*Stewart and Mr. Roy Morris* be appointed to the Children & Youth Planning Board. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, and J. Young (11). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner G. Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Burrell**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *that Jeron Rogers, Coretta Kimble, Shayne Gibson, Rachel Jackson, Rudolph Glass, Richard Miller, Belinda Rose, Cammie Wright, and Tammie Carey* be appointed to the Citizens Disaster Committee. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, and J. Young (11). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner G. Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

### **NEW BUSINESS**

It was **moved by Mr. Burrell**, seconded by Mr. J. Young, *that Commissioner travel to Baton Rouge to meet with the Governor* be adopted.

Mr. J. Young explained that this would be a good opportunity for Commissioners to go down to Baton Rouge to meet with the Governor about issues within Caddo Parish. He said that the date has not been set yet.

Mr. Epperson said that he brings the resolutions he introduces to the Governor and/or elected officials in Baton Rouge. He makes sure they read the Caddo Parish legislation.

Mr. Burrell suggested that the lobbyists carry the legislation to the appropriate parties. Mr. Epperson agreed with this.

At this time, Mr. Burrell's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, and J. Young (11). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner G. Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

### **COMMUNIQES & COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Mr. Burrell said that Texas has money to pay for protecting the borders. He does not believe in closing the borders, so as long as the people come into America the legal way. The Louisiana National Guard should be protecting the Louisiana border from Texas.
- Mrs. Blake announced that Huntington High School's Choir will be performing at Carnegie Hall next month. She is extremely proud of those students.
- Mr. J. Young announced that Centenary College will be performing "King Lear" at the Playhouse.
- Mr. Epperson asked that Public Works reach out to GLOVIS regarding litter on Antoine Boulevard.

Mr. Epperson also mentioned that there is an underground tunnel going from Mexico to California that is completely air conditioned with electricity that traffics guns, drugs, and people.

### **CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Nancy Treadwell came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

The other topic I forgot earlier was of budget and priorities. And as I listened again, it hit home. I think we just—and I encourage everyone to think this way—I certainly have to think this way with my business, so with government in general, big picture, safety is one the responsibilities of local and federal government. The protection of our most vulnerable citizens—and that again, big picture, infrastructure. Again, big picture, we talk about things like a great new building to show off how amazing our businesses or culture is here, and then we have horrible streets to get there. I know I'm not straight on who is responsible for which street and road and everything, but the idea—I mean, sometimes, we might have to say no to really good interesting projects because we're crumbling underneath our streets and our sewers and our people are hungry and there's crime that's just harming our communities. I would encourage everyone in our cities, our Parish, and our nation to really think about that. We are in a true crisis situation where we have to get back to basics of safety, infrastructure, and basic needs of food and being able to walk down the street or just stay in your home and not have a child shot. So, some of the things we have to change about the way we receive from the federal government or even the State. We maybe saying no to certain projects because if we don't switch the idea of how we parcel out money through our nation, our city, and our local areas, or this can't go on forever. Our sewers are going to start filling our streets; and crime is going to get to the point where we can't walk down our streets; and our neighborhoods are going to live in fear—many of them already are. So, I would just encourage the idea of changing the way we think

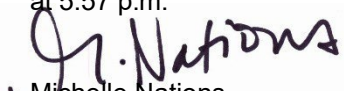
about budgets, and how we prioritize. It might mean saying no to things that seem good—that they're just going to hand out the money anyway if we match it—that may not be the best thing for our communities right now. So again, if we can prioritize safety, infrastructure, and taking care of the most vulnerable of us, and that includes our animals because that's a part of safety, too. Being a veterinarian, sick animals in our streets are dangerous. They suffer just like we do. So thank you, again. I'm going to be a face around here because I love this city; I love this state; and I love Caddo Parish. I do want to be a force of good, and I want to keep an open mind in here. I'm listening to you, and I'm grateful for your service. Thank you.

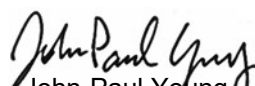
Mr. J. Young mentioned that the Industrial Tax Exemption Program affects the Parish's bottom line. He suggested reading the article on 710 Keel.

Mr. Epperson welcomed Ms. Treadwell to tour his district.

Mr. Burrell suggested that the streets stop being flooded with guns in order to reduce the gun violence. Mr. J. Young said that the guns are coming from Mexico.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

  
Michelle Nations  
Assistant to the Commission Clerk

  
John-Paul Young  
President