

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 3RD DAY OF MARCH, 2024

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Work 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, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (11). ABSENT: Commissioner Gage-Watts (1).

Mr. Greg Young gave the invocation, and Mr. Victor Thomas led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- Juvenile Detention

Assistant Parish Administrator, Clay Walker, said that there are nineteen children in the Detention Center; five of which are OJJ. There are six 17-year olds, and seventeen children at CCC. There are 568 children on probation.

- Announcements

Mr. Walker announced that the Caddo Correction Center tour will be held on Friday, March 8 at 10:00 a.m.

He also announced that the grand opening for the new OMV building will be held on March 11.

- Website Update

Mr. Walker said that the new Parish website, www.caddo.gov, will launch on March 11, 2024.

- Livestream of meetings

Mr. Walker said that the meetings will no longer be livestreamed to Facebook, but it will be available on Youtube and the Parish's website.

- SLB Tour—March 27, 2024

Mr. Walker announced that the SLB tour will be held on March 27 at 11:00 a.m.

- Reggie Lewis
Raley & Associates
King Oaks Housing Development

Mr. Lewis came before the Commission and explained that he is representing his client, Standard Enterprises, who is looking to expand their current development. Currently, the King Oaks Subdivisions has approximately 100 single family homes, but now they have the opportunity to purchase the adjacent twenty-one acres which would allow for about 73 more homes to be built. The reason it is before the Commission today is that the new property lies right outside of the city limits of Shreveport.

Mr. G. Young wanted to know if there were any neighborhood meetings that were conducted with regards to this zoning case. Mr. Lewis said that two meetings were held, but no one showed up to the second meeting. Mr. G. Young then wanted to know how the public is notified when there is a zoning change. Mr. Alan Clark, MPC Executive Director, explained that notices are sent out to everyone within 1,500 feet of the zoning change. Mr. Clark also said that they notify various elected officials who represents that particular area.

Mr. G. Young said that there was a similar development in this area. Mr. Clark understood and said that there are challenges when developing affordable housing for people who are economically challenged. No one wants a person that are not affluent to be neighbors next to them, he said. The MPC does not get into income criteria for development. Mr. G. Young disagreed and said that people have an issue with people who not affluent to come into their neighborhoods in a mass. He feels that there is very little benefit for the community at large for these types of housing projects. Mr. G. Young would like a better plan that speaks to more diversity—diversity of income and diversity of race—for affordable housing.

Mr. Clark said that a similar subdivision is adjacent to this proposed zoning change, and they are well kept. He further explained that the MPC accepts the applications and make recommendations to the planning board. Mr. G. Young said that he is not in support of this project and is not interested in going back and forth on this topic.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if this is in the Parish. Mr. Clark said that it is outside the city

limits of Shreveport.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if there is a need for additional housing in this part of the community. Mr. Clark said that there is a need for affordable housing all over the United States, as well as Shreveport and Caddo Parish. Mr. Atkins then wanted to know if the tax credit structure would make these houses more affordable. Mr. Clark said that this project will remain as rental properties. The developers are making investments in this area to ensure they get the return from their investments. Mr. Atkins wanted to know if the developments this company has done are well-maintained. Mr. Clark said that this development is kept immaculate.

Mr. James Freeman, Standard Enterprises, explained that King Oaks is the current subdivision that they would like to extend. The residents in this community take great pride and ownership in their yards and homes. They are proposing an additional 70 single-family homes. The existing subdivision is in the city, but the additional proposal is in the Parish. Currently, the zoning will allow for single family units, but currently the requirement is that they have to be on a one acre lot size. They are asking that the zoning be changed so they will match the existing subdivision. This project is partially funded through the Community Development Block Grant program. Mr. Freeman said that there is a need for affordable housing in this area. They receive several phone calls per day asking if there are available units in the existing, King Oaks Subdivision. His company would like to fulfill that need.

Mr. Freeman also said that they are not registered with the Shreveport Landlord program because they are regulated by the Louisiana Housing Corporation.

Mr. J. Young asked if Standard Enterprises would be interested in adjudicated properties. Mr. Freeman said that they are, but they ran into issues in the past with obtaining a clear title. Since then, there has been legislation in place that would allow an adjudicated property to be a perfect title.

Mr. G. Young appreciates Mr. Freeman for coming down to the Commission and presenting this project. He suggested asking the other Commissioners to have it constructed in their districts.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if the residents would own the homes. Mr. Freeman said that they would not, but the Louisiana Housing Corporation still oversees the project for 35 years. He also said that they've been in business since 1948, and they've never had a project fail.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know who is responsible for encouraging residents for the maintenance of the property. Mr. Freeman said that they allow the residents to maintain their yards, and if they cannot, then the property company comes in and does it for them.

Mr. Freeman also mentioned that there was a program in the late 70s-early 80s that based a person's mortgage off of their income. It is his opinion that this set people up for failure because those people could not afford to maintain their homes, so they fell into substandard living. Mr. Freeman said that if there are issues with the units in the King Oaks Subdivision, it is up to him to ensure that the units are well kept. He encouraged everyone to go and look at the subdivision.

- **Commissioner Requests**

Mr. Burrell asked that Administration provide an update on Comcast and Broadband in the Parish. He also said that there is a business, Five Loaves & Two Fish, in his district that causes a traffic problem on Lakeshore.

Mr. Atkins asked that Administration look into the illegal dumping on the Southern Loop and Wallace Lake Road.

Mr. Epperson asked that Administration look into installing a defibrillator in the Chambers.

COMMISSION REMARKS

- Mr. Giles talked about Chief Reese saving a man by giving him the Heimlich Maneuver at the Blind Tiger. He would like to recognize Chief Reese for his lifesaving skills.

- Mr. G. Young acknowledged some of the residents from the Cooper Road area who were in attendance today. He then talked about the racial adversities he faced when he was growing up while living in affordable housing. Mr. G. Young would like everyone to have the opportunity to own the deeds to their properties. We need a better plan to put people in homes, Mr. G. Young said.

- Mr. Cothran invited everyone to a bowling event hosted by the Southern Hills Business Association on March 15.

- Mr. Atkins appreciated Mr. G. Young for sharing his story. He also said that affordable housing can often times help people move to a better position in their life. Mr. Atkins respects Mr. G. Young's position on this matter.

OLD BUSINESS

It was **moved by Mr. Cothran**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *that Ordinance No. 6417 of 2024, an ordinance to amend Volume II of the Code of Ordinances of the Parish of Caddo, as amended, the Caddo Parish Unified Development Code, by amending the zoning of property located on the east side of David Raines Road of Audrey Lane, approximately 530' north of 7th Street, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, from R-A, Rural-Agricultural Zoning District to R-1-7, Single Family Residential Zoning District, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be advanced to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. G. Young asked that the Commissioners stand with him on not advancing this to the Regular Session for introduction.

At this time, Mr. Cothran's motion failed, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins and Lazarus (2). NAYS: Commissioners Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Giles, Kracman, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (9). ABSENT: Commissioner Gage-Watts (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

NEW BUSINESS

It was **moved by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mr. J. Young, *that Ordinance No. 6420 of 2024, an ordinance declaring certain adjudicated properties to be surplus and to authorize the Parish Administrator, or a designee, to sell the Parish of Caddo's tax interest in certain surplus adjudicated properties and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's Regular Session for introduction. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (11). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Gage-Watts (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *that Resolution No. 14 of 2024, a resolution to authorize the Caddo Parish Administrator to approve the assignment, bill of sale, and conveyance of State Agency Leases #19734 and #19675 from BPX Operating Company to Chesapeake Louisiana, LP, and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for consideration.

Mr. J. Young mentioned that Chesapeake Energy has sponsored many community projects.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know what district was this in. Mr. Lazarus said it was District 11. He also mentioned that BPX is receptive to the concerns of the community.

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

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *that Resolution No. 15 of 2024, a resolution recognizing the detriment of gun violence in Caddo Parish, requesting Parish stakeholders to gather and promulgate a plan to combat gun violence within Caddo Parish, requesting the State to consider declaring gun violence to be a public health emergency within Caddo Parish, and otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for consideration.

Mr. Epperson said that Mrs. Gage-Watts is under the weather today and asked that all of her items be advanced to Thursday's meeting for consideration.

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if there will be any additional benefits in adopting this resolution. Mr. Walker said that he is not aware of any benefits at the state level. Attorney Frazier said that this resolution is asking the State to declare a state of emergency, which could possibly allow for additional funding to Caddo Parish.

Mr. Burrell suggested that this could also be done for diseases, fentanyl, and meth.

Mr. Kracman wants to know if there were any mandates that would come with this resolution. He also feels that this resolution is "two minutes too late" due the to recent Special Session with regards to crime at the Legislature. Baton Rouge sent a message loud and clear in the past couple of weeks—if you commit a violent crime, you're going to go away; you're going to go away for a great deal of time, he said. Mr. Kracman also mentioned that the Legislature passed a constitutional carry bill.

Mr. Giles said that not everyone should have a gun due to mental health issues and things of that nature.

Call for the Question by Mr. Cothran, seconded by Mr. Epperson. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Giles, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (11). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Gage-Watts (1). 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, Giles, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young

(10). NAYS: Commissioner Kracman (1). ABSENT: Commissioner Gage-Watts (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. J. Young**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *to englobo and move the following items to Thursday's agenda for consideration:*

- *Special Resolution proclaiming 318 Day in Caddo Parish*
- *Special Resolution of Appreciation for Myrtis Edwards*
- *Special Resolution for Women's Month. Presentation to be held during the March 21, 2024 Regular Session*
- *Appoint Mary O'Neal to the Citizens' Disaster Response Committee*
- *Visitor from the Community Foundation of NWLA to present an update on their Early Childhood Education initiative*

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

COMMUNIQUES AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Mr. Burrell talked about Constitutional Carry. He does not feel that this is a good idea because "people are going to assume you have a gun" so they may use this as a reason to kill you. He agreed that not everyone should be a gunowner. Along with mental health issues, there is also so much hate. This wi

CONSENT AGENDA

- *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*

At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the Commission adjourned at 4:43 p.m.


Assistant to the Commission Clerk