

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF
THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 17TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2022

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Regular Session, on the above date, at 3:37 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mr. Atkins, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Taliaferro, and Young (8). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts, Johnson, Jones, and Lazarus (4).

The invocation was given by Mr. Hopkins, and Mr. Burrell led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

VISITORS

- Community Program: P.R.O.T.E.C.T.- Kristi Hylan, AVP Nursing, Perioperative Services

Mr. Mike Nolan, Pediatric Trauma Coordinator at Oschner LSU Shreveport and member of the P.R.O.T.E.C.T Program team, discussed the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. (Providing Resources and Outreach Tools for Every Child and Teen) Program, which is a hospital-based violence intervention program which targets the increase in the pediatric population that are injured with violent and/or accidental gunfire. Mr. Nolan explained that their goal includes decreasing gunshot injuries and returning injuries. Mr. Nolan said that there are similar programs throughout the country and through networking a facility in St. Louis, Missouri, approximately the same size as LSU Ochsner, mentored the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. Program team. He said that their mentor facility has reduced its re-injury rate from 40% to almost 4% with a similar program it launched in 2008. Mr. Nolan explained that the program works as a public health approach to gun violence and that gun violence is a public health issue. Mr. Nolan gave two scenarios of a child visiting the ER for high blood sugar, which includes comprehensive care with specialists and on-going post-discharge care, and that same child returning to the ER a week later for a gunshot wound, which includes wound treatment and one or two follow up treatments. Mr. Nolan said that the two scenarios look different, and they should be treated the same. Mr. Nolan explained that the program and community resources have vetted each other, so that gunshot victims under the age of 17 go to the LSU Ochsner's ER. First, a social work assessment is done before the victim is informed of the program. Once the victim chooses to enroll, a deeper assessment is completed to figure out what other things brought or caused the victim to be wherever they were when the injury occurred. Mr. Nolan said that the PROTECT program offers services that includes helping victims succeed in job interviews or Office Suite training. The program separates services into diverse groups to address things such as mental health, education and a safe place. Mr. Nolan said the program does not offer housing but partnered with SPAR (Shreveport Parks and Recreation) and the community for safe locations. Mr. Nolan further explained that after enrollment, the program follows the victims and keeps in contact with them. Mr. Nolan said that it is hard to get a family to enroll until the community knows who the program is. He explained that the community does not know who the program is and there is no trust. Mr. Nolan said the key is to get the information out with the matriarchs and patriarchs of our communities to know what PROTECT is and asked the Commission to spread the program throughout their districts.

Dr. Brett Chapman, a Trauma Surgeon in Oschner LSU Shreveport and Medical Director of the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. Program, commented that the latest data for 2021 showed a record 49,000 deaths from gunshot wounds in America. Dr. Chapman said that the number of deaths in 2021 represents a 9% increase from 2020, and that 2020 data showed a 14% increase from 2019. Dr. Chapman explained that the data from 1999 to 2014 showed a stable rate of firearm injury deaths in America. Then, from 2015 to 2019 there was a slow, but gradual increase of firearm injury deaths in America and starting in 2019 the increase skyrocketed. He further explained that Louisiana has the second highest per capita rate of gun death in America behind only Mississippi. In 2019 to 2020, there was a 24% increase in children's deaths due to gunshot wounds, which was double the averages for adults in the general population. Shreveport has the only pediatric trauma center in the State of Louisiana that is verified by the American College of Surgeons, the national organization that oversees the quality and surveillance of trauma centers. During the last visit by the American College of Surgeons to reverify the LSU Ochsner's Pediatric Trauma Center, they found that 26% of the trauma center's pediatric patients were due to firearm injuries. Dr. Chapman said that the national average of pediatric firearm injuries is 8%, which means that pediatric firearm injuries is a locally significant problem. Dr. Chapman expressed the project's need for the Commission's help. Dr. Chapman said that the problem stretches into every district and crosses every socio-economic boundary. Dr. Chapman promised that every Commission district has been represented by a child in the LSU Ochsner ER in the past year.

Mr. Burrell expressed support to reduce gun injuries and wanted to know how the program would affect the number of gunshot victims. Mr. Burrell wanted to know how dealing with gunshot victims is going to eliminate the work of the perpetrator. Mr. Nolan responded that the perpetrator may not be the victim and that is why the pediatric trauma center does the assessment. He explained that the proximity where the child was at the time they were shot could be because there was no food at home and the child was trying to get whatever they could. Mr. Nolan said those are the situations that lead to many firearm injuries. He also said that the pediatric trauma center sees children that are at home, in their bed asleep, and a bullet comes through the wall. Mr. Nolan said that the pediatric trauma center will still assess the

family through the intervention program, but there is another team with the trauma center that does injury prevention. Dr. Chapman responded that that gun violence is a multi-factorial and complex issue and there is no program that can address 100% of the factors that go into gun violence. Dr. Chapman said that the pediatric trauma center does not pretend that it can do that, but is trying to tackle one subset of patients. He also said most pediatric trauma patients have some modifiable risk factors. Dr. Chapman explained the goal of the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. program is to completely assess a child's living situation, their financial situation to do a 360-degree evaluation of the child, the family and all the circumstances to see what they could do to reduce a re-injury. Dr. Chapman said that the national recidivism rate for return visits to the trauma center is about 15-20%, which means one quarter to one fifth of its patients that come to the trauma center have been to it before. Dr. Chapman explained that trauma is a chronic disease, and many populations are at risk of having injuries. He further explained that the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. Program's approach is like treating high blood pressure or diabetes to prevent heart attacks and strokes. Dr. Chapman reiterated that the risk factors in patient populations are modifiable such as supplying a secure place after school or a secure place to live and supplying resources or community connections.

Mr. Hopkins wanted to know how many of the 25% of gun related patients are for suicide type. Dr. Chapman responded that the increase in suicide rate from 2019 to 2020 was about 1% and the increase in homicide during that period was about 2%. Dr. Chapman explained that there was a large jump in suicide during 2020 to 2021, but firearm wound is an uncommon way for the pediatric population, age 17 and under, to commit suicide. Mr. Hopkins also wanted to know if the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. Program addresses tire tool violence, knife violence or machete violence. Mr. Nolan responded that the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. Program is gun only because the program is in its infancy stages. Mr. Nolan said that the program has planned out phases because the goal is to have any violent injury such as a fist fight or an assault. Mr. Nolan explained that a paper called 'The Broken Jaw' looked at how many children enters the pediatric trauma center with a broken jaw and later ended up as a victim of gunshots. He further explained that the next phase will open the program to all violent cases and the last phase to bring in mentors.

Mr. Epperson said the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. Program visited the Grassroots Forum telecast and received many comments about the program. Mr. Epperson asked each Commissioner and attendees to get the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. Program's contact information and invite them to neighborhood groups, youth groups, church groups, sororities and fraternities. He thanked Mr. Nolan and Dr. Chapman for coming to the meeting and asked that they supply their contact information before they leave. Dr. Chapman commented that when patients and families agree to let the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. Program collect socioeconomic data and outcomes data, their team will reevaluate after one year to improve the program. Mr. Nolan said the phone number to reach the PROTECT program is 318-626-3737 and that their email is protect@ochsner.lsuhs.org. Mr. Atkins mentioned that the contact information is on the back of their tri-fold pamphlet.

Mr. Jackson wanted to know if the acquired data will include the physical environment, physical place, and condition of socioeconomic backgrounds. Mr. Nolan responded that the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. Program will collect the pediatric registry or national database will collect the address and zip code and the assessment data will be the research base. Mr. Jackson wanted to know if the data will include conditions such as lighting, sidewalks, food deserts, bank deserts, etc. Mr. Nolan responded that the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. Program will take the information it they can get. Mr. Nolan said that the program has a small team. Mr. Jackson commented that the Parish has a Juvenile Justice Task Force which assesses the physical place and environment and the housing aspect. Mr. Jackson expressed belief how individuals are often products of their environments. Mr. Nolan asked Mr. Jackson if he would be interested in being a P.R.O.T.E.C.T. Champion. Mr. Jackson agreed to sign up.

Mr. Taliaferro wanted to know which office the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. team is in the hospital. Mr. Nolan responded that that the program is under the Pediatric Trauma Center and the team is a volunteer group. He explained that the volunteers wear other hats and there was one recently filled social worker position to help drive assessments inside the facility and at community events. Mr. Nolan said that the P.R.O.T.E.C.T. team is multidisciplinary and includes trauma surgeons, nurses, social workers, etc.

ADOPT REGULAR SESSION MINUTES

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Young, *that Regular Session Minutes November 3, 2022* be adopted. Motion carried.

SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *to adopt Special Resolution of Recognition For Gisele Proby-Bryant*. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Hopkins, Jackson, Taliaferro, and Young (7). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Epperson, Gage-Watts, Johnson, Jones, and Lazarus (5). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Epperson said that Mrs. Proby-Bryant is a master teacher and an ultimate volunteer. Mr. Epperson runs some of his projects by her first and appreciates her expertise, dedication and commitment to the organizations she has worked with. Mr. Epperson said Mrs. Proby-Bryant is involved in many other community organizations. Mr. Epperson restated a phrase by Mr. Robert Stewart, "Leadership basically comes from surrounding yourself with people that are smarter than you are". Mr. Epperson said

that Mrs. Proby-Bryant is smarter than a lot of people she served with and made them leaders and boards look good.

Mrs. Proby-Bryant thanked the Commission and gave appreciation for their selfless service. She said that Mr. Epperson is a leader and takes his commitment very seriously, which is shown by the things he does around the community. Mrs. Proby-Bryant was touched by the medical visitors because people experience being born normally until something happens that could take a turn in their lives. Mrs. Proby-Bryant said the ARC of Bossier is looking forward to its 70th year and recognized the Clerk for his board service before coming to the Commission. Mrs. Proby-Bryant said that there are many individuals with disabilities and many men and woman in the armed forces return with disabilities. She recommended uniting to service this population of individuals who need a lot of service.

Mr. Burrell commended Mrs. Proby-Bryant for her leadership in different roles in the Shreveport Area and that the special resolution award is well deserved.

Mr. Atkins thanked Mrs. Proby-Bryant for her work and for being a wonderful asset to the Caddo Parish community.

COMMUNIQES AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Dr. Wilson mentioned that Administration has action items that they are working on right now.

- Mr. Jackson mentioned that he did not attend any of the scheduled budget retreats and requested a Zoom meeting with staff. Mr. Jackson said he had a budget amendment and would like to have it ready for the budget presentation, but he has questions about the CCC healthcare, public works, and millage assessments. Mr. Jackson mentioned that he sent Administration information about a property and doing a community garden. He explained that the property is owned by the City of Shreveport and is unmaintained. Mr. Jackson reminded Mr. Travis Clark, Animal Services Director, about doing a ride along. Mr. Jackson asked Dr. Wilson about the detailed expenditures on the CCC, including inmate care. Dr. Wilson wanted to know if this is the follow up question from last year. Mr. Jackson said that he did not receive an answer to his question. Dr. Wilson responded that he did not receive an answer either, but will try to get an answer again.

- Mr. Epperson thanked everyone for the gifts, calls, visits and condolences on behalf of the loss of his mother. Mr. Epperson thanked Chris, Charles, Hana, Roy and others from the Facilities & Maintenance Department for their instrumental in the success of the Veterans Honor Ceremony and Parade. Mr. Epperson asked Mr. Kevin Lawrence, Director of Facilities & Maintenance, to thank his team. Mr. Epperson mentioned that he visited a compactor site and hid in a different car. He saw site workers receive a lot of verbal abuse and they do not deserve it. Mr. Epperson received concerns that the Parish compactor sites do not accept plastics and people take their plastics to Bossier. Mr. Epperson said that citizens get irate with the site workers and requested for signs that state what is accepted or not accepted at the compactor sites. Mr. Epperson told Dr. Wilson that the compact site workers should not make less than \$16 per hour for what they go through such as stench, temperatures, abuse they take, and sacrifices. Mr. Epperson mentioned that the Parish sexual oriented business ordinances are under scrutiny about the suit against the City of Shreveport. Mr. Epperson said that the Commission is watching that, and their action will be based on fact and data. Mr. Epperson addressed Dr. Ken Ward about hunters parking their trailers hauling ATVs in front of private residences and that hunting lease holders need to find another area to access the woods. He asked that Attorney Frazier and Dr. Ward alleviate the problem before it leads to something serious. Mr. Epperson mentioned a rise in drilling complaints on Jefferson Paige Road, Pines Road, Greenwood Road, Rice Road about rigs popping up overnight. Mr. Epperson said that mud on the streets cause road hazards and that he once requested Elysian Fields rig operators to use clear the mud with water hose.

- Mr. Jackson thanked Mr. Patrick Wesley, Director of Parks & Recreation, and his team on behalf of LSU Health Science Center for helping with its medical school HBCU preview day. There were up to 50 students visiting from across the country who are seeking medical schools. Mr. Jackson hoped that the students choose the LSU medical school. Mr. Jackson announced the highway dedication of former Commissioner Pierson schedule for Sunday, November 20th at 1:30 p.m. Mr. Jackson requested an update from the City on their work of overlaying the highway. Mr. Jackson gave appreciation of Public Works working with Mrs. Pierson on the highway dedication. He also thanked the attendees of the S.R.A.C. Caddo Commons Park Pavilion Event because it was one of the projects the Parish Commission funded. Mr. Jackson asked that Mr. Alan Clark, MPC Director, clarify the situation at Grimmatt Drive. Mr. Jackson wanted to know if the standard practice to move buildings onto a property is before a zoning permit is received. Mr. Clark responded that it is not standard practice. Mr. Clark explained that the building had to be removed from Wells Island Road and he allowed the building to be moved to the property that the owner owns on Grimmatt Drive. Mr. Clark ensured that the property will go through a site plan review process and that it will be an office, not a residential dwelling. Mr. Jackson wanted to know why the building had to be moved from Wells Island Road. Mr. Clark responded that he does not know and that he will find out and follow up with Mr. Jackson. Mr. Jackson pointed out that there is a convenience store next door to that property and the property looks abandoned and rundown. Mr. Clark responded that he would investigate

that location and that Mr. Jackson's concern is a property standard issue. Mr. Clark explained that the MPC is trying to reduce liquor stores in certain areas. Mr. Jackson expressed concern about a liquor store on North Market and that north Shreveport may be burdened with more alcohol liquor stores and wanted to know what has caused that. Mr. Clark responded that the MPC has been working on that issue for many years and the MPC has made a monumental accomplishment creating use standards to remove liquor stores from inner city neighborhoods. Mr. Clark explained that one liquor store met the use standards by being not within 200 feet of a residential district and not within 1000 feet of another liquor store. Mr. Clark further explained that the first phase of the liquor store ordinance requires liquor stores to meet standards or they will not be allowed to reestablish, and that the phase is a lengthy process. Mr. Jackson wanted to know if there were any façade and design standards such as the one put in place for the liquor store at Kings Highway and Gilbert Drive. Mr. Clark responded that the MPC ensures landscaping meets the landscape ordinance and the parking meets parking ordinances, but the standards of that liquor store was a Council action which overrode the recommendations of the MPC. Mr. Jackson wanted to know if the City Council could place recommendations for the liquor store on North Market. Mr. Clark responded that the liquor store did not have appeals and it was a straight approval, because it met all the requirements. Mr. Clark expressed understanding for Mr. Jackson and Councilperson Taylor's sensitivity to that site. Mr. Jackson wanted to know what occurred with the neighborhood participation plan for the liquor store on North Market. Mr. Clark responded that the applicant had gone through a neighborhood participation plan meeting in the first process, where the applicant explained to the citizens exactly what they were proposing. Mr. Jackson explained that citizens at the neighborhood participation plan were emphatically against what the applicant was doing. Mr. Clark responded that the MPC is described as anti-business, not business friendly and it puts too much on businesses. Mr. Clark explained that the MPC did not feel it was necessary for a business to go back through the process and that the purpose of a neighborhood participation meeting is for a business to explain its purpose with the neighborhood. Mr. Clark further explained that the meeting does not decide if a business' application is blocked. Mr. Jackson commented that the MPC should also have heard that it must protect neighborhoods and neighborhoods do not need proliferation of liquor stores. Mr. Clark said that the MPC is doing everything it can to protect interests in neighborhoods. He explained that was the base reason for the moratorium, the study and sought consultants including the American Planning Association to develop a mechanism to prevent proliferation of liquor stores. Mr. Clark further explained that there are liquor stores in black communities directly in front of houses and the MPC is emphatic that would never happen again. Mr. Clark said the proliferation happened over 30 to 40 years and the MPC is working to remove them.

- Mr. Chavez requested Attorney Frazier to check into speed cameras in school zones because he is receiving questions about a city ordinance allowing them. Attorney Frazier responded that she would gather as much information as she can.
- Mr. Young requested that Mr. Clark enforce the stipulations of landscaping of the Highland liquor store on Kings Highway and Gilbert Drive.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Atkins said that during the Long-Range Planning Committee meeting, the Committee was notified by several people having problems with their voting machines, precinct lines and district lines. He announced to everybody that experienced problems with voting on election day or in the early voting process to notify the Secretary of State Kyle Ardoin, Registrar of Voters Dale Sibley, and the Clerk of Court Mike Spence, because those are the key players that must be aware of the problems. Mr. Atkins thanked Mr. Jackson for covering on the Mr. Pierson road dedication ceremony as he will be out of town on Sunday. Mr. Atkins announced that Commissioner Taliaferro will be joining the City Council next year and his last day is December 31st. Mr. Atkins requested the Commission to consider temporary replacements of Mr. Taliaferro in District 8 and provide the names of replacements to either himself, Vice President Mr. Burrell, or the Commission Clerk.

Mr. Burrell said that this is a redistricting year, so the replacement does not have to be in that district. Attorney Frazier commented that the District 8 replacement would be appointed from the district as it stands now, per the Commission's Charter.

PUBLIC HEARING ON CADDO PARISH 2023 OPERATING & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS BUDGET

At this time, the President opened up the floor to anyone to speak in favor or against the 2023 Operating & Capital Improvements Budget. There being no one to speak, the President concluded the public hearing.

The President said that the public hearing was opened and closed quickly, but that does not imply that the Commission has not given serious consideration to the budget. The President explained that the Commission has participated in many budget retreats and budget discussion, and the public hearing is a final process of the formal process.

ORDINANCES (for introduction by title)

- Ordinance No. 6295 of 2022, in regards to Zoning Case 22-24-P, 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 south side of Southern Loop, approximately one thousand and six hundred feet west of Wallace Lake Road, Caddo Parish, LA., from R-A Rural Agricultural Zoning District to C-UV Urban Village Commercial Zoning District, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto
- Ordinance No. 6296 of 2022, in regards to Zoning Case 22-25-P, 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 NE corner of Linwood Avenue and Buckley Boulevard, Caddo Parish, la., from C-1(PUD) Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District to C-1(PUD) Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto

WORK SESSION MINUTES

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Jackson, that Work Session Minutes from November 14, 2022 be ratified. Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS

The Clerk pointed out that the second meeting in November 2023 falls on the Thursday of Thanksgiving and was moved forward to Wednesday. The Clerk mentioned that the 2023 meeting invitations are ready to be sent electronically should the Commission be interested in doing so.

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, to englobo and adopt the following resolutions:

- Resolution No. 50 of 2022, a resolution giving written public notice of the regularly scheduled meetings of the Caddo Parish Commission for the calendar year 2023, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto
- Resolution No. 51 of 2022, resolution in support of the Louisiana Department Of Transportation And Development, for funding under the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure And Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto

Substitute motion by Mr. Jackson, seconded by Mr. Young, to set the meeting start time at 4:30 p.m. for Resolution No. 50 of 2022.

Mr. Jackson said he requests to change meeting start times every year, because a 4:30 p.m. meeting time would give people an opportunity to participate without having to miss school or work time.

Mr. Epperson commented that he will not support the substitute motion, because the meeting start time is in the charter. He said that 20 years ago the start time was 1:30 p.m., and that the start time is not going to satisfy some one.

At this time, Mr. Jackson's substitute motion failed, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners, Burrell, Jackson, and Young (3). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, and Taliaferro (5). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts, Johnson, Jones, and Lazarus (4). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Burrell commented the importance of Resolution No. 51 of 2022 for the passenger rail to come to the area. Mr. Burrell explained that the resolution and a letter will be sent to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg, who decides whether Louisiana will have a passenger rail. Mr. Burrell said that Senator Cassidy's Office called to inform him that the Senator is trying to secure funds through Governor Edwards to move forward with the passenger rail.

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

NEW BUSINESS

The Commission then moved onto the first New Business item, *Introduce End of the Year Appointments (Final Approval December 8th)*.

The Clerk commented that the no vote is needed at this time and that the appointments are scheduled to be determined at the next regular session. The Clerk requested the Commission to inform the Clerk's Office of any changes to appointments.

Mr. Epperson requested that the contact information Susan Tuberville from Fire District No. 3 be sent to him. The Clerk acknowledged that he will.

Mr. Jackson wanted to know where Fire District No. 6 is located. Mr. Atkins responded that it is in south Linwood.

It was **moved by Mr. Young**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *to approve Commission travel to participate in Southern University System Board meeting. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Taliaferro, and Young (8). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts, Johnson, Jones, and Lazarus (4). ABSTAIN: None (0).

COMMUNIQUES AND REPORTS

- Mr. Epperson thanked Facilities and Maintenance for lighting the Parish Courthouse green.
- Mr. Jackson requested Attorney Frazier inform the Commission about public meetings per Louisiana Public Meeting Law. Attorney Frazier responded that a public meeting is a meeting of the Commission with a quorum present. Mr. Jackson also wanted to know if a meeting with Dr. Wilson, Mrs. Erica Bryant and himself is considered a public meeting. Attorney Frazier responded no.

DANGEROUS DOG APPEAL

- Appellant: Christopher Bell
Case No. C07174238

Mr. Jackson wanted to know which district the case is from. Mr. Atkins responded that it is from the 71118 Gooseberry Hill.

Mr. Travis Clark, Animal Services Director, came before the Commission and said that the Animal Services Department reviewed the case and considered the dog a hazard to the community. Mr. Clark explained that the case was presented to the Animal Services Board to decide on whether the appellant's dog is dangerous and for the people to speak to the Animal Services Board. Mr. Clark said that no person was bitten during the animal-on-animal attack, but Mrs. Sandy Martin's dog was severely injured. The Animal Services Board upheld his decision that the appellant's dog is dangerous. Mr. Clark said that when a pet is deemed dangerous, it is spayed or neutered. He explained that the issue is probably the spaying and neutering.

Mrs. Sandy Martin, 1111 Japonica Lane Shreveport LA 71118, explained that her dog was viciously attacked on October 31st, but a week before the attack the other dog had damaged her privacy fence and came into her yard. She said her family, who were in the yard, ran inside the house with their dog, and Mrs. Martin called Mr. Bell to retrieve his dog. Mrs. Martin said she and Mr. Bell agreed that in January-February they would enforce the fence and that Mr. Bell ensured he would be with his dog every time it is outside. Mrs. Martin explained that on October 31st, she took her dog to the backyard and heard a crack and her dog screaming. She found Mr. Bell's dog had grabbed her dog and shaking it badly, then threw her dog and ran after her. She further explained that Mr. Bell's dog bared its teeth at her, growling, until some stray cats distracted the dog to chase after them. Mrs. Martin showed images of 27 stitches and two lacerations of her dog. She explained that her dog's lung was ruptured or lacerated and a sac lining that separates its organs was ruptured. Mrs. Martin said that the dog has weekly doctor visits and the bills are over \$820. Mrs. Martin said that she did not want Mr. Bell's dog killed, but she did not want them to receive a slap on their hand.

Mr. Christian Bell said that he and his mother came home, let the dog out and went back indoors since everything was fine. He said that their dog was barking at the neighbors on the right side of their house, so they brought their dog back into the house. Mr. Christian Bell explained that he and his mom looked at their camera and saw Mrs. Martin's dog in their backyard. They noticed the back gate was broken and was unsure how it was broken, so they lured Mrs. Martin's dog back to Mrs. Martin's yard. Mr. Atkins reiterated that Mr. Christian Bell's testimony is that Mrs. Martin's dog was in their yard and then it back into Mrs. Martin's yard. Mr. Christian Bell agreed.

Ms. Skylar Bell commented that she let their dog out and was watching him. Ms. Skylar Bell explained that she saw Mrs. Martin's dog in her backyard and both dogs were barking. She said she was calling her dog back while Mrs. Martin also called her dog back. Ms. Skylar Bell expressed how much she missed her dog, how it helped comfort her and would like to see it for her upcoming birthday.

Ms. Amiyah Bell commented that she really wanted her dog back and that he is a really

good dog.

Ms. Serena Bell said she feels protected with her dog around and likes to play.

Mr. Christopher Bell stated that he went to Mrs. Martin's home on October 22nd to put screws inside Mrs. Martin's fence, but Mrs. Martin declined because the fence was rotten and that she was going to get a fence. Mr. Bell said that he gave Mrs. Martin his business card and they agreed to fix the fence next year. Mr. Bell said that the previous home residents had pit-bull dogs. Mr. Bell exhibited images of the rotted part of the fence and the outdoor pen he built in his backyard. Mr. Bell said that he asked the Animal Services Board not to spay his dog, but he is fine with the house checkups and chipping his dog. Mr. Bell said that his dog wears a muzzle to the doctor because his dog does not know people. Mr. Bell apologized for Mrs. Martin's dog. Mr. Bell said that he has dog signs on both sides of his fence. Mr. Bell explained that he found a piece of the chain fence in someone's trash. Mr. Bell said that he explained to Mrs. Martin that he does not have enough money, because he just became a homeowner. Mr. Bell said that the dog is going to receive discipline training and dog ownership training. He also said that this is his dog's first offence and he is asking not to have his dog spayed. Mr. Bell explained that he wants to breed his dog which requires the dog to be registered per Shreveport law. Mr. Bell said that he submitted a letter to the Commission detailing everything his family has experienced and expressed understanding to what Mrs. Martin has experienced with her dog.

Attorney Frazier clarified that the Animal Services Board has declared the animal vicious, and that Mr. Bell is appealing the neuter provision of that ruling. Mr. Young wanted to know if the ruling stated dangerous or vicious. Attorney Frazier responded dangerous. Mr. Bell said agreed with what Attorney Frazier said. Mr. Bell felt that he received unfair treatment and that Mrs. Martin was coming for him. Mr. Bell explained that he saves lives everyday because he installs security systems in homes of domestic violence.

Mr. Young asked if Mr. Bell agreed that his dog inflicted injuries on Mrs. Martin's dog. Mr. Bell responded yes. Mr. Young also asked if Mr. Bell offered to pay her vet bills. Mr. Bell responded that he and his wife will if Mrs. Martin asked for his help. Mr. Young said that Mrs. Martin has the right to bring a civil court suit against Mr. Bell to pay for the harm that Mr. Bell's dog inflicted upon Mrs. Martin's dog. Mr. Young said that since Mr. Bell has not done any mitigation with Mrs. Martin the Commission has no reason to exercise leniency toward Mr. Bell's dog. Mr. Young wanted to know if Mr. Bell has a fence in his yard and whether the rotting fence was on Mrs. Martin's property. Mr. Bell responded that his surrounding neighbors have fences and built a pen. Mr. Young wanted to know how long Mr. Bell lived at their current house and if he had his dog in his previous house. Mr. Bell responded that he has been at his house for one month and was renting his previous house. Mr. Young wanted to know if there was a fence on Mr. Bell's previous house. Mr. Bell responded yes and that the fence was a metal cyclone fence. Mr. Young said the fence on Mrs. Martin's property is not sufficient to keep Mr. Bell's dog from her property and there are no fences on his property to control his own dog. Mr. Bell said that when they bought the house it was surrounded by fence, then they built the cyclone fence on site. Mr. Young commented that it is important for dog owners in Caddo Parish to know the rules they must follow and one of those rules is for the dog to have a proper enclosure. Mr. Young explained that the enclosure could be provided by someone else's fence, but it does not have to be provided by someone else. He further explained that the law requires dog owners to have a fence that properly encloses their dog, so that aggressive breed dogs, like Rottweilers, do not escape and prove that it's dangerous by attacking or injuring a person or another animal. Mr. Young said that there was no proper enclosure in the appeal case and that it is the dog owner's responsibility to supply the enclosure. Mr. Young also said that there has been no attempt so far from Mr. Bell to pay the large bill that Mrs. Martin has suffered.

Mr. Taliaferro wanted to know if the wooden fence that Mr. Bell offered to fix belonged to Mr. Bell. Mr. Bell responded that the fence is Mrs. Martin's and he offered to repair it because the fence shares the back-fence line. Mr. Bell explained that he offered to have a sit down with his wife and Mrs. Martin. Mr. Taliaferro said that Mr. Bell is basically relying on Mrs. Martin's fence to keep her dog out and Mr. Bell's dog in, but per the testimony Mrs. Martin's dog encroached Mr. Bell's side of the fence. Mr. Bell said that the cyclone fence is up now.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know if the attack occurred when Mrs. Martin's dog went to Mr. Bell's property. Mr. Bell responded that Mrs. Martin's dog came to his side of the fence on October 22nd and on Halloween Mr. Bell's dog probably chased a cat into Mrs. Martin's fence. Mr. Epperson clarified that Mr. Bell offered to repair the fence before it was broken, which was the part that the dogs went through. Mr. Bell acknowledged Mr. Epperson's clarification. Mr. Epperson suggested that Mr. Bell check his homeowner's insurance and that a fence may be in his policy. Mr. Epperson wanted to know if Mrs. Martin refused to meet with Mr. Bell and his wife to come to an agreement. Mr. Bell said yes. Mr. Epperson wanted to know if neutering is reversible. Mr. Travis Clark responded no.

Mr. Jackson clarified that Mr. Bell is appealing the neutering, but is agreeable with the other standards and requirements of the ruling. Mr. Bell agreed with Mr. Jackson. Mr. Jackson wanted to know if the Mr. Bell was home the date of the attack. Mr. Bell said yes. Mr. Jackson wanted to know if Mr. Bell has proof from the camera footage. Mr. Bell responded no, because his cameras are on a 20-day cycle and is set for people. Mr. Bell explained that the camera system he has offers animals, people, cars and drones, but the cameras he installed are set for people. Mr. Jackson wanted to know how Mrs. Martin's dog was

caught on camera into Mr. Bell's yard. Mr. Bell explained that his wife saw Mrs. Martin's dog and that the camera did not catch them. Mr. Bell further explained that when he went back to look for the footage, he saw where his wife went outside and his dog coming back in. Mr. Jackson said that he heard two different things and wanted to know Mr. Bell's plans with the puppies if he breeds his dog. Mr. Bell said that his father and children want a dog, but he does not know how many dogs come in the litter. Mr. Bell said that he is unsure of all the laws to breeding. Mr. Bell explained that he is not breeding to sale the dogs. Mr. Jackson asked Mr. Travis Clark whether aggression traits and characteristics are bred. Mr. Clark responded that it could be, because an animal that is deemed dangerous has already shown negative behavior. Mr. Clark voiced concerns of seeing the genetic trait bred in to animals in the community. Mr. Jackson wanted to know if this is the first encounter with the dog. Mr. Clark said that he was afraid of the big dog when it first arrived. He explained that over the past week of cleaning up behind Mr. Bell's dog, the dog now listens to him. Mr. Clark said he is fine with the ruling if Mr. Bell's dog is deemed dangerous. He explained that if Mr. Bell's dog is intact and something else occurs that puts Animal Services in front of the Commission again, it would not be a matter of Animal Control not doing its job. Mr. Jackson had concerns about breeding the dangerous dog and the puppies from its litter being given to another owner that may not be as responsible as Mr. Bell.

The President reminded the Commission that they have the minimum quorum and to wrap up the discussion.

Mr. Chavez wanted to know the age and weight of Mr. Bell's dog. Mr. Bell responded that his dog is one year old and 96 pounds. Mr. Chavez also wanted to know why Mr. Bell's dog wears a muzzle. Mr. Bell responded that from his experience of wanting to pet a dog and the dog lunged at him. Mr. Bell explained that he does not want anyone to experience that with his dog and that the dog wears a muzzle to the vet doctor. Mr. Bell said that this is the first offense that his dog has ever had. Mr. Chavez wanted to know if neutering a dog will make it less dangerous. Mr. Travis Clark responded that neutering decreases testosterone, which in theory will help with aggression in animals. Mr. Chavez also wanted to know if the Bell family could visit their dog. Mr. Clark responded that Animal Control discontinued pet visits since the pandemic occurred. Mr. Clark explained that in this case, seeing the family could cause the dog to regress if the dog thinks it is going home. Mr. Bell commented that the Animal Control Officer informed him of visitation when he dropped off his dog.

Mr. Young commented that dogs are hardly dangerous to its own owner or family. He explained that many aggressive, big, powerful dog breeds that pose a danger to people and animals they do not know. Mr. Young said that a responsible dog owner can prevent revealing itself as dangerous is by following the law and having a proper enclosure for the dog before anything happens, not afterward. Mr. Young said, "Once the dog has escaped, and gone onto someone else's property and cause damage, it has revealed that it is a dangerous dog. According to the definitions in our law, there is no reason to have dangerous dogs breeding in Caddo Parish. We must not let dangerous dogs be bred in Caddo parish ever. Please vote to neuter this dog. Thank you."

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Jackson, *to overturn the decision of the Animal Services Board, however, the owner and his dog will adhere to all the other requirements associated with the determination of a dangerous dog, except for the neutering of the dog for one year.*

Point of Clarification by Mr. Jackson, on what will occur with the ruling if the motion failed. Attorney Frazier clarified that if Mr. Epperson's motion fails, then there would need to be another motion. Attorney Frazier explained that if the Commission does nothing, the appellant can appeal to the District Court. Mr. Jackson wanted to know the number of votes to uphold the motion. Attorney Frazier responded the majority of the quorum.

Attorney Frazier pointed out that some requirements are permanent and asked for clarification of Mr. Epperson's motion about the one-year period. Mr. Epperson said that the requirements for one year would be at the discretion of Animal Services.

Mr. Hopkins requested clarification on whether the Commission is voting to deem the dog dangerous. Attorney Frazier reiterated that Mr. Bell is appealing the spay and neuter of his dog.

Point of Clarification by the Clerk, that Mr. Epperson's motion is to overturn just the spay and neuter aspect of the Animal Services Board ruling.

At this time, Mr. Epperson's motion failed, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Epperson (1). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Jackson, Taliaferro, and Young (6). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Gage-Watts, Johnson, Jones, and Lazarus (5). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Young**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *to uphold the recommendation of the Animal Services Board and all stipulations.*

Mr. Young commented that the Parish passed a law that all cats and dogs need to be spayed or neutered in Caddo Parish, unless they meet certain exceptions; and Mr. Bell's dog does not meet any exceptions. Mr. Young said that it is against public policy to allow the animal to breed.

At this time, Mr. Young's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Chavez, Hopkins, Jackson, Taliaferro, and Young (6). NAYS: Commissioner Epperson (1). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Gage-Watts, Johnson, Jones, and Lazarus (5). ABSTAIN: None (0).

The President asked that Animal Services act as soon as possible to allow pets back to their owners. He also told Mr. Bell he can appeal the Commission's decision to the District Court if he wants to take his case to another level.

There was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.



Linda J. Montgomery
Office Specialist I

John E. Atkins
President