

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF  
THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION  
HELD ON THE 8TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2022

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Regular Session, on the above date, at 3:43 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mr. Atkins, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (8). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, Jackson, and Jones (4).

The invocation was given by Mr. Johnson, and Mrs. Taliaferro led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Young, *to suspend the rules and consider agenda item 8.5 Special Resolution of Recognition for The Krewe of Sobek's 20th Anniversary.* Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (8). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, Jackson, and Jones (4). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mrs. Gage-Watts commented that the Krewe of Sobek does much for Parish kids and that it is the only Krewe that rolls through Shreveport neighborhoods including Queensboro. Mrs. Gage-Watts presented a Key to The Parish to the Krewe of Sobek. The King of Sobek explained how the Krewe of Sobek follows its founder's mission to bring the parade through neighborhoods and do philanthropy throughout the community. He said that the Krewe of Sobek hosts bike drives, voting drives, angel Christmas trees, food drives. Mrs. Sandra Begum, co-founder of the Krewe of Sobek and Ball Chairperson, announced that the Krewe of Sobek celebrates 20 years strong with their current year's theme being Sobek Travels the World. Mrs. Begum invited the Commission to purchase tickets and attend their Parade on Saturday, January 14, 2023. Mr. Young congratulated the Krewe of Sobek and expressed excitement to see the Krewe of Sobek and their participation in the Highland Parade. Mr. Young said that the Krewe of Sobek is always very exceptional.

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Young, *that the Special Resolution of Recognition for The Krewe of Sobek's 20th Anniversary be adopted.* Motion carried by acclamation.

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Young, *to return to the regular agenda.* Motion carried by acclamation

**AGENDA ADDITIONS**

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *to expand the agenda and add Resolution No. 53 of 2022, a resolution of the Caddo Parish Commission, State Of Louisiana approving and authorizing the Caddo Parish Fire District No. 1 of the Parish Of Caddo, State Of Louisiana to issue, sell and deliver revenue refunding certificates in an amount not exceeding five hundred eight-three thousand dollars (\$583,000), in one or more series, and providing for other matters in connection therewith under Resolutions.*

The President of the Commission opened the floor for anyone to speak in favor or against adding Resolution No. 53 of 2022 to the agenda.

Mr. Wesley Shafto came before the Commission and gave the following comment for the Resolution:

Thank you. My name is Wes Shafto, Boles Shafto in Monroe, we're bond council to Fire District Number One. This is mainly a routine matter of consenting to a refinancing of existing loan the district incurred back in 2011. The interest rate feature of this loan becomes due February One, and we have to reset a refinance the loan by that time. We have a commitment from the Red River Bank at a 4% interest rate, one and a half percent interest rate, and we would request that you approve this. Obviously, there's no liability or responsibility of the Parish, but under State law, you as a Fire District as a supporting entity requires your consent.

There being no one else to speak in favor or against the agenda addition, the President closed the public hearings.

At this time, Mr. Johnson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (7). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jackson, and Jones (5). ABSTAIN: None (0).

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

RJ Johnson came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Thank you, Commissioner. Good afternoon, commissioners. I'm here a lot of times in a lot of capacities. Today, I'm here in my capacity as a member of the Caddo Parish Board of Election

Supervisors. You've probably received our minutes from our board meeting, drawn by another member of our board, the Clerk of Court, as well as our Board Secretary and our Elections Supervisor in the current course office, Ms. Crawford. And so, in those minutes, we did ask that you delay the consideration of the redistricting today. So, we would have time to look at the Parish precinct splits, and determine how that, you know, if that will work, how that will work, and kind of come up with some additional solutions to that issue. So, we're asking that you do delay the passage of the ordinance in relation to reapportionment today, in that regard. That's it. Thank you.

Marvin Muhammed came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Thank you, Mr. President and to the commission. I stand to come to speak on the on your ordinance for redistricting as well. I stand to rise, because I was, after looking at the commission work session on Monday, I had some concerns. I listened and quite honestly, I heard a device of Parish. one Black, one White, one Republican, one Democrat, one poor, one rich, and I thought that that's themed from fears and insecurities. And often times when a proper understanding of the history of Caddo Parish, then these things can be relevant today. So, I stand today to just walk through us a very short period of the Parish of Caddo so we can fully understand why today is very critical. In 1938 of January of 1830, I mean this Parish was incorporated. For 134 years, all the way up to 1972, there wasn't one single African American representative, actually representing the interests of African Americans in this Parish. In 1972, four men, the Honorable Hersey D Wilson, Dr. E. Edward Jones, Dr. Sam Lester and Reverend H.M. They actually broke a barrier seven years after the 1965 Voting Rights Act. In 1975, during the new election, we actually got our first female African American Police Juror by the name of Bessie Smith. Take that all the way up to 1984. Through two propositions to Police the Caddo Parish Police Jury established the Home Charter rule. Two things happened they went from that to a Home Charter route, and proposition two actually went made this body from 20 to 12. Today, so we went from very diluted Ward territories to what we have today, 12 single member districts. In 1998, then Commissioner Hersey D. Wilson made his transition. He passed on August 3, 1998. He was laid to rest on August 8th, that Saturday. That preceding Monday on August 10th, six male White Republicans actually appointed a White Republican to his seat by the name of former Commissioner Charles Andrews. This is the this is the climax, why it's so important that we get this right. For decades, for a little less than 16 years, less than 200 years, we have been struggling. Thank you. I won't take up the full, remaining three minutes Mr. President. The 1998, as I was saying, there was an attempt to further dilute or take away the representation of Black voices. Here we are today, in 2022 because of a shifting population, the argument now is centered around District 10. I too as the previous speaker spoke, I suggest very humbly that this body postpone any consideration of any maps, because there's literally five or six different maps that have been proposed to one by Mr. Cedric Floyd, because L.B.J. map, Commissioner Chavez and Commissioner Paul Young. They both asked for a map that I have viewed. There's another map that the power cord listeners have introduced since incident then, and there's other maps that's also. So, I believe the best thing to do at this point, so that we don't become divisive, so that we can push one parish is to stop and let's educate the voters. Let's educate the citizens of this parish should move forward as one. Thank you.

### **VISITORS**

- Stacy Brown To Present 2023 Convention and Tourist Bureau Budget

Mrs. Brown described the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau as the official destination marketing organization whose staff are experts, local business advocates and tourism industry leaders at the local, state, and national levels. The Tourist Bureau services more than 800 partners in the Shreveport-Bossier area, oversees two visitor centers, and manages divisions and marketing partnerships. Mrs. Brown highlighted the awards and contracts that the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau received such as the ASA Archery ten-year contract valued at the economic impact of \$2.5M, the National Square Dance, with about a \$4.39 million economic impact, and the Dixie World Series with a \$4.2 million economic impact. Mrs. Brown said that Shreveport will host the National Tour Association which has national and international tour operators coming into the local market. In February 2023, the Society of American Writers will host their central states chapter meeting in Shreveport to experience Mardi Gras and write about it. Stage Works is being converted into a multi-use sports facility in mid to late 2023 that the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau will host events through. Mrs. Brown recapped that the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau hosted 95 convention/tourism groups this year through September for an economic impact of \$63M and hosted 110 Sports Commission groups for an economic impact of \$47M. Mrs. Brown said that local hotel occupancy continues to surpass pre-COVID figures. Mrs. Brown explained that a company tracks geolocation data to help the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau target where and when to place ads. Mrs. Brown explained that most visitors come from Texas, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Arkansas and love to spend money dining out and groceries. Mrs. Brown reviewed the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau 3-year Strategic Goals, and their top two priorities is to do a destination masterplan and a community-owned brand. A destination masterplan is a 10-year strategic roadmap that increases leisure, business and sporting visitors, enhances the quality of life and opportunities for residents, and accelerates resident relocation and talent attraction. Mrs. Brown presenting the members of the steering committee which completed focus groups, interviews, town hall meetings, committee meetings, and resident surveys. Mrs. Brown said the key takeaways of the resident survey are that residents see Shreveport as a diverse and artsy community. She explained that the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau is working with grass root leaders and community pillars and with economic development teams. Mrs. Brown highlighted local events that

increased stats over 300% from the previous year such as the Rose Parade and how the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau collaborates with culinary trails. She said that their team will do equity, diversity and inclusion training to highlight true diversity in the community. Mrs. Brown explained that the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau run fiscally sound and keep a six-month reserve in case of another pandemic like COVID. Mrs. Brown explained that the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau 2023 budget is up 2% over 2022 with a revenue of \$5.6M and presented a breakdown of the Bureau's budget and the Sports Commission's budget. Mrs. Brown explained that the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau recognized the need to reserve funds for special sporting events in case of a bid opportunity or large bid fees for the opportunity to be considered for an event

#### **ADOPT REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *to englobo and adopt the Regular Session Minutes November 17, 2022, and Special Session Minutes (Budget Adoption) December 1, 2022. Motion carried.*

#### **SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS**

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

- *Special Resolution of Recognition for The Theater of The Performing Arts*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition for Shreveport Little Theater*
- *Special Resolution of Remembrance for Mr. Carl Staples*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition for The Toys for Tots Program*
- *Special Resolution Recognizing December 10th as Human Rights Day*

Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (7). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jackson, and Jones (5). ABSTAIN: None (0).

#### **COMMUNIQES AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Mr. Young reminded everyone to vote on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING ON ZONING ORDINANCES**

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

- *Ordinance No. 6295 of 2022, related to 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, related to 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*

Jason Brady came before the Commission and gave the following comment for Ordinance No. 6295:

Jason Brady. I'm just here. We represent Laggerson Holdings in the rezoning and here if you all have any questions.

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

#### **PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCES**

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

- *Ordinance No. 6264 of 2022, an ordinance amending and re-enacting Ordinance No. 5111 of 2011, reapportioning Caddo Parish into twelve Commission Districts, enumerating the constituent precincts respectively comprising the Commission Districts, and otherwise providing with respect thereto.*

Mike Spence came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Commissioners, thank you for giving me a second here. I am speaking on behalf of the Board of Election Supervisors and the Caddo Parish Clerk of Court's Office. In your votes, we would ask for you to please consider not splitting any precincts to where we have an A and a B precinct. The main reason for this is we do not have the machines to accommodate that, and also it creates havoc for the voters. So, anyone have any questions for me? There are some now that any new-right now we have about five to six machines that are spares. So as long as we consider that we appreciate it. When we say split, that's when you create a new precinct.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that split precincts already exist. Mr. Hopkins said there are six splits in the original redistricting plan and Mr. Hopkin's.

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

### **ZONING ORDINANCES (for final passage)**

It was **moved by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *that Ordinance No. 6295 of 2022, related to 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* be adopted.

Mr. Young commented that he will vote in favor of this to support the Commissioner of that district, however, the development is not what the master plan envisions, and the rezoning is spreading a diminishing population. Mr. Atkins thanked Mr. Young for his support and stated that the project fits well with the master plan. Mr. Clark acknowledged the comment that the project is consistent with the future land use map of the UDC (Unified Development Code).

At this time, Mr. Atkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (7). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jackson, and Jones (5). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *that Ordinance No. 6296 of 2022, related to 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* be adopted.

Mr. Johnson asked for clarification on changing the zoning to the same zoning. The Clerk responded that each zoning has specific details. Mr. Clark, Director of the MPC, explained that the original C-1 zone was for industrial type use and the C-1(PUD) zone provides amenities to offset the increased utilization of a property. Mr. Clark explained that sheet metal type operations were removed and replaced with a vehicle operation facility, which was a better use for surrounding residential properties. Mr. Atkins agreed with Mr. Clark that the designation is a much better fit for the neighborhood.

At this time, Mr. Atkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (7). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jackson, and Jones (5). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *that Ordinance No. 6264 of 2022, an ordinance amending and re-enacting Ordinance No. 5111 of 2011, reapportioning Caddo Parish into twelve Commission Districts, enumerating the constituent precincts respectively comprising the Commission Districts, and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be delayed until January 19, 2023.

Mr. Hopkins commented that more work is needed and if each plan is considered during the meeting it would fail based on the members present. Mr. Atkins commented that the Secretary of State confirmed that the State deadline for redistricting plans is in July, although the Caddo Parish Commission's Charter's deadline is the end of the year. Mr. Chavez requested that Mr. RJ Johnson and Mr. Mike Spence attend the meeting when Ordinance No. 6264 of 2022 is considered. Mr. Chavez thought that it would be advantageous for the Commission to get advice from Mr. RJ Johnson and Mr. Mike Spence. The Clerk announced that he briefly consulted with Attorney Frazier that the Commission would need a date certain

to postpone an agenda item, but if the Commission did not have a date an agenda item could be tabled.

At this time, Mr. Atkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (7). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jackson, and Jones (5). ABSTAIN: None (0).

**ORDINANCES (for introduction by title)**

- *Ordinance No. 6297 of 2022, an ordinance amending the 2022 Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Section 8 Fund*

**WORK SESSION MINUTES**

It was **moved by Mr. Johnson**, seconded by Mr. Young, *that Work Session Minutes from March 14, 2022, be ratified. Motion carried.*

**RESOLUTIONS**

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

- *Resolution No. 53 of 2022, a resolution of the Caddo Parish Commission, State of Louisiana approving and authorizing the Caddo Parish Fire District No. 1 of the Parish of Caddo, State of Louisiana to issue, sell and deliver revenue refunding certificates in an amount not exceeding five hundred eight-three thousand dollars (\$583,000), in one or more series, and providing for other matters in connection therewith.*
- *Resolution No. 54 of 2022, a resolution providing for canvassing the returns and declaring the results of the special election held in Caddo Parish, Louisiana, on Tuesday, November 8, 2022, to authorize the renewal of special taxes therein and the issuance of general obligation bonds.*

Mr. Johnson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (7). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jackson, and Jones (5). ABSTAIN: None (0).

**OLD BUSINESS**

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *to englobo and approve the following end of the year appointments:*

<u>Sewerage District No. 7</u>	<u>Expiration Date</u>	
Billy Woods, Jr.	12/4/2022	Reappointment
<u>Fire District No. 1</u>		
Joseph Distefano	12/4/2022	Reappointment
Lendell Davidson	12/4/2022	Reappointment
<u>Fire District No. 3</u>		
Susan Tuberville	12/4/2022	Reappointment
<u>Fire District No. 4</u>		
Steve Opdroek	12/4/2022	Reappointment
Greg Sims	12/4/2022	Reappointment
Kevin McClure	12/4/2022	Reappointment
<u>Fire District No. 5</u>		
Jake Majors	12/4/2022	Reappointment
Lennis Elston	12/4/2022	Reappointment
John Lorick	12/4/2022	Reappointment
Stacey Pierce	12/4/2022	Reappointment
<u>Fire District No. 6</u>		
Patrick Miciotto	12/4/2022	Reappointment
Marilyn Smith	12/4/2022	Reappointment
Mike McCullough	12/4/2022	Reappointment
Don Razinsky	12/4/2022	Reappointment
<u>Fire District No. 7</u>		
David Houston	12/4/2022	Reappointment
James R. Alexander	12/4/2022	Reappointment

<u>Fire District No. 8</u> David Austin, Jr.	12/4/2022	Reappointment
<u>Shreveport-Bossier Tourist Commission</u> Casey B. Hartley	12/31/2022	Reappointment

**Friendly amendment by Mr. Johnson**, to remove the reappointment of Casey B. Hartley to the Shreveport-Bossier Tourist Commission.

Mr. Hopkins commented that Mrs. Casey B. Hartley does a very good job. Mr. Johnson said that he did not know who the candidate was.

Mr. Johnson withdrew his friendly amendment.

At this time, Mr. Hopkin's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (7). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jackson, and Jones (5). ABSTAIN: None (0).

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Atkins wanted to know the required advertisement period. The Clerk responded that there are no formal requirements, but the Commission could set an advertisement period. The Clerk explained that once there is a vacancy the Commission has 20 days to appoint, and that the Governor would make an appointment if the Commission has not appointed someone within the 20 days. Mr. Taliaferro's resignation date has been estimated. Mr. Johnson commented about relaxing the deadline to give people a chance to hear about the vacancy and to submit resumes. Mr. Atkins proposed a special meeting on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Mr. Hopkins suggested the special meeting be scheduled before a Work Session meeting, but Mr. Johnson said that there may not be a quorum. Mr. Hopkins commented that the Commission did not interview Mr. Steffon Jones and Mr. Atkins agreed to remove interviews. Mr. Hopkins said that the ad will go out on December 9<sup>th</sup> with a deadline for December 22<sup>nd</sup>, and that the Commission Clerk's Office can get the information to commissioners between Christmas Eve and Christmas Day for consideration on January 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Taliaferro said that he could resign anytime up to December 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Johnson pointed out that due to national holidays at the end of the year the Commission could make an appointment the week after the first of the year. Mr. Atkins responded that there is concern about having a commissioner's seat empty. Mr. Young preferred to make an appointment in advance of the 20-day deadline. Mr. Hopkins preferred that the new appointee starts the first meeting week in January. Mr. Chavez spoke in favor of a special meeting on January 6<sup>th</sup> and asked the Clerk about the Chamber's availability on January 9<sup>th</sup> through the 11<sup>th</sup>. The Clerk responded that the Chambers will be occupied on January 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, but the schedule is open on January 12<sup>th</sup>.

It was **moved by Mr. Chavez**, seconded by Mr. Young, *that a Special Session be held on January 12, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. appointment candidates for the district 8 Commission Seat be considered.*

Mr. Chavez commented that candidates could speak in the citizens comments section during that meeting. Mr. Johnson preferred a question-and-answer process.

**Amendment by Mr. Chavez**, *to add a question-and-answer process and allow up to seven minutes per person.*

Mr. Hopkins clarified that the deadline for applications will be December 31<sup>st</sup>.

At this time, Mr. Chavez's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (7). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jackson, and Jones (5). ABSTAIN: None (0).

The Clerk would send the advertisement draft to all commissioners. The Clerk announced that advertisement for the District 8 vacancy would be submitted for publishing on December 9, 2022, and the advertisements should be available in the next print edition of four newspapers. The applications will be available in writing and electronically until December 31<sup>st</sup>. The applicant must be a registered voter in District 8, and there are no other requirements. The public meeting to consider applicants for the District 8 vacancy will be held on January 12, 2023, and applicants who wish to be considered are required to attend the meeting in person.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that the official journal does not print until next week. The Clerk acknowledged that each newspaper has a different publication date and that he would send a schedule of the publication dates. The Clerk confirmed that the district 8 vacancy would be advertised in the Shreveport Times, Shreveport Sun, Caddo Citizen and the Inquisitor. Mr. Johnson wanted to know if advertisements could be published before the Caddo Parish's official journal, The Caddo Citizen, publishes the advertisements. Attorney Frazier did not see an issue if the official journal has a specified length of time to publish the advertisements. Mr. Johnson said the official journal's purpose is to publish Parish matters.

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Young, *to confirm the appointment of Tony Moffet to the Caddo Fire District No. 1 for the unexpired term of Mr. Carlos Gipson (term to expire January 1, 2024)*. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (7). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jackson, and Jones (5). ABSTAIN: None (0).

### **COMMUNIQUES AND REPORTS**

- The President gave the floor to Mr. Cedric Floyd, with the Data Center LLC.

Mr. Floyd commented that in his redistricting experience, parishes would merge precincts in a consolidation plan that reduces the size of precincts. In consolidation plans, no additional precincts are added. Mr. Floyd said that parish governments create precincts and suggested that the Commission work with the Clerk of Court and the Registrar of Voters to consolidate precincts. Mr. Hopkins pointed out that the Parish has the right number of precincts, but there are not enough voting machines. Mr. Floyd explained that when precincts merge, the precincts do not cross State Senator or higher representatives. Mr. Floyd expressed his willingness to work with the Board of Supervisors or the Clerk of Court on a consolidation plan after a redistricting plan has been approved.

- Mr. Taliaferro gave the following statement:

Mr. President, fellow Commissioners, Dr. Wilson and staff, as I close this chapter of my public service with the Caddo Parish Commission mere words of gratitude fall short of expressing my sincere appreciation to the members of the Commission, the supporting staff and the employees, some whom I've never met, but nevertheless I know of their selfless service. Upon my arrival, you embrace me as a newcomer. Taking the time of both to educate and counseled me on various aspects of my responsibilities of this office and you continue to offer that support and friendship for the last three years. Thank you, Dr. Wilson, your staff, Jeff, Michelle, Linda, to all the department heads, being the hub of the wheel, doing my research, being a sounding board, confirming calendar events, all without hesitation. I cannot thank the entire staff enough for your friendship, your kindness, your responsiveness to my text messages, emails and phone calls. It is this team support which allow me to pass along information and services to my constituents, leaving a favorable impression, and appreciation for the work that you all do. Each of you has been the epitome of stellar customer service, and I really appreciate that. To my fellow Commissioners, I have valued our time together and I have learned from each one of you the many aspects of responsible representation and stewardship to those we serve. To acknowledge the impact each one of you have had on me during my tenure, would require much more time and would still fall short of expressing the depth of my gratitude. Through all our working, regular, special sessions and committee meetings, it was clear. We all have the same goal-grow our parish and serve our constituents. Regardless of how a vote came down on any one subject, I witnessed the genuine depth of compassion, caring and responsibility for the greater good of those we serve. But at the end of the day, I also noticed something that perhaps is more valuable, our fellowship, our camaraderie, our friendship and genuine respect for each other as public servants. A quote from Harry S. Truman, and repeated by many others says, "It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit". Serving with you, I have witnessed firsthand what can be accomplished for the good of team Caddo. I thank you for allowing me to serve alongside you. And to all of our parish employees who do the daily grind of keeping the trains running on time and the parish wheels rolling, I sincerely thank you for making my job and my responsibility to my constituents seamless and meaningful. You continue to go above and beyond on all occasions to numerous dimensions, addressing the concerns of those of us on the Commission, but more importantly, to those citizens of Caddo. And finally, to the citizens of Caddo District 8, I thank you for allowing me to be your voice within our Parish Government. I've enjoyed being your representative, and I hope that through my actions and that of my fellow Commissioners, we have in some part enhanced your quality of life. The people who work tirelessly behind the scenes to provide you with the services that you deserve are as good as they come. And you can be very proud of them as I am. Although I'm ending my service with the Commission, I take with me a part of each of you. Your passion, your wit, your knowledge, your wisdom, and most importantly, your friendship. I thank each of you for the contributions that you have made, which have enriched my life, and prepared me for my challenge going forward. I believe through this experience with you, I can honestly and with pride say that I was part of a Commission, who represented respectful, honest, transparent government. A standard I take with me forward. I have this quote by Condoleezza Rice on the bottom of my Commission stationery, which says, "There's no greater challenge and there is no greater honor than to be in public service". Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you for your leadership, and your counsel and your friendship, and allow me this time to speak. I wish all of you a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year. God bless you, and God bless the Parish of Caddo. Thank you very much.

Mr. Johnson said he would miss Mr. Taliaferro as he got to know him well in the last three years. Mr. Johnson also wished everyone a happy holiday however they celebrate it.

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



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Linda J. Montgomery  
Office Specialist I

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John E. Atkins  
President