

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
PUBLIC SAFETY AD HOC COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 7TH DAY OF MARCH, 2024

The Caddo Parish Public Safety Funding Ad Hoc Committee met in legal session on the above date at 2:00 p.m., in the Government Plaza Chambers, with Mr. Epperson, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Epperson, Gage-Watts, Thomas, and G. Young (4). ABSENT: Commissioner J. Young (1).

The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were given during a previous meeting, so the Committee moved onto Agenda Additions and Public Comments. There were none, so the Committee then moved onto New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

- Update on the automated traffic ticketing system

Mrs. Hayley Barnett, Finance Director, said that they did issued the RFP on January 11, 2024 for the traffic cameras, and the proposals are due today. Next week, the selection committee will review those proposals and give their recommendations to Mrs. Bryant. The RFP will be awarded at the end of this month.

Attorney Bernstein mentioned that Senator Seabaugh introduced Senate Bill 21 in the upcoming Legislative Session. This bill will prohibit the use of traffic cameras in the State of Louisiana.

Mr. Epperson said that use of automated cameras traps speeders in school zones without the use of police officers. He explained that the officers could be in other areas deterring crime.

- Recap of impacts of State Special Session and additional discussion and recommendations related to Public Safety funding, including Crime Labs, Public Defender's Office, and expenses related to CCC detainees and Juvenile Justice


Mrs. Gage-Watts said that Benton is opening up a crime lab. She asked for an update on this lab. Attorney Bernstein said that it is his impression that this would be a part of the Bossier Parish Sheriff's Office. Mrs. Gage-Watts wanted to know if they were disenfranchising the NWLA Crime Lab and operating independently. Attorney Bernstein said that they would have to research that further and provide more details at a later date.

Mr. Epperson asked about the Public Defender's Office. Mr. Walker explained that the board went from an 11-member board to a 9-member board. He will provide that list directly from the bill at a later date. Caddo Parish's local public defender will maintain her status until 2025, at which point she would need to be reappointed at that time. Mr. Walker said that there are no other updates in the local office, but local attorneys are planning to sue in federal court regarding this change. Mr. Walker will provide the latest version of the bill to the Commissioners.

The Clerk of the Commission reminded the Committee that the Parish Administrator sent out a summary of bills that may impact Caddo Parish.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know if all members of the Citizens Advisory Disaster Committee have been appointed. The Clerk of the Commission stated that there are enough members for a quorum at this time. Mr. Epperson said that there will be a discussion regarding the parameters of that Committee at a later date.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:23 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant to the Commission Clerk