

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 2ND DAY OF MAY, 2022

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Work Session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mr. Atkins, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, Taliaferro, and Young (10). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell and Gage-Watts (2).

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

AGENDA ADDITIONS

It was **moved by Mr. Chavez**, seconded by Mr. Young, *to expand the agenda and add Resolution No. 30 of 2022, a resolution urging the State Legislature to amend the sentence for assault by drive-by shooting, and to otherwise providing with respect thereto* under New Business.

He said that this resolution would request the Legislature to increase the minimum incarceration term from one year to five years for drive-by shootings.

At this time, the President opened up the floor for anyone to speak in favor or against adding this item to the agenda. The public hearing was now closed.

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

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Mayquie Jackson came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I'm a CEO founder of Humanity 2020 Group, which powers Operation Neighborhood Reinforcement Initiative that American Rescue Plan funding Committee generously recommended us for appropriated funds last year. We're a nonprofit two on one service provider. We're Medicaid service provider. We'll be able to behavioral health service provider. We're a licensed mental health professional. We're licensed professional counselors or psychiatrists. We're licensed clinical social workers, all on staff. We were following all guidelines of substance abuse and mental health services. Our credentials with this more than 30-plus years of experience in the field, we know our industry like the back of our hands. There're no challenges too big or too small. We dedicate our utmost energy to every crisis that we take on. We're, now, can be considered a Medicaid mobile crisis response team. Our team consists of two Crisis Peer Peace Practitioners, one Drug and Alcohol Specialist, excuse me, one Mental Health Specialist. Let's get closer with the collaboration and the partnership that we have. We have Katrina Bolden, Executive Director of Peer Counseling. She has three locations here, Louisiana. She has Shreveport, Rustin, Farmersville and she's a true mental health specialist in the industry. 988 is one of our biggest components that really expanded us. It will allow us to be able to receive, excuse me, will allow us to be able to be a service provider for 988, which the three-digit National Mental Health Crisis Hotline that was mandated by the federal government October 2020. This will allow us to receive calls from national and local crisis centers. Calls to inform 911 Shreveport Police Department that meet our criteria. These calls will be redirected to 988, then to our in-house call center. We stand here in front of you today because we need your help. We have experience. We have, excuse me, we have expanded our collaboration partnership as far as we possibly can in the Caddo Parish and the City. Here's the situation, we're capable of serving Shreveport-Caddo Parish Medicaid recipients over the age of 21 and up leaving a huge gap of uninsured and the most vulnerable citizens without normal crisis management. Especially our future, our children. Those at risk and those under 21. With your help we can reach those most in need together. This matter is worth considering again. A crisis plan is a very important component of. I'm sorry, time. Thank you. This matter was considered a crisis plan is important component of community. It can act as a guide to help us quickly compound the crisis and help citizens to recover some this crisis. I'm hoping you'll consider we handle your generous contribution this year. Thank you, all commissioners, for taking the time to listen as we hope your votes yes for Operation Neighborhood Reinforcement Initiative on the streets of Caddo Parish. Our citizens need you, especially our children. Please add us on the next work session agenda. I yield back. Thank you for the.

Susannah Poljak came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I am here today to talk about the gunfight and murder of a child. That happened yesterday afternoon at the corner of Erie and Fairfield. To paraphrase the movie network, I'm mad and I'm not going to take it anymore. And I don't want anyone anywhere in this city to take it anymore. Enough is enough. I understand that I can be accused of not caring until it affected me. And that's fine. So be it. I am willing to accept all that comes with that criticism. But what I want to know is what we are going to do right now and going forward? All children should be able to sit in a car, to play in their front yard, to visit their parents at

their workplaces, to sleep in their beds, or to visit their grandparents and not get killed for it. We are failing our children whether those children are perpetrators or victims and failure just isn't an option. I live here in the City of Shreveport. I have children. I want them to come back, and I got to tell you right now, they are afraid and I don't blame them. But I'm not here just to complain. I am ready to work. I need you to tell me what it is that you want me to do. Do you want me to pay more taxes? I will do it. Do you want me to walk the streets? I will put on my walking shoes and I will get people together. Do you want me to tutor children? I will do it. I will do it. I will do whatever is needed, but I have a request from you. We need-the Commission controls juvenile justice. Juvenile Justice, I know all the people who work there. I have worked with them over the years. They, to me, deserve canonization and the Nobel Peace Prize and they ought to get them both today. They are so good at what they do, but their funding stream isn't consistent and it's small. I would just I would ask that you give them-that they don't have to worry about whether or not taxpayers are feeling rebellious and burdened and they have to want to renew the millage. They just deserve. They deserve more money and they deserve to know that it will always be there. So, I'm going to ask for that, and the other thing I'm going to ask is I would really like for the Commission to take the lead on creating a safety commission that involves the District Attorney, involves the Courts, involve Juvenile Justice, the Caddo Parish School Board, the City Council, the Sheriff, the Mayor, and this Commission. And, I would like for the Safety Commission to be able to gather data to plan, to organize and to implement. I would ask. I'm sorry, my time has expired. Thank you very much. I really appreciate it. I would like any egos and power struggles to be put aside. These are our children, and I'm willing, as I said earlier, to do whatever help is needed. If y'all need someone from Silicon Valley. I used to work in the Bay Area. I can go find some data expert to analyze this data to tell you what to do. If you want me, I used to live in New York City. Do you want me to go find a Police Commissioner, Bill Bratton, to help you figure out how to get this doing? I'll do it. I will do whatever is needed, but the fact is we have to act now. And I want you to know, the Commission, if you guys take the lead. You're not alone. I had a conversation today with my former colleague Dottie Bell of the Caddo Parish School Board. I asked her if I can quote her, and she said I could. So, I'm going to. She says, I am tired of our babies being killed. I just left CMS checking on the babies and staff. When I walked in, my heart was so heavy, because a month ago it was Huntington High School. I felt the same way looking at the faces of the babies and the staff. Whatever you do, I'm in support of it. We have got to do something and maybe what you're doing today we'll give it a start. I'm praying for an answer. And I said to Ms. Bell I said I'm praying for an answer and I would really appreciate the Commission for taking the lead. Thank you.

VISITORS

- Jeffrey Goodman, YMCA of Northwest Louisiana
Baseball complex presentation

Mr. Goodman conducted a presentation for the potential baseball complex. He said that the YMCA is developing a youth baseball and softball complex. The current complex is home to the Shreveport Little League Baseball and Softball and opened up over 30 years ago. Since its inception, the facility has virtually remained unchanged. The family that owned the land and leased it to the Little League who was hesitant to put "real money into it" because they thought maybe the family might have a change of heart.

Now the YMCA owns that land. Once the Y bought the land, they went through a needs assessment to determine the best use for the complex. In order to make the complex "tournament grade", additional parking is needed, drainage issues need to be resolved, and artificial turf need to be installed in the fields. He said that if the field does not have artificial turf, that location will not even be considered.

The project will cost about \$7.5M. The Y has raised \$2.3M to date. It is also estimated that there will be a \$5M economic impact in Year One. Approximately 50,000 people use the current facility per year; it is estimated that 340,000 people per year will use the upgraded facility. The funds for this facility have been raised through a combination of public and private monies.

He also pointed out that MLB's RBI (Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities) program increases participation and interest in baseball and softball among underserved youth; encourage academic achievement; and teach the value of teamwork. The complex will also provide a positive outlet where youth can spend time, which correlates to less crime. The Youth Development Baseball Complex will also increase the number of local kids playing baseball and softball, enhance opportunities for local league play, offer free summer baseball and softball clinics, provide career and volunteer opportunities; and it will be a source of community pride, vision, and hope.

Additional uses for the complex include: weekend outdoor health and wellness fairs, family fun nights at the park, community baseball and t-ball games, movie nights under the stars, and events that utilize YMCA's forty current community organization partnerships.

Mr. Patrick Wesley, Director of Parks & Recreation, said that he was going to put in the 2023 Budget Book a feasibility study request for a sports complex, but then Mr. Goodman approached him about this complex. Mr. Wesley views this complex as a "win-win". He explained that the youth sports tourism industry is brings in about \$19B annually.

Mr. Wesley also said that Caddo Parish does have T-Ball, but then it drops off because

there isn't a feeder system. He said that this complex will provide for an academy type setting to follow the children from Wee Ball to T-Ball to baseball.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know where the current YMCA facilities are located in Caddo Parish. Mr. Good said that there is the Downtown facility, the BHP YMCA, and they are currently working on a complex in the Forbing area, which should be open in about ten months.

Mr. Epperson said that West Shreveport and Pines Road has a huge population with several amenities, including easy access to the airport, interstates, and hotels. He said that West Shreveport and Pines Road has plenty of land that is ready for development. Mr. Epperson would like some development, such as this, for that area.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know if any other entities have committed to this project. Mr. Goodman said that they are planning to do a presentation before the City and the School Board. He also mentioned that the State provided them almost \$1.5M.

Mr. Taliaferro thanked the YMCA for coming to the Commission today to present this proposal. He wanted to know if they would be able to use some of the money from this complex for the children in the community who do not play softball or baseball. Mr. Goodman said that along with the baseball, there will be soccer fields, basketball courts, etc. He said that the complex would teach the children who are interested in sports, how to play those sports. Mr. Goodman also said that there will be significant new revenue to grow the game, develop players, and help subsidize membership fees for those who cannot afford program fees or membership fees.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- Pin Ceremony Virtual Video Presentation
Friday, May 6, 2022 at 2:30 p.m.

Dr. Wilson said that this will be aired virtually, but is hoping that it will be in-person next year.

- Employee Recognition Event
Saturday, May 7, 2022 from 11:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.
Richard Fleming Park

Dr. Wilson invited everyone to attend.

- First Quarter Travel Report

Dr. Wilson provided the Commissioners with a quarterly travel report.

- Jacob Haynes, SJB Group
Parks Master Plan Update

Mr. Cook said that they are working with the Caddo Parish Parks & Recreation Department and the City of Shreveport's SPAR program to update the Parks Master Plan. They will collect data to learn specific trends, opportunities, and needs of the public. This information will be put in a report with a list of recommendations for the department. They are currently in the community engagement part of the process. He encouraged all of the citizens to provide their input.

Mr. Atkins asked that Mr. Cook provide a link to the survey for all of the Commissioners.

Mr. Young wanted to know where the headquarters for SJB was placed. Mr. Cook said that they are out of Baton Rouge. Mr. Young also mentioned that four out of ten people in this community live in chronic malnutrition because there is not enough healthy food for the citizens. He would like fruit trees and food gardens be incorporated into the master plan.

Dr. Wilson also said that they are working towards getting the Caddo Parish Parks nationally certified.

Mr. Chavez requested a meeting with Mr. Cook and the SJB Group to voice their needs and wants on behalf of their constituents.

COMMISSION REMARKS

- Mr. Johnson asked about the broken monitor. The Clerk of the Commission said that something is wrong with the wiring issue, not the monitor, but they are actively working on it.

He also talked about the tragedy that happened over the weekend. He said that this type

of crime has gotten out of hand and has been going on all over Shreveport.

- Mr. Young said that there will be a Memorial Community Crisis Walk beginning at 5:00 p.m. in the South Highlands neighborhood. He encouraged all to attend. Mr. Young agreed with Mr. Johnson and said that all lives are equal and valuable. He hopes that everyone can “respond to the crisis that is a generation old in our city”.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Mr. Atkins agreed with Mr. Johnson and Mr. Young. He also said that more conversations need to be had about protecting the youth.

NEW BUSINESS

It was **moved by Mr. Chavez**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that Ordinance No. 6229 of 2022, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Capital Outlay Fund and the Oil & Gas Fund for the year 2022 to provide an appropriation for the construction of the YMCA Baseball Complex and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday’s agenda for introduction.

Mr. Chavez said that this passed unanimously out of the Economic Development Committee.

Mr. Jones is excited about the prospect of this complex to be built in this community. He said that he’s been to some of these parks that were mentioned in the presentation, and they “are packed”. He said that Shreveport and Caddo Parish could have a piece of this pie by building this complex. Youth Sports is a huge market and generates revenue, he said.

Substitute motion by Mr. Young, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *to englobo and move the following items to Thursday’s agenda for introduction:*

- *Ordinance No. 6229 of 2022, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Capital Outlay Fund and the Oil & Gas Fund for the year 2022 to provide an appropriation for the construction of the YMCA Baseball Complex and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 27 of 2022, a resolution ordering and calling a special election to authorize the renewal of special taxes and the issuance of General Obligation Bonds; making application to the State Bond Commission and providing for other matters in connection therewith*
- *Resolution No. 28 of 2022, a resolution to authorize the acceptance of the Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire*
- *Resolution No. 29 of 2022, a resolution urging and requesting the Temporary Caddo Parish Planning Commission & Zoning Board to recommend an increase to the limits within which notice of public hearings on subdivision and zoning applications is required, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 30 of 2022, a resolution urging the State Legislature to amend the sentence for assault by drive-by shooting, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Appointment of Julie Gilley to the Ward II Industrial Board to fill the unexpired term vacated by Marty Wooldridge*

Mr. Hopkins wanted to know the costs for increasing notifications with regards to Resolution No. 29 of 2022. Dr. Wilson said that administratively, it is manageable.

Mr. Jones talked about Resolution No. 30 of 2022. He said that he has raved about violence in the community. He wants to ensure that the momentum of outraged does not die after a week or two. He said that there needs to be more programs to keep the attention to the children. Mr. Jones said that the ministry goes beyond the four walls of the church. He said that a generation of young people are gone, and those children are the ones who are killing people. Mr. Jones wants to ensure that we don’t lose another generation of children.

Mr. Jackson wanted to know if this was a one-time appropriation for the YMCA. Dr. Wilson said that this appropriation is over four years. Mr. Jackson wanted to know if there was an application submitted. Mr. Atkins said that it is an economic development proposal. The Clerk of the Commission said that the YMCA did apply, but it is not attached. Mr. Jackson wanted to know if an economic impact study was provided. Mr. Atkins said that it was a part of the presentation. Mr. Jackson asked that each Commissioner show the same respect to the other Commissioners when placing items on the agenda.

At this time, Mr. Young's substitute motion carried, Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Epperson, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Lazarus, and Taliaferro (9). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Gage-Watts, and Young (3). ABSTAIN: None (0).

COMMUNIQES AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Mr. Jackson is disturbed by the young lady whose life was taken. He then talked about Dr. King's *The Other America*, which talks about the "daily ugliness of the other America". He said that there isn't much that separates South Highlands from Cedar Grove, and there should be just a much outrage in one neighborhood as the other. He is praying for this family. Let's keep each other's back, he said.

CONSENT AGENDA

- *Resolution No. 26 of 2022, a resolution urging and requesting the Louisiana Legislature to allow local planning and zoning issues to be resolved by local governing entities and opposing legislation to the contrary, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6226 of 2022, an ordinance to authorize the Administrator to execute a pipeline servitude and right-of-way agreement with Magnolia Midstream Gas Services, LLC, regarding a pipeline through and under Paris property located in Sections 31 and 32, Township 17 North, Range 15 west, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6227 of 2022, an ordinance to deem property surplus and authorize the sale of surplus property owned by the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6228 of 2022, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues for the American Rescue Plan Fund to provide an appropriation for North Louisiana Crime Lab in Caddo Parish, 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 5:02 p.m.


Assistant Commission Clerk