

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
NGO APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 6TH DAY OF MAY, 2024

The Caddo Parish NGO Appropriations Committee met in legal session on the above date at 2:00 p.m., in the Government Plaza Chambers Conference Room, with Mr. Cothran, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Atkins, Cothran, Gage-Watts, Thomas, and G. Young (5). ABSENT: Commissioners Jones and J. Young (1).

Mr. Thomas gave the invocation, and Mr. Atkins led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance. There being no Agenda Additions or Citizens Comments, the Committee moved to New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Considerations and recommendations regarding Hope Connections*

Mrs. Barnett gave a brief summary of this situation. She said that both NGO and Economic Development requires an application to be submitted in order to be considered. There has been an issue with Hope Connections and the application process. She said they started the application process, and they are due 45 days later. DocuSign voided Hope Connections application because it was open for so long without any action. It should have been in Finance's log. She said that this is the only entity that this has gone through this. Mr. Atkins wanted to know if they submitted the application before the deadline. Mrs. Barnett said that they did. Mrs. Barnett said that their application was not scored because their application was voided in error.

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Thomas, *to recommend to the full body an appropriation of \$40k for Hope Connections.*

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if the funds are available for this appropriation. Mrs. Barnett said that they are.

Hope Connections received a grant in February of 2020 to build an additional shelter. There was a contract signed at the time with \$40k for operational costs. Once the funds were drawn down for constructions, the funds that were given to the LHC for operational costs, it was discovered that those funds could not be used for operations.

Christa Pazzaglia, Executive Director from Hope Connections, further explained that the people who cannot reside at the Mission or other rescues can come to this shelter to shower, sleep, case management, etc.

Mr. Cothran wanted to know what would happen if these funds don't cover the whole year of operation costs. Ms. Pazzaglia said that there are other funding sources that they are trying to get funds from.

She also mentioned that the people in the Safe Haven have to only be referred to by the Street Team. They have to be living outside. She further said that these residents are the people who cannot get into any of the other shelters due to mental illnesses, addiction, criminal backgrounds, etc.

Mr. Thomas wanted to know how far could \$40k take them, operating wise, if no other funding sources come through. Ms. Pazzaglia said that two other funding sources have been approved—the City of Shreveport for \$45k, and the Louisiana Housing Corporation for \$70k. Ms. Pazzaglia also mentioned Emergency Solutions funding that could help as well.

Ms. Pazzaglia said that the Louisiana Housing Corporation has a stake in this because the project cannot be shut down due to their error. She said that they are committed to helping out.

Mrs. Gage-Watts wanted to know if they foresee any additional cuts to get under the \$40k. Ms. Pazzaglia does not foresee anymore cuts.

Mr. Cothran said that the request was originally for \$32k, but now it is for \$40k. He asked for an explanation of the other \$8k. Ms. Pazzaglia said that the request was made last year, and they weren't entirely sure of the monthly cost to run the Safe Haven. Mr. Atkins also pointed out that the Commission is part of their patchwork funding.

Mr. G. Young joined the meeting and asked for clarification on what is being discussed. Mr. Thomas gave a brief summary of the situation. The Safe Haven requested an application through the NGO process last year. Once they received it, they opened it on Day 1, but they had 45 days to turn it in or the system would void it automatically. They submitted the application on Day 45, but it came in after 5:00 PM, so the system automatically voided it out. It was on-time and met the deadline, but fell through the cracks due to being submitted after the business day, but before end of the actual day. Mrs. Barnett said that they have since corrected this issue.

Mr. Atkins also said that they are asking for \$40k, but will apply again through the NGO process for next year. Mrs. Bryant pointed out that they have received funding from the Commission for many years. She also explained that the Commission has used Hope Connections to help citizens in the times of relocation and other emergency needs.

At this time, Mrs. Gage-Watts' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Cothran, Gage-Watts, Thomas, and G. Young (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Jones and J. Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mrs. Gage-Watts thanked Hope Connections for all they do for the community and the displaced citizens.

- *Continued discussion regarding the 2024 NGO process to possibly include recommendations for future action or policy.*

Mrs. Barnett said that there was discussion on Compassion for Lives and MLK Dream Keepers during the last committee meeting. They have not received anything from MLK Dream Keepers. She did provide a new score sheet for Compassion for Lives.

Mrs. Bryant also mentioned Transitional Trucking, who is affiliated with Durham Trucking. She said that Transitional Trucking has not been in operation for two years, but Durham Trucking has. Transitional Trucking did not receive funding due to not being eligible per the requirement.

The audio/video equipment failed. The recording ended at 60 minutes. The minutes going forward are solely based on the notes of the Commission Clerk.

It was **moved by Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mr. G. Young, *to rescore the application. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Cothran, Gage-Watts, Thomas, and G. Young (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Jones and J. Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the Commission adjourned at 2:38 p.m.


Assistant to the Commission Clerk