

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S  
APPROPRIATIONS NGO COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THE 5th DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2023

The Caddo Parish Appropriations NGO Committee met in legal session on the above date, at 11:00 a.m., in the Government Plaza First Floor Conference Room, with Mrs. Gage-Watts, Chairman, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, and Jones (6). ABSENT: None (0).

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public comment by Sharon Green regarding support for a grant application.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- Discuss Details of The Non-Governmental Organization Appropriation Process

Mrs. Gage-Watts indicated that the Committee would reconvene next week to complete scoring organizations and have the information submitted to Finance. Mrs. Barnett reviewed the NGO packets with the Committee. Mrs. Gage-Watts reviewed the scoring matrix. Mrs. Barnett indicated that the Food Bank and the Caddo Council on Aging (CCOA) on the scoring list although the Parish has not ever scored those entities, which Mrs. Bryant advised that those entities are funded separately.

Mr. Atkins indicated that the working budget for NGO Appropriations would be \$400,000 after removing the appropriation amount for CCOA and the Food Bank. Mrs. Gage-Watts advised that all entities would be considered and that each entities' scoring would be affected for their late submissions, non-compliance and lack of attendance to Zoom meetings. Mr. Hopkins clarified that entities that did not attend any of the five Zoom meetings

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *that any NGO applicant that failed to attend the Zoom meeting be disqualified from the 2024 funding.*

Mrs. Jalisa Thomas, Grants Coordinator, advised that Robinson's Rescue reported that they did not have time to attend the Zoom meeting. Mrs. Thomas indicated that applicants were invited to the Zoom meetings. Mrs. Bryant advised that she could supply information for one organization that was unable to receive emails.

Mr. Hopkins motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, and Jones (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Jackson (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mrs. Gage-Watts explained that each member would score an applicant based on what they seek. Mrs. Bryant advised that the Community Foundation is proposing an early childhood education program and that the Parish does not want to be in competition with another organization for a program that the Parish already funds. Mrs. Gage-Watts advised that the Committee is to go through the NGO proposal master list, ask any questions and to score each organization. Mrs. Barnett explained that the score would dictate the baseline award amount that the Committee could suggest a separate amount from.

Mrs. Thomas advised that Acadiana Legal Service-Legal Aid of North Louisiana was funded in the past without providing results of their services, and that year 2023 is the first time Acadiana Legal Service provided results of their services. Mrs. Bryant indicated that during the Expungement Summit the Parish would refer people to the Legal Aid of North LA and that summit provides information on the process of an expungement. Mrs. Gage-Watts stated that she would attempt to have an Expungement Summit next month, which Mrs. Bryant requested a grace after October 14<sup>th</sup>.

It was **moved by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *to remove entities from consideration that submitted late applications and were non-compliant.*

Mr. Johnson reviewed entities that could be removed.

**Substitute motion by Mr. Jackson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *to remove applicants that were late or non-compliant except for Southern University Foundation.*

Mrs. Bryant explained that guidelines do not provide exclusions for late submissions and that it was left up to the Committee to consider the information staff provides. Mrs. Bryant indicated that there are 45 days for applications to be submitted. Mr. Jones discussed updating the policy to include the Commission's freedom to reconsider a late submitted application.

Substitute motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Gage-Watts, Jackson and Jones (4). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Hopkins (2). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Mr. Jones clarified that the late submission would affect the score. The Committee reviewed the effects of a score to an organization's requested amount. Mrs. Thomas indicated that organizations would have a higher request amount to improve the favors of receiving an appropriation closer to their actual need amount. Mrs. Bryant explained the different Southern University organizations. Mrs. Gage-Watts reviewed the Proposal Rating Form with the Committee. Mrs. Barnett explained that she did not have the remaining amount from the 2023 budget and that Finance would know by January 31, 2024. Mr. Burrell clarified the effect on the budget for organizations that may not have spent all of the first half of their appropriation and other similar scenario, which Mrs. Bryant addressed. Mr. Johnson suggested that joint committee meeting occur to review the policy for appropriations. Mrs. Bryant reminded the Committee that the NGO Appropriations Committee and the Economic Development Committees historically met as a joint committee to review the appropriation applications, but at the request of the Commission the two committees met separate to review appropriation applications. Mr. Johnson suggested that organizations should receive their second half of the appropriation once an organization submits receipts from using the first half of their appropriation. Mrs. Bryant and Mrs. Barnett indicated that the Parish funding should not be an organization's main source of funds. Mr. Johnson clarified that his suggestion should be allowed for events, which Mrs. Bryant advised that Mr. Johnson's recommendation should be for events only and what qualifies an event. Mrs. Bryant suggested that appropriations for events only be considered by the Economic Development Committee instead of the NGO Appropriations Committee. Mrs. Bryant discussed the grant management policy and procedure development to address challenges with organizations meeting appropriation requirements. Mr. Burrell discussed deadline to submit receipts for appropriations by December 31<sup>st</sup>.

It was **moved by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, *to remove organizations that have not been in existence long enough to meet the grant requirements*.

Mrs. Bryant discussed the rules regarding small and emerging businesses not qualifying for NGO Appropriations. Mr. Jackson clarified that should the motion fail that the organization would be scored accordingly under organization capacity. Attorney Frazier addressed Mr. Hopkins' inquiry to consider Southern Law School in the NGO Committee instead of the Economic Development Committee.

Motion failed, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Hopkins (3). NAYS: Commissioners Gage-Watts, Jackson and Jones (3). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Attorney Frazier suggested that the NGO Committee and the Economic Development Committee have an after-action review after the grant process has been completed for the year. Mrs. Bryant suggested to have completed scores by September 11, 2023, which the Chair confirmed that the Committee would return their scores by September 12<sup>th</sup>. Answering Mr. Atkins, Mrs. Gage-Watts clarified that the Committee must submit the Proposal Rating Form with their score, rating and any comments. Answering Mr. Jackson whether the score task could be given to staff to do, Mrs. Barnett explained that a Committee member does not have to score but it would throw the scoring matrix off.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

/s/ Linda J. Montgomery  
Linda J. Montgomery  
Administrative Specialist I