

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
NGO APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 20TH DAY OF JUNE, 2022

The Caddo Parish NGO Appropriations Committee met in legal session on the above date, at 2:00 p.m., in the 1ST Floor Conference Room, with Mr. Johnson, Chairman, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson, and Lazarus (5). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, and Gage-Watts (3).

Mr. Lazarus gave the invocation, and Mr. Chavez led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Discuss NGO Process and Suggested Updates*

- Organization Capacity, Points A & B

Mrs. Bryant explained that Point A of the Organization Capacity scoring criteria is important, because the organization must have the ability to implement their program based on its history of management and implementation capacity. Mr. Johnson commented that Mrs. Bryant's explanation is in Point B. Mrs. Bryant suggested combining Points A and B. Mrs. Barnett stated that "Point A is trying to indicate the capacity of an organization, not necessarily their track record, but if the organization had the capacity to utilize the funds at the requested amount.

Mr. Johnson stated that some organizations do not have the money to implement new programs, so those organizations continue to operate their existing programs. Mrs. Bryant suggested again to combine Points A and B. She also suggested that Mr. Johnson remind the Committee of his recommendations from the previous committee meeting.

Mr. Hopkins recommended following this point system for one year. Then, evaluate what is redundant or irrelevant. He suggested using what they have as a "beginning phase". Mr. Johnson disagreed and prefers to correct the process to refrain from constantly redoing it.

Mr. Atkins voiced concern that the Committee should provide oversight, direction and spirit and should not be micromanaging Administration and Finance. Mr. Johnson disagreed and said that "appropriations is more us than them". Mr. Atkins stated that the guidelines are the Appropriations Committee's task, but Administration takes the Committee through the evaluation process. Mr. Johnson responded that Administration gives the committee recommended a dollar amount, how much funding is available, then the Committee determines the funding amount for each organization.

Mrs. Bryant reiterated that Administration's main suggestion is to combine Points A and B.

- Organization Capacity, Point C.

Mrs. Barnett explained that Point C refers to an organization having the capacity, resources and staff to implement a program. She gave an example of a hypothetical organization wanting to tutor fifty children and the space to tutor fifty children defines capacity. She said that the organization's resources have different meaning depending on the program. Mrs. Barnett stated that there needs to be a scoring matrix to determine an organization's funding.

- Organization Capacity, Point F.

Mrs. Bryant stated that Point F shows what an organization is putting into their program. Mr. Johnson commented that he did not want in-kind to be leveraged against them. Mrs. Barnett stated that organizations list that information because Commissioners ask what other organizations are contributing to their program. She said that their contributions gives the Commission more reason to fund their program.

- Program Design, Point A.

Mrs. Bryant stated that Point A is important to determine whether an organization is addressing a need in the community.

Mr. Chavez wanted to know if staff could recommend a grant applicant to another organization that targets the same need in the nearby area. Mr. Johnson responded that a Commissioner can do that. Dr. Wilson stated that the Parish receives many tutorial programs throughout the Parish, but have met challenges to coordinate programs geographically.

- Program Design, Points B & C.

Mrs. Barnett recommended that Point B be removed and keep Point C. She said that Point C refers to project redundancy in an applicant's target area.

- Outcomes Points, Points A & B.

Mrs. Bryant stated that each organization should measure the effectiveness of their program. Mr. Johnson wanted to know if the Parish is going to include measurable indicators and if there is a template available. Mrs. Bryant explained that each program is unique and the Parish cannot pre-determine what each program is measuring. She further stated that it is not consistent across the board. Mrs. Barnett explained that there is an outcome report that requests a maximum of four pages to include lessons learned, results, future plans, etc. Mr. Johnson commented that the Parish should provide an example of measurable indicators in case an organization is unsure how to complete an outcome report. Mrs. Barnett stated that if an organization is running a program, they should know what they're trying to achieve. Mrs. Bryant stated that they can provide a general example.

Mrs. Bryant suggested that Outcomes Points A and B could be combined into one Point.

- Outcomes, Points C.

Mrs. Bryant explained that an organization must adequately summarize how and what was achieved from its program.

- Influence and Impact

Mrs. Bryant stated that Mr. Johnson previously suggested removing Point A. She explained that the Commission should know a program's impact, if the Parish has been funding that program for several years. Mrs. Barnett commented that a program's outcome report should show increased impact. Mr. Johnson requested a maximum of five for reviewing an organization's impact. Mrs. Bryant pointed out that if an organization has a lesser impact, it would have a lower score. She said that a lower score does not necessarily mean an organization wouldn't get funded.

Mr. Johnson stated that there is no scoring rubric. Mrs. Barnett explained that she did not include a score rubric because "it would take on a whole life of its own". Mrs. Barnett further explained that based on her research, an applicant's score of 60% or lower is a failing score and would not receive funding. For a score of 90 to 100, an applicant may receive 90% of their requested amount. Mrs. Barnett stated that with this knowledge an organization could apply for a higher amount than what is needed just to ensure they receive 90% of their funding. She further stated that Community Foundation advertised their average reward amount to manage people's expectations when they start applying for grants. Mrs. Barnett explained that in 2021, Caddo Parish awarded an average of \$25,000 for NGOs and awarded economic development projects at an average of \$35,000. Mrs. Barnett stated the Parish can advertise their average to manage what organizations are asking for. She added that based on their score, an organization can receive a certain percentage of their asking amount.

Mr. Johnson asked if her research was from Community Foundation. Mrs. Barnett commented that the Parish used references from Community Foundation, Baird Industries, United Way, etc. Mr. Johnson voiced concerns that other cities and parishes in the State of Louisiana were not mentioned on how public dollars are being managed. Mrs. Bryant stated that it was requested of Administration and Finance to research how local organizations manage grant programs. Mr. Johnson expressed there is a difference between private organizations and public funding to non-governmental organizations. He said that if private organizations face revenue problems they would come to public agencies for help. Mr. Atkins disagreed that private sector would not come to the public sector. Mrs. Bryant recalled the Parish's experience with applying for the State. They had to complete an application with a multitude of requirements. She said the application is very restrictive, and they do not receive payments right away. Mrs. Bryant suggested the Parish should at least have a minimum score.

Mrs. Barnett explained that the Parish could set different levels to receive funding, but she did not want to complicate the process. Mr. Johnson agreed. Mrs. Barnett pointed out that she was not aware of that rationale since it has never been spoken or written down. Mr. Johnson agreed to put it on paper. Mrs. Bryant stated that they are going to set a minimum. If applicants do not meet that minimum, they will not be considered, she said. Mr. Johnson stated that if an applicant's score is above the minimum, then the tier system would be applied. Mrs. Barnett pointed out that tiers could be titled as Parish-wide grant, District grant, and neighborhood grant.

Mrs. Bryant suggested that they set their minimum score and organizations that are below that minimum score will not be considered for funding. She also suggested higher scores will be considered for funding, however there are no guarantees. Mr. Johnson suggested the phrase be more generic, such as "if below this score, no funding. If above this score, you're eligible". The Committee members agreed.

Mrs. Bryant wanted to know what would be the failing score. Mrs. Barnett pointed out that based on the American 10 Point scale, anything below 60 is an F. Mr. Atkins commented that he will support a higher score. Mr. Chavez reminded the Committee that they could revisit the scoring system and change the minimum score next year. Mr. Hopkins suggested that applications be considered from highest to lowest score. Mr. Johnson suggested applications be prioritized by district to refrain from lower scoring programs in certain areas and losing opportunity for funding. Mrs. Bryant stated that Commissioners can not prioritize funding by their districts. The Committee members agreed.

Mr. Chavez suggested evenly distribute monies across various sectors and industry types.

Mrs. Bryant responded that after scoring, the Committee determines how much is appropriated. Mrs. Barnett explained that she could present each organization by category and score. She further explained that there will be a learning curve, and the Commission can adjust accordingly.

Mrs. Bryant pointed out that Administration is very involved with many organizations and suggested that the Parish Administrator be a scorer. She explained that through his staff, the Administrator has more knowledge of an organization's history. Traditionally, the Parish Administrator would make recommendations for grant funding, then the Commission would vote on that recommendation. Dr. Wilson commented that was the process until 2009. Mrs. Barnett said that Finance works closely with the different NGOs, and their feedback could be included in the Administrator's score. Dr. Wilson stated that the Commission can exercise their discretion when following the Administrator's recommendation.

Mr. Atkins stated that he believed the Administrator did the scoring. Dr. Wilson responded that the Parish Administrator scored grant applications then presented those applications to the Committee Chairperson. He said that the practice changed to a Commission led process. Mr. Johnson suggested that the policy includes the Parish Administrator or their designee to score the applications. Mrs. Bryant clarified that Parish Administration will provide the Committee with summarized data and information on applications for the Commission to make a decision.

- Award Notification, Review, and Acceptance

Mr. Johnson suggested that it be mandatory for applicants to attend grant workshops. All Committee members in attendance agreed.

- Grant Awards, 2. Communication.

Mr. Johnson wanted to know how official communications are made. Dr. Wilson responded that communication is made via mail and e-mail. Mrs. Barnett stated applications were sent in hardcopy but will encourage digital communications moving forward. Mr. Chavez wanted to know if prior grant recipients are contacted via email to apply again. Mrs. Barnett stated that prior recipients automatically get a notification. Mr. Chavez wanted to know if that is a rule. Mrs. Bryant explained that the Parish does not have an open application process, because the Parish cannot handle the volume for open applications. She further explained that they send notifications to prior recipients and take requests. Mr. Chavez suggested that notifications not be automatically sent to prior recipients.

- Grant Awards, 3. Implementation.

Mr. Johnson suggested to remove "staff or team members" and add board. Mrs. Barnett stated that they aren't always notified of a change in the point of contact. Mrs. Bryant suggested changing the phrase to "key" or "contact person". Mr. Johnson suggested to change the phrase to "point of contact".

- Grant Awards, 4. Award Amount

Mrs. Bryant suggested to reduce the amount of funding of an organization, so they should have other sources of income. Mr. Atkins agreed and stated that organizations should not be solely dependent on the Commission. Mrs. Barnett stated that the appropriation amount may not have to change after three years, but the Parish should not be 50% of an organization's revenue by Year Four. Mr. Atkins agreed that the Parish's objective is to not be the sole provider for the NGOs. Mr. Johnson commented that some organizations can get funding easier in certain neighborhoods. Mr. Atkins recommended that organizations seek funding externally. Mr. Johnson pointed out that some people would use a program outside of their area instead of supporting programs near them.

Dr. Wilson wanted to know what other foundation exercises the three-year policy. Mrs. Barnett responded that Beaird Foundation policy includes a one year wait time after four years of funding. Mrs. Bryant explained that Community Foundation does a reduction to 75% after three years. Mrs. Bryant further explained that cutting off an organization could set back a program or put them out of business. Mr. Atkins stated that its not healthy for a company to focus on one main customer and that it is encouraged for companies to broaden their base. Mr. Johnson suggested to remove the second sentence. Mr. Hopkins stated they should keep it because there are some organizations in the system that are not getting penalized. He stated that they can make adjustments after four years.

- Reporting

Mr. Johnson suggested including "If a report is more than 30 days late, additional funding will be jeopardized." He also suggested including "If an organization goes into bad standing with the IRS, the State of Louisiana, or the Parish of Caddo funding, will be suspended for one year after clearing status."

- File Retention Procedure

Mrs. Bryant also suggested to include that organizations maintain their own records. Mr. Johnson requested that organizations should retain their records for five years.

- Proposal Rating Form

Mrs. Barnett explained that each question is meant to be used as a rubric when considering the total possible points for each criteria.

- Section I: Introduction and Funding Purpose

Mr. Johnson wanted to know why there is a line for Commission District on the application. Mrs. Barnett explained that she had to figure out what district an organization was in. She further explained that most organizations leave it blank, because they do not know what district they are in. Mrs. Barnett said that it is also helpful when the Commission asks her what district it is in.

Mr. Johnson wanted to know if the listed purposes Economic Development, Education and Social Welfare will remain the same. Mrs. Barnett responded that the Parish can only provide appropriations for those three purposes. Mr. Chavez suggested adding "Are there any other entities performing this service within this area?" He said that organizations should acknowledge similar non-profits in their area already operating. Mr. Johnson stated there are 20 churches within one block of the MLK area, and each church has differing opinions. Mrs. Bryant stated that organizations will try to convince the Parish that their program is the best and not like other programs.

- Section II: Proposal Narrative

Mr. Johnson stated that Background and Capacity of Organization scores an organization based on their creative writing skills instead of objectively. He said the Parish should drive organizations to provide information it wants. Mrs. Barnett suggested creating a drop down box to answer questions and to allow a free form. Mr. Johnson agreed that the free form can be used for additional comments. He said that is it should not be all narrative.

- Attachment A: Contact Information

Mr. Johnson suggested removing the Address and Commission District columns. Mrs. Barnett said that Attachment A has always been included with the application and most organizations only put their name. Mr. Johnson voiced concerns about determining which Commission District an organization is located. Mrs. Bryant stated that many organizations do not put their personal addresses, but as long as they are serving Caddo Parish citizens.

Mr. Hopkins wanted to know how names are checked. Mrs. Barnett responded that they do not check names. Mr. Hopkins also wanted to know if organizations must file with the Secretary of State. Mrs. Bryant responded that it is required.

- Attachment B: Project Timeline

Mrs. Barnett stated that this timeline tests whether organizations have met their outcomes. Mr. Johnson requested a template be included. Mr. Atkins wanted to know if the project timeline includes four primary milestones. Mrs. Barnett said that planning is different for each organization.

- Checklist of Required Documents

Mr. Johnson requested an update on the outcome report template. Mrs. Barnett pointed out that the Outcome Report template is listed on Page 3, Number 11. She said the template is a work in progress. Mr. Johnson asked if it should be a required document. Mrs. Bryant responded that there is no due date for the Outcome Report. She suggested to change the font to bold and include it under the Checklist of Required Documents.

Mr. Johnson wanted to know if the application will be electronic. Mrs. Bryant acknowledge that it will be.

It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Chavez, *to recommend to the full body approve the amendments made to the Caddo Parish Grant Management Policy & Procedures. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson, and Lazarus (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Epperson, and Gage-Watts (3). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Committee, so the meeting adjourned at 3:24 p.m.


Administrative Specialist I