

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 22nd DAY OF AUGUST, 2024

The Caddo Parish Appropriation Committee met in legal session on the above date at 2:30 p.m., in the Government Plaza Chambers Conference Room, with Mr. Cothran, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cothran, Gage-Watts, Jones, Thomas, and G. Young, and J. Young (8). ABSENT: (0). Commissioner Blake was also in attendance.

The Pledge of Allegiance and invocation were given during a previous committee meeting.

There being no Citizen's Comments or Agenda Additions, the Committee moved to New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Discussion of possibility of extending the deadline for NGO Applications*

Mr. Cothran said that several people have asked to extend the deadline for NGO applications. He thought it was a good idea to have it discussed during a committee meeting. The Director of Finance, Mrs. Haley Barnett, said there is a policy in place for a reason. She also mentioned that it could be extended, but cautioned to not extend it more than a week. She said the deadline helps foster a fair process when scoring the NGO applications. Mrs. Erica Bryant advised the process could be adjusted if the information is provided to them as quickly as possible.

Mr. Atkins advised that it has been mentioned before about processes and procedures. He said there needs to be some discipline, and "we shouldn't keep jerking staff around". He is firmly opposed to the extension as it is unfair to those who submitted their information on time. Mr. Burrell agreed with Mr. Atkins, but advised that there are extenuating circumstances and it should be based upon that.

Answering a question from Mr. Jones regarding the deadline, Mr. J. Young said that it was July 31, 2024. Mr. Jones then wanted to know if an Appropriations Committee was scheduled since the deadline. He explained that twenty-three days later, the Committee members were made aware of an extension. Mrs. Bryant said that she has not had discussions with organizations asking for an extension; Commissioners have come to her asking for one. Mr. Jones agreed with Mr. Atkins and Mr. Burrell to stick to the process in order for the processes to work.

Mr. G. Young suggested that the Committee consider extending the deadline, but only if the organization provided proof of why they could not meet the deadline, and it would need to be extenuating circumstances. Mr. G. Young said that an organization cannot function correctly if the rules are always changing. It was stressed that an extension would cut into the organization's efficiencies.

Attorney Frazier mentioned that some of the organizations who are requesting an extension have been a part of this process for several years.

Mr. J. Young explained that the Riverboat Fund has two natural sources of revenue: video poker and the casinos. He supports a strict process for this fund; however, there are other committees with others charges to fund groups to respond to the urgent needs of the communities. Mr. J. Young believes that those committees should be able to make recommendations to the full body, if needs arise.

Mr. Burrell says that there are many reasons why organizations cannot make the deadline and how in the past letters have gotten lost. He is not saying the Parish is negligent, but said that sometimes things get misplaced.

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Thomas, *to extend the deadline for submitting NGO applications to August 29, 2024.*

Mrs. Gage-Watts agreed with the discussions that have been had around the table. She also said that there are two organizations with valid initiatives to address their concerns with the alternatives to incarceration. She would like them to have the opportunity to go through the NGO process.

Mr. Cothran understood, and said that if the extension is granted, there is always going to be someone who misses the deadline.

Mr. Thomas said that there are new organizations that have been established since the NGO deadline. He understands the reason for the rules and following the processes, but also understands being fluid.

Attorney Frazier pointed out that the Commission does not fund startups through NGOs. She said that it would not be fair if an organization could go around the NGO process and get another committee to fund their project. She said that could provide legal basis for the Commission to have a problem. Mrs. Bryant agreed and explained that every organization should be filling out an application and providing the information needed. She further stated that if the Commissioners allow one organization to

do this, then the rest will follow. Mrs. Bryant said that Administration would like a consistent process, regardless of what Committee the organization goes before.

Attorney Frazier also said that a funding opportunity cannot be made through a department.

Mrs. Bryant explained that all NGO and Economic Development applications are funded through Riverboat. She said that often times, they have to transfer from Oil Gas Fund to cover the totals.

Mr. G. Young clarified that the non-profit is subject to the deadlines; the for profit (economic opportunities) have the possibility of a mid-year appropriation.

Mr. J. Young said that it would be a good policy to limit the funding for NGOs to the amount of monies in the fund, without transferring any monies in. Mr. J. Young also said that Administration's accounting practices should not influence or determine the meaning of the By-Laws. Administration is not allowed to be Commissioners; and Commissioners are not allowed to do the Administration, he said.

Mrs. Bryant said that the Charter states that all budget recommendations are recommended by the Administration. She further explained that the Commission can weigh in on the NGOs, but all recommendations for the budget comes from the Administration.

At this time, Mrs. Gage-Watts' motion failed, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Gage-Watts, Thomas, and J. Young (4). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Cothran, Jones, and G. Young (4). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

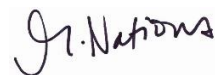
- *Return Date Discussion for Appropriation review packet received 8/19*

No further discussion was needed on this topic

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.



Ashlyn King
Office Specialist



Michelle Nations
Assistant to the Commission Clerk