

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S  
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THE 23RD DAY OF OCTOBER, 2024

The Caddo Parish American Rescue Plan Committee met in legal session on the above date at 12:00 noon, in the conference room of Government Plaza Chambers, with Mr. Roy Burrell, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (5). ABSENT: Commissioner Jones (1).

Pastor Collier gave the invocation, and Mr. J. Young led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

There were no Agenda Additions nor any Public Comments, so the Committee moved New Business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- *Discussion and possible recommendations regarding the Galilee Lighthouse Project*

Mr. Burrell explained that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss repurposing some ARPA funds for the Galilee Lighthouse Projects. He is suggesting not to break up the Galilee project.

Mr. Thomas requested a breakdown of how the funds were spent. Mrs. Barnett said that she can send it the Commissioners. She also mentioned that all of this is available on the Treasury's website.

Ms. Susan Caldwell, Interfaith, introduced herself to the Committee. She said that Interfaith is nonpartisan. They do not accept funds from political candidates. Ms. Caldwell explained that the leading cause of deaths during a natural disaster is extended power outages, which can result in oxygen machines not working, refrigerated medicines going bad, etc.

Lighthouse Keepers are a group of volunteers who go into the neighborhood and get to know the residents to determine who is need of refrigeration for their medicines, power for oxygen tanks, etc. This team of volunteers actively canvasses neighborhood residents, gathering information so they are prepared to meet the needs of their community during crisis events.

Each community lighthouse is equipped with a solar and batter-storage microgrid. When the main power grid fails, the hub operates independently, providing essential services for the neighborhood until power is restored.

Mrs. Kitty Batterton said there was a collaborative effort from several organizations during the June outage to provide people with ice, water, food, etc. She said that this worked, but this could be done differently. Lighthouses are effective in providing the necessary resources to all citizens who are in during crisis.

Mr. Nathanael Wills talked about the specs of the solar panels and the backup power that is being stored. The systems can be ran indefinitely, as long as they pay attention to the output and inputs.

Deacon Michael Tate said that the Allendale neighborhood is eligible for 50% construction costs of a lighthouse. Galilee Baptist Church is a pillar in the community, especially during the Civil Rights era, he said. Galilee also provides affordable housing for the elderly and handicapped. They also have a Red Cross certified shelter that's been in place since Hurricane Katrina. Galilee has several educational centers that offer tutoring, literacy classes, ACT/SAT Prep courses, etc. Deacon Tate said that Galilee Baptist Church provides several services for the community.

Mr. Wills came back before the Committee. He said that the Social Vulnerability Index is high in several categories. He said that there is a need in this neighborhood, and that makes this community more vulnerable during natural disasters or crisis.

He also mentioned that the construction for the Highland Center will start in the next few weeks.

Ms. Maxine Davis said that they are in the process of expanding into Bossier. There will be two community lighthouses in Bossier City.

Mrs. Batterton said that the one on one interactions throughout the neighborhoods and knowing the neighbors is essential to the Lighthouse Keepers' mission.

Pastor Collier closed with saying that the need is there, and feels that Galilee can meet that need as a Community Lighthouse.

Mr. J. Young requested that any funds left over and rebates received be used for the next community lighthouse project. He also insisted that there be a water back up supply.

Mr. Thomas said that Galilee stands prepared and is ready to serve the community in a state of crisis and natural disaster.

Mr. Atkins is supportive of the mission of the community lighthouses and the mission of Galilee Baptist Church, but does not feel that solar panels is the most effective way to power them.

Mr. G. Young said that he is not hostile to this project. He came to this meaning under the assumption that this is a beautiful project. He wanted to know which fund does the money come from. Mr. Burrell said that it would come from the ARPA Fund. He then wanted to know if this qualifies for ARPA. Mrs. Barnett said that she would need to review the guidelines again to ensure that this project does qualify for ARPA funds. Mr. G. Young then asked how much would be spent on this project. Mrs. Barnett said that it would be \$500k. Mr. G. Young then wanted to know if there would be a \$250k rebate. Mrs. Barnett stated that they may not be able to receive the rebates.

Mrs. Blake would like to see a map of services for the community lighthouse. She also wanted to know what a deployable battery was. Mrs. Batterton said that these are portable battery packs that could be used in places such as nursing homes where the residents may not be able to move.

It was **moved by Mr. Burrell**, seconded by Mr. Thomas, *to recommend to the full body to repurpose the Galilee project funds to the Galilee Lighthouse project for \$500k; the residual funds from the Galilee Lighthouse project and the 50% rebate funds to be used for the next lighthouse project in Caddo Parish with water backup.* Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (4). NAYS: Commissioner Atkins (1). ABSENT: Commissioner Jones (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 1:09 p.m.



Michelle Nations

Assistant to the Commission Clerk