

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION  
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION  
HELD ON THE 4<sup>th</sup> DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2024

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Work Session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mrs. Gage-Watts, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (12). ABSENT: None (0).

Mr. Jones gave the invocation, and Mr. Epperson led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AGENDA ADDITIONS**

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *to expand the agenda and add Special Resolution of Remembrance under New Business.*

At this time, President Gage-Watts opened the floor for anyone to speak in favor or against adding this item to the agenda. There being no one to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Epperson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (11). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioner Blake (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Special Resolution of Remembrance was added under New Business.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

**Mayor Justin Davis came before the Commission and gave the following statement:**

Thank you all for allowing me to speak today. My name is Justin Davis. I'm the mayor for the Town of Greenwood, 9381 Greenwood Road, 71033. For those that don't know, as of July 1 of 2024, our new administration of newly elected officials is focusing on our water system improvements and working with the LDH to provide quality water for our existing customers. I understand there will not be a vote today, but I'm here on behalf of the town, and the existing Greenwood water citizens, and our customers in opposition of Ordinance 6513 of 2025, the Town of Greenwood request reallocating the funds of Ordinance 6014 of 2020 from a waterline extension down Highway 169 to water infrastructure improvements for the Greenwood Water System. We also ask that the stipulation for the Citizens Water Committee to be removed. Since we have newly elected officials, we'd like to be transparent with Caddo Commissioners and the LDH. The Greenwood Water System provides water outside of the town limits currently to Deer Creek and Timberland subdivisions, Walden ferry and down highway 80 to the Texas state line, which is also outside the town limits. I just want to let you know that the town supports helping to provide water to future customers, but our current priority is providing the quality of water our existing customers need. In my opinion, it's quality over quantity. This funding if reallocated, will help with, a couple of significant projects. 1. replacement of our above ground storage tanks and the reworking of our tank piping. Two of our above ground storage tanks were put into operation in 1994. One of the two tanks from 1994 is currently non-operational due to corrosion. It has way too many holes and thin metal. According to our last tank inspection report, the second tank from 1994 is headed in the same direction. It is currently operational. Our third storage tank was made operational in 2016, when the water plant was upgraded. The reworking of the tank piping is to improve stored water turnover time, which has been recommended by the LDH for several years now. It's in our sanitary survey. I'll be more than happy to share any of that information with anybody on the board—the projects I have in mind, I'll be more than happy to share that information with full transparency. My last project would be our membrane filter replacement. These filters are due for replacement due to aging. This is based on manufacturer's recommended service life. We're currently on year nine of ten. So, in one year, we're going have to replace those filters. The projects I mentioned are estimated that cost to town approximately \$500000, plus engineering fees. Again, our newly elected officials and I want to work with the Commission for the betterment of our town and the existing Greenwood water customers. Please vote "No" on Ordinance 6513 of 2025 and please reallocate the funds of Ordinance 6014 of 2020 to help with the improvements so we can provide better quality of water that the existing water customers deserve.

**ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

- Traffic Cameras—Blue Line Solutions

Mrs. Bryant said that the Parish will be working with Blue Line Solutions to install the traffic cameras throughout the Parish.

- Juvenile Detention

Mrs. Bryant said that there are seventeen children in the Juvenile Detention Center; five of which are OJJ. There is one 17-year-olds and 458 children on probation.

- Police Jury Association Annual Convention—February 12-14th  
Mrs. Bryant announced the Police Jury Association will be in Baton Rouge from February 12-14<sup>th</sup>.
- Intergovernmental Meeting—February 21<sup>st</sup>  
Mrs. Bryant announced that the next Intergovernmental Meeting will be held on February 21<sup>st</sup>. She said that the School Board is hosting this meeting.
- Most Influential Woman Award—Nomination of Krystle Beauchamp  
Mrs. Bryant also announced that Communications Director, Krystle Beauchamp, has been nominated for the Virginia Sheehee Most Influential Woman Award.

### **COMMISSION REMARKS**

- Mr. G. Young said that one of his constituents who was bed ridden never received his wheelchair ramp, and this man passed away recently. Mr. G. Young also mentioned that all of the Baby Boomers will be 65 years old in 2030. He would like the Commission to remember the aging population of this community. Mrs. Bryant said that an action item would need to be added to the next Work Session agenda.
- Mr. Burrell requested an update on the Parish broadband progress.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Mrs. Gage-Watts asked that the Village Apartments be added to the relocation assistance funds. She said that they would be losing their water supply on February 27, 2025.

Mrs. Gage-Watts also thanked Administration and staff for their swift response for the weather earlier this month.

There was no Old Business, so the Commission moved onto New Business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

It was **moved by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mr. Thomas, *that Ordinance No. 6514 of 2025, PZC Case No. 24-39-P, an ordinance to amend Volume II of the Code of Ordinances of the Parish of Caddo, as amended, the Caddo Parish Unified Development Code, by amending the zoning of property located on the west side of Dean Road, approximately 800 feet south of Green Terrace Road, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, from R-A, Rural Agricultural Zoning District to R-1-7, Single Family Residential Zoning District, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction. Motion carried unanimously.

It was **moved by Mr. G. Young**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that Ordinance No. 6515 of 2025, PZC Case No. 24-45-P, Ordinance No. 6515 of 2025, an ordinance to amend Volume II of the Code of Ordinances of the Parish of Caddo, as amended, the Caddo Parish Unified Development Code, by amending the zoning of property located on the north end of David Raines and Audrey Lane, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, from R-A, Rural Agricultural Zoning District to R-1-7, Single Family Residential Zoning District, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

**Substitute motion by Mr. G. Young**, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *that Ordinance No. 6515 of 2025, PZC Case No. 24-45-P, Ordinance No. 6515 of 2025, an ordinance to amend Volume II of the Code of Ordinances of the Parish of Caddo, as amended, the Caddo Parish Unified Development Code, by amending the zoning of property located on the north end of David Raines and Audrey Lane, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, from R-A, Rural Agricultural Zoning District to R-1-7, Single Family Residential Zoning District, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be remanded back to the PZC.

The Clerk of the Commission advised that this would need to be forwarded to the Regular Session, then during final passage, it could be remanded to the PZC.

Mr. G. Young said that he has had discussions with the Capital Investments who will provide home for purchase on this property, not subsidized housing. These conditions would need to be approved by the PZC before coming back to us for final approval.

At this time, Mr. G. Young's withdrew his substitute motion, and the original motion carried unanimously.

It was **moved by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mr. Kracman, *that Ordinance No. 6516 of 2025, an ordinance to close and abandon and unnamed public dedication in the Northwood Hills Subdivision, located in Section 35, Township 9 North, Range 15 West, in the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction. Motion carried unanimously of those

members present.

It was **moved Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mr. Kracman, *that Ordinance No. 6517 of 2025, an ordinance relative to the sale of Parish property, to authorize the sale of the Regional Lab building, located at 533 Vine Street, Shreveport, LA, and adjacent parking lots and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Thomas said that this would be purchased by Brentwood Hospital. He asked for the Commissioners to support this.

Mrs. Bryant said that an offer of \$1.18M was made for the facility with a price adjustment resulting in 60 new jobs. The \$270k reduction in the sales prices was granted due to the job creation. The facility is currently vacant, but still incurs carrying costs to the Parish.

Dr. Jeremiah Smith came before the Commission and advised that Brentwood Hospital plans to use the facility as a Psychiatric Emergency Center, Behavioral Health Crisis Center, and Crisis Stabilization Unit. This would allow individuals experiencing mental health crises to receive immediate care, rather than waiting in the ER. The goal is to improve care for those in mental health crisis by providing a specialized facility. It will allow for 24-72 hour stays. A total of \$5.1M is allocated for this project, in partnership with LDH. A similar facility exists in Baton Rouge.

Mr. Cothran wanted to know the capacity for the center. The plan includes 24 recliners for 24 hour stays. The Crisis Stabilization Unit will initially have 12 beds, but may expand in the future.

Mr. Atkins said that the sale of this building will provide extended services to the community and reduce the Parish's maintenance costs.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know where would the funds from the sale go. Mrs. Bryant said that they would go back to the Health Tax Fund.

Mr. J. Young wanted to know if this facility would be used for those people who are experiencing psychiatric problems due to drugs. Dr. Smith said that it would.

Mr. Thomas' motion carried unanimously of those present.

It was **moved by Mr. J. Young**, seconded by Mr. Thomas, *that Ordinance No. 6518 of 2025, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Solid Waste Fund and the Riverboat Fund to provide an additional appropriation for property standards and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. J. Young said that there are several vacant homes and properties in his district. Vacant houses in Shreveport are being illegally entered by meth users and burned down, causing damage to neighboring properties. Absentee landlords and the City's limited resources exacerbate the problem, creating a public safety hazard. This ordinance aims to provide up to \$100k to address these issues in various districts in Caddo Parish. The funding will be used to board up vacant properties and clearing up dump sites—it aims to improve the City's cleanliness and address all of these concerns.

**Substitute motion by Mr. G. Young**, *that a PILOT be put in place specifically in District 4 regarding blight and cleanup.* Motion failed due to the lack of a second.

Mrs. Bryant advised that the Charter specifically prohibits appropriating dollars by district.

Attorney Frazier suggested that the Commission sit down with the City of Shreveport to outline a process by which this could be done. The process will involve determining if properties are condemned or have violations. She further explained that the City would have to initiate the process by which these properties are addressed.

**Substitute motion by Mr. G. Young**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *Ordinance No. 6518 of 2025, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Solid Waste Fund and the Riverboat Fund to provide an additional appropriation for property standards and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction and remanded to the Long-Range Planning Committee for further discussion.

Mr. Jones wanted to be added as a co-sponsor for this legislation. He also said that all of the districts in Caddo Parish needs this, and the constituents would be satisfied to bring solutions to the blight.

Mr. Burrell is glad that something is now being done in the urban areas. He then wanted to know what would be discussed during the Long-Range Planning Committee. Mrs. Gage-Watts said that this issue would be vetted and questions could be answered.

Mr. Cothran said that a Long-Range Planning Committee will be scheduled once Administration reaches out to them. He also mentioned that this would show collaboration between the City and the Parish. Mr. Cothran also said that this could open up the possibility of working with the City with other issues such as roads.

Mr. Atkins understands addressing the challenges in the community. He cautioned the body against the slippery slope of opening up the Parish's budget to the City's issues, i.e. roads, lighting, blight, etc.

Mr. J. Young said that they would need the City's permission to go onto private property and board up houses. He also explained that the Parish could provide funds to an organization to pick up the litter in the community.

At this time, Mr. G. Young's substitute motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Gage-Watts, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (10). NAYS: Commissioners Epperson and Kracman (2). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Cothran**, seconded by Mr. Kracman, *that Resolution No. 5 of 2025, a resolution to authorize the Caddo Parish Administrator to approve the assignment, bill of sale, and conveyance of State Agency Leases No. 22252 and No. 22253 from Cypress Energy Partners, LLC to Paloma Natural Gas, LLC, and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for consideration.

Mr. Tim Weaver, Public Works Director, said that this is just a reassignment of state leases.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know if there are any lease bonuses. Attorney Frazier said that this is just a reassignment, so all of that has already been worked out.

Mr. Cothran's motion carried unanimously.

It was **moved by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mr. Thomas, *to englobo and move the following items to Thursday's agenda for consideration:*

- *Proclamation Black History Month in Caddo Parish*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition Bonnie Moore's Retirement*
- *Special Resolution of Welcome Pastor Bobby Smith*
- *Special Resolution of Remembrance Fred Caldwell, II*
- *Special Resolution of Remembrance Joe Shyne*
- *Special Resolution of Remembrance Pastor Calvin Austin*
- *Selection of Youth Advisory Council Members*

Mrs. Gage-Watts would like each Commissioner to submit two names. Mrs. Blake wanted to know if they could submit names from private schools. Mrs. Gage-Watts said that they could.

Mr. Atkins asked the Clerk of the Commission to forward the criteria for the Youth Advisory Council members to all of the Commissioners.

At this time, Mr. Jones' motion carried unanimously.

It was **moved by Mr. Cothran**, seconded by Mr. Kracman, *that the authorization for Administration to accept changes to the cooperative endeavor agreement for the Red River Expressway* be moved to Thursday's agenda for consideration.

Attorney Curtis Joseph said that this project will connect Shreveport to Bossier. The current CEA obligates the Parish to maintaining the road; the proposed changes would make it less onerous for the Parish because the surface road will remain with Tim James, Inc. Attorney Joseph said that this will not a toll road, but a toll bridge. You will only be charged a toll if you go across the Red River. Also, no public vehicles would be charged to cross the bridge.

Mr. G. Young wanted to know if this bridge would go over the Red River. Attorney Joseph said that it would. Mr. G. Young said that it is an additional pathway to Bossier. Attorney Joseph agreed and said that this bridge would alleviate some of the traffic congestion in the Parish.

Answering a question from Mr. G. Young regarding what is being proposed, Attorney Joseph said that they are asking to amend the current CEA.

Mr. Burrell said that this would be a private roadway, but the public will have access to it.

Mr. Atkins mentioned that this bridge is in District 9, and he is in support of this. He explained that this would provide ease of ingress and egress off of Flournoy Lucas.

At this time, Mr. Cothran's motion carried unanimously.

### **COMMUNIQUES & COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Mr. Epperson announced that the Public Safety Committee will meet on Thursday, February 6 at 2:00 p.m.
- Mr. Burrell requested an update on the dog situation at Boss Avenue. Animal Services Director, Travis Clark, said that they've caught four dogs in that area.
- Mrs. Blake said that resurfacing has began on Youree Drive. She asked everyone to be patient with the people working on the road.
- Mr. Atkins said Pastor Calvin Austin would send a bible verse to him every morning. Pastor Austin will be missed, he said.
- Mr. Thomas announced that there will be free hot meals at Bilberry Park on Saturday. He also said that Caddo Parish DJ, DJ Yoshi, will be at the Superbowl this Sunday.

He also announced that the Appropriations Committee will meet this Thursday at 1:00 p.m.

- Mr. Cothran wanted to piggyback on Mr. Atkins' condolences for the community's loss. He said that Pastor Austin prayed for him and with him when he became an elected official. He offered condolences to Pastor Austin's family.
- Mr. Burrell requested that Hearne Avenue be resurfaced. Mrs. Gage-Watts said that the Government Liaison can reach out to LA DOTD for more information.

He also said that him and Pastor Austin were acquaintances. He said that Pastor Austin was a huge component of children getting a proper education. Mr. Burrell said that Pastor Austin was one of the individuals who helped shape Shreveport.

There were no Citizens Comments, late arrivals.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- *Ordinance No. 6513 of 2025, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues and Expenditures for the Capital Outlay Fund to change an appropriation from the construction and improvement of Greenwood Water Lines to construction of the Dawson Road Extension*

At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the Commission adjourned at 5:19 p.m.



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Michelle Nations  
Assistant to the Commission Clerk