

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 20th DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2025

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Regular 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, Kracman, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (12). ABSENT: None (0).

Mr. Epperson gave the invocation, and Mrs. Blake led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance. There were no Agenda Additions, so the Commission move onto Citizens Comments.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Susan Stankey came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Thank you. This has been brought to our attention actually through a video that I've witnessed, Elena Odom, on Facebook. It was speaking on terms of a fire on Columbia Avenue. This brought great concern to me because her main concern—mainly was the health of the fire hydrants and the water. The fire hydrant in this situation and inner-city neighborhoods quite often are deteriorated, maybe not functioning, or they could be functioning, but yet the water source to those fire hydrants may be broken. A water main may be broken, or a supply line or the pressure by which the water can get to that fire hydrant may take so much time that the fire becomes out of control and burns longer than it should. So my question is, are there any committees or any groups of individuals, volunteers? —what kind of studies are being done to determine the health of our fire hydrants, especially in our inner cities—which means North Highlands, Highland, South Highlands, and Spring Lake which are all inner city neighborhoods and so we have enough battles with urban decay, then to talk about fire hydrants on top of that. That begins to impact the health and well-being and the safety of our residents. We're all the tax base. We're the major tax base in this area. So I'm just wondering if there's any kind of committee or a consideration for determining the health of our fire hydrants and the infrastructure that leads to those. Is it a privatized situation in which some cities privatize their fire hydrants health and/or is this a city concern? And if it's a city concern, I would like to see it populate up higher. We live in these neighborhoods because we live in these neighborhoods, we want to make it be safe for everyone.

Alvin Smith came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I'm here regarding the issue of the apartment complex that I live in; and of course, we're trying to figure out where the owners are. Because there's no one to answer; there's no apartment manager or anything. So my question is, is this something that is on a city level? Or is it on a Parish level? Because this is all new to me. I know I should be more involved—I tell you its been—we're on water restriction. We pay—I know me, I pay my rent on time every month. I've been there for over a year and a half. I want to find out what's actually going on and if there's anything being done. Who the owners are? Because we have no answers for any of these things. And also, I mean, can the property be confiscated or what? I mean locked down or what? I mean, because like I said, we haven't had anybody to get in contact with. The reason we found out about these things is because the water department came through and put notices on everybody's door. That's what my question is, what relief can we have?

Jon Glover came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I need to get some clarity because I had two items on my ticket. One was going to be speaking to an item you all tabled on Tuesday, though you don't provide those items as part of your agenda. Or, is it appropriate that I speak to that item nonetheless? That's what I wanted to do to speak to that particular item. On Tuesday, as I listen to you all's Commission meeting. I was kind of puzzled when it was that the decision was made to table Resolution 6 of 2025, I didn't understand the totality of why such was tabled. It only ask that consideration be made for Article 2, the realigning of your agenda where your special resolutions would not take precedent up over the business of the City, but no clear conversation or comment was given whereby I could appreciate why that item was tabled. So, if it is that someone can get with me because I do know the rules, you can't speak to me directly, but that information would be of substance for me, please. Thank you.

Jeremy Taylor came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Good evening. Commissioners, Ordinance 6518 of 2025 is asking that additional funding for property standards. I am requesting that some of those funds be dedicated to the properties in the Highland area that contributes to the blight, [inaudible], structures being burnt down, which proves hazardous to all.

Charlotte Russell came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I'm here as the President of the Highland Neighborhood Association to encourage you to

vote in favor of allocating these funds to property standards to assist in securing properties, specifically in our inner city—hopefully, the Highland Neighborhood. We’ve addressed fires a lot. Fires are not the only problem that result in unsecured properties in Highland. We have a significant squatter issues that I’m sure people are aware of. But, there’s also utility theft. I watch people across the street from me steal buckets of water from Noel Methodist with some regularity, which means they’re living someplace that does not have water; which also means they don’t have sewage services. It’s a public health concern, and these properties really do need to be secured, and the City has told us repeatedly that they do not have the manpower or the funding for this. We would appreciate the Caddo Parish Commission helping with some funding. Thank you.

Theresa Edgerton-Scott came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I’m here to tell every one you why Highland matters, and why not sitting around and watching it deteriorate further matters to each of you. For one, historic tourism. It’s a thing. People come to visit localities because of historic elements, historic structures, and they stay longer and other kinds of tourists, and they spend money locally. I’m also gonna talk about this picture that is going around. It is a shed at 660 Merit that has actually burned twice—the second time, pretty much burned it down. But it also took with it a large number of the AT&T fiber optic cables serving the neighborhood, so people were out for days. If you worked from home—if you had a business in Highland, you didn’t have service. When I went over there and took pictures—I don’t even know how many trucks were there for days. So you know we say ‘we’re business friendly’, we can’t be burning down the infrastructure. Thirdly, I noticed when I recently paid my taxes that my Parish taxes were more than my city taxes. I would like to think that you all would support the inner city neighborhoods more than just stray dogs and stray cats which we do have a gracious number of. But, I appreciate your listening and certainly hope you will give this some very serious consideration.

Melody Roser came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I’m a homeowner. I’m also a small business owner in the neighborhood. I’d like to speak to the need for Caddo Parish to address the derelict properties and the squatting issues. It is a hazard; it is a public health hazard. I have witnessed two properties that are so close, I can watch the fire from my house burn. We had a dead body discovered in a property less than half a bloc from our house that was a squatter who eventually killed himself, and it took weeks to have authorities to actually come and enter that property and remove the body. It is a huge health hazard. I walk regularly the few blocks around my neighborhood around our house. I try and report streetlights out and just keep an eye on the neighborhood. I have had squatters scream inappropriate things at me from the properties that they’re in, and I fear for my safety walking within block of my own home. It is a serious health issue. I also—I’m a small business owner, and I work in film. I will tell you that that deters film from returning to Shreveport. They do not want to return to a place that has visible hazards. I have shot more projects that I can count in Highland, but not in the last few years. So this is affecting our earning as a city and as a Parish and our public safety. Thank you.

Alana Oldham came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Good afternoon. My name is Alana Oldham. I’m a resident and small business owner at 425 Columbia Street in Highland. I live across the street from a recent fire last month. It was a house that had been squatted, and it caught fire just after Christmas. A lot of us complained to the City and tried to get it removed. The people that went into that burnt out shell of a house, and it caught fire again. This time, it caught Bill Lindsay’s house to the right of it on fire, and Ms. Lula, an old lady and all she had was her home, and now, she can’t live there anymore. I interviewed her, as we were helping her get out of that house, and help her get some of her things, but she has nothing now. So, yes it is—I hear a lot of complaints. I’m the one that posted on Facebook about the fire hydrants and because I was there, well, you know it was still smoke coming from the embers. It is a Band-Aid, but we can’t have more fires happening tonight when it gets cold. We have to have an immediate problem. If we have \$100,000 today to be able to stop more issues like Ms. Lula becoming homeless. Yes, those of us who are taxpayers. I hear people commenting on my post about this issue saying, ‘but why should I have to pay for a homeowner whose not keeping up their property?’ well, I think that a long-term solution might be something like sending an email to all of those homeowners and telling them if they have a certain amount of time to either get that house occupied, get it sold, or the City’s going to seize it—and that’s the long-term plan, but until then, we’re going to have to keep putting theses 100,000 Band-Aids unless you want more innocent people—homeowners like Ms. Lula being homeless now because the house next to her caught fire for a second time. Thank you.

Carol Paps came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Good afternoon. My name is Carol Paps. I know you’ve heard lots and lots of things—uh, complaints about specific properties. One of the things that I want to share with you, it is what some of the neighbors and our City Councilman for Shreveport, and I know this is the Parish, but I think y’all need to hear because you may not know about it. Gary Brooks, this is the third meeting that I’ve been to on this issues, and at the other two, we talked to City officials, including the Police Chief and the Fire Chief, and so forth. Last time, Gary Brooks had a piece of legislation from the State, and we all read it, and we thought, ‘ok, this is gonna give us some meat.’ Because what the Police Chief has told us is that unless the property

owner complains, the police cannot do anything about the vagrants that are in that house. I think we need to get away from the word “squatters” because that really is not the definition. Well, for most of these properties, the owners are on Mars. That’s about how much chance we have of contacting them. I’ve been telling them that there’s a problem. Yeah, they might as well be—they’re just missing. They’re someplace else. For the few people—I mean, there are some people who work diligently to try and contact these people, so this idea that I’m looking at a house two doors down from me. It is empty; it is boarded up; I don’t know who owns it. They obviously don’t care. I see people entering that house. They stay in there. They bring their friend in there. We see them walking back and forth between empty houses and doing things. There’s criminal activity going on. It’s not safe, but all we get told is, unless the property owner files the complaint, the police can’t do anything about it. I’m really getting tired of hearing that. So, somebody—I don’t care if tis the Parish or the City—there’s so many lawyers, that means somebody’s gotta be able to come up and draft some legislation that says, ‘those who live in the neighborhood can file complaints’ because there are people in those empty buildings that should not be there. That’s what I want. Thank you.

There were no more Citizens Comments, so the Commission moved onto Visitors.

VISITORS

- Representative Cleo Fields’ District Manager, Lindora Baker

Ms. Baker said that the newly elected Congressman for District 6 has established an office in Shreveport with the intention of establishing a presence in North Louisiana. She provided the Commission with her contact number and encouraged all to reach out if they need anything.

Mr. Quentin Aught introduced himself to the Commission and said that Representative Fields has provided him with the opportunity to bring young people to the table for progressive change.

Ms. Baker invited everyone to attend the meeting that will be held tonight.

Mr. J. Young said that Shreveport faces a severe blight issue, which is closely connected with affordable housing. He also mentioned that the Eden Gardens neighborhood was built on a federal grant called 235. Mr. J. Young said that this area could use federal help with turning old houses back into good houses.

Mr. G. Young mentioned the Commission would like to create a land bank. He understands that it needs to go to the State Legislature. He suggested that the Commissioners and others talk to their State Legislators to keep the ball rolling with this legislation.

- Charter Review Committee President, Dr. Jimmy Jones and members

The Caddo Parish Charter Review Committee met several times in 2024 to review suggested Charter amendments. Key recommendations include adding a Department of Communications and a Department of Information System. The Committee also plans to incorporate the suggested amendments from the 2020 Charter Review. Dr. Jones provided a binder which compiled all of the work that the Charter Review Committee submitted, including minutes, agendas, and proposed amendments.

REGULAR/SPECIAL SESSION MINUTES SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS

It was **moved by Mr. Cothran**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *to englobo and adopt the following Regular Session Minutes from February 6, 2025 and the following Special Resolutions:*

- *Special Resolution of Remembrance for Sgt. Robert Henry Lewis*
- *Special Resolution of Remembrance for Antonio Washington*

At this time, Mr. Cothran’s motion unanimously.

SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF REMEMBRANCE SGT. ROBERT HENRY LEWIS

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission notes with deep sorrow the passing of Sergeant Robert Henry Lewis, a dedicated public servant, trailblazer, and beloved member of the community, who departed this life on February 1, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Robert Henry Lewis was born to Mr. and Mrs. Luther and Helen Lewis in 1933, and at the age of sixteen, he moved to Shreveport/Caddo Parish, Louisiana, where he worked in various capacities, including construction at H&H Cement Finishing; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lewis was drafted into the United States military, where he honorably served as a Generator Mechanic at Fort Benning in Georgia, and upon his release from military service, he pursued his childhood dream of becoming a police officer; and

WHEREAS, in April of 1969, Robert Henry Lewis joined the Shreveport Police Department, dedicating twenty-six years of exemplary service to the community and, in 1972, achieved a historic milestone by becoming one of the first Black detectives in the department, paving the way for future generations; and

WHEREAS, beyond his service in law enforcement, Sergeant Lewis was a devout and active member of King's Temple United Pentecostal Church, where he served as a deacon, offering guidance, support, and compassion to all those in need; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Lewis was widely known for his warm, compassionate spirit, unwavering dedication to justice, and commitment to bettering his community, leaving an indelible mark on the lives of countless individuals; and

WHEREAS, the passing of Sergeant Lewis during Black History Month is particularly poignant, as he himself was a pillar of history, an individual who broke barriers and uplifted others through his service, integrity, and faith; and

WHEREAS, a public viewing and family hour will be held on Friday, February 14, 2025, at King's Temple United Pentecostal Church in Shreveport, where his homegoing service and repast will take place on Saturday, February 15, 2025. A burial service will be held on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at the Keithville Veterans Cemetery, where he will be laid to rest with the honor and dignity he so greatly deserves; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission, that it does hereby recognize and honor the life and legacy of Sergeant Robert Henry Lewis, expressing deepest condolences to his family, friends, and all who were touched by his life, and further acknowledges his invaluable contributions to Caddo Parish and beyond; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of the Caddo Parish Commission in lasting tribute to the memory of Sergeant Robert Henry Lewis, whose unwavering commitment to service, justice, and community shall never be forgotten.

**SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF REMEMBRANCE
ANTONIO WASHINGTON**

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission notes with deep sorrow the passing of Antonio Washington, affectionately known as "The Maestro," a gifted choir master, dedicated servant, and pillar of the musical community, who departed this life on February 2, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Antonio Washington was born on May 3, 1963, and from an early age demonstrated an extraordinary passion and talent for music, which would become the foundation of his lifelong ministry and service; and

WHEREAS, Washington served many congregations and ministries throughout his career, bringing joy, inspiration, and spiritual upliftment through his masterful direction and musical genius; and

WHEREAS, he was especially renowned as the heart and soul of the music department at Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, where his dedication, talent, and faith created an enduring legacy of worship and praise; and

WHEREAS, his unwavering commitment to excellence and his ability to inspire generations of singers and musicians solidified his place as a cherished mentor, leader, and friend to many in the community; and

WHEREAS, in tribute to his life and legacy, Antonio Washington will lie in repose on February 14, 2025, from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM at Thee Precious Memories Mortuary Chapel; and

WHEREAS, The Maestro's Musical, a special tribute performance, will be held in his honor on February 14, 2025, at 6:00 PM at Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, where voices will be lifted in celebration of his extraordinary contributions to gospel music and worship; and

WHEREAS, a Celebration of a Righteous Reward ceremony will take place at Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church on February 15, 2025, at 11:00 AM, commemorating a life well-lived in faith and service; and

WHEREAS, Antonio Washington will take his rest until resurrection at Forest Park Cemetery, where he will be laid to rest with the honor and reverence befitting a man of his impact and dedication; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission, that it does hereby recognize and honor the life and legacy of "The Maestro" Antonio Washington, expressing deepest condolences to his family, friends, and all those who were blessed by his music and ministry, and further acknowledges his immeasurable contributions to the cultural and spiritual life of Caddo Parish and beyond; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of the Caddo Parish Commission in lasting tribute to the memory of Antonio Washington, whose voice, vision, and vibrant spirit will continue to resonate in the hearts of those he touched.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

- Speed Cameras Update

Parish Administrator, Mrs. Erica Bryant, stated that Blue Line Solutions was chosen for implementation of the cameras, and Legal is in the process of drafting a contract. Traffic studies are underway to determine camera placement based on the Commission's recommendation and Sheriff's Office's suggestions. The cameras will be installed approximately 60 days after the data is gathered. Mrs. Bryant said that the public will be notified beforehand.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know if the installation of the cameras is permanent. Mrs. Bryant said that it would be permanent.

Mr. Cothran wanted to know if there have been conversations with the City of Shreveport to alleviate any issues with the company. Mrs. Bryant said that there have been conversations. She mentioned that the main issue was charging for appeals. Mrs. Bryant said that the Parish will not be charging for appeals. A process is being developed for managing citations in the Parish. The system's implementation will involve cameras and clear understanding of the rules. The goal is to avoid surprising anyone with the citations. Mrs. Bryant said that the public will be notified prior to going live.

- War on Litter

Mrs. Bryant also said that a digital marketing campaign promoting litter reduction practices is underway, including email updates and details. Promotional items like car trash bags and signs are being procured to aid in litter control efforts. Mrs. Bryant also said that Public Works' crews started removing litter in the Parish, coordinating with the Sheriff's Office and contractors. A camera was also installed to test its effectiveness in catching litterers; one person has been arrested and charged. Mrs. Bryant also pointed out that analyzing camera footage is time-consuming; further research into camera installation and monitoring is planned.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know if the resolution needs to be re-adopted. The Clerk of the Commission said that it does not have an expiration date. Mr. Epperson would like this topic brought up during the Intergovernmental Meeting.

Mrs. Bryant said that both of these reports have been emailed to the Commissioners.

COMMUNIQES & COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Mr. Burrell requested an update on the broadband in the rural areas of the Parish. Mrs. Bryant provided an email with the update.

Mr. Burrell also asked for an update on two Animal Service complaints. Mr. Kelvin Samuel, Animal Services Assistant Director, said that there was a removal of animals from Essex and Merwin Streets.

- Mr. Atkins said that Centenary College has provided Bicentennial beads for all of the Commissioners.

- Mr. Thomas announced that an event promoting heart health awareness will be held this Saturday. The event will take place at the Bill Cockrell Community Park at 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Thomas also raised concerns about the vacant houses and blight in his district. Shreveport Reform aims to revitalize the City through various community initiatives, such as tackling blight. This group will host a community meet on February 26, 2025.

- Mr. J. Young said that there is a proposed ordinance that the Commission is considering allocating \$100,000 for blight improvements in the community. He also said that many of those dollars can be deployed for the War Against Litter.

Mr. J. Young also said that he is not a fan of cameras or surveillance cameras, but everyone in his district in Dixie Garden is in favor of these cameras because people speed so ridiculously fast on their streets, so he will support them.

- Mr. Epperson announced that P.R.A.B.A. will meet and invited everyone to attend.

He also expressed concerns with the measles outbreak in Texas. He asked that Administration invite Dr. Whyte to attend a Commission meeting and provide an update.

- Mr. Burrell said that there will be several events in his District this week and weekend to provide resources for citizens.
- Mr. Jones talked about Section 504. He said that the Attorney General is collaborating with the Administration to ensure precise adherence to the legal language during the Section 504 revision process. The update ensured that protections for disable citizens would remain in place.
- Mrs. Blake pointed out that the Shreveport Police Department offers a program for businesses to deter loitering and trespassing. Businesses can request signage indicating their right to remove trespassers.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Gage-Watts requested that the Personnel Policies Committee and the Juvenile Justice Committee meet before the next meeting.

Mrs. Gage-Watts said that a collaborative approach is needed to address community issues like squatters, trespassers, etc. She reiterated the signage program that Mrs. Blake spoke about.

At this time, Mrs. Gage-Watts asked the Clerk of the Commission to read aloud the following letter:

Dear Attorney General,

I am writing in my capacity as the President of the Caddo Parish Commission to respectfully request that Louisiana withdraw from the lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. As a mother of a child with medical needs, I understand firsthand the critical importance of the protection and services provided by Section 504. This vital legislation ensures that approximately 62,000 students in Louisiana and their families receive the accommodation and support they need to thrive academically and socially. Joining this lawsuit has caused unnecessary stress, anxiety, and uncertainty for families who are already managing the complex challenges of raising children with special medical and educational needs. I recognize that the emphasis behind this lawsuit appears to be concerns surrounding around the protection of gender dysphoria under Section 504. Where it is important to note that gender dysphoria has been removed from the list of protected conditions, continuing to participate in this legal action risks undermining the broader essential protections that Section 504 provides to thousands of Louisiana students with disabilities. I'm not alone in my concerns, Shreveport City Council Chair Tabitha Taylor, State Representative Joy Walters, and several of my colleagues on the Caddo Parish Commission who have offered to cosign this letter, stand with me in advocating for the well-being of our most vulnerable residents. We believe that Louisiana's inclusion in this lawsuit is not in the best interest of our children and places an undue burden on families already navigating significant challenges. We respectfully urge you to reconsider Louisiana's participation in this lawsuit. Parents prioritize the needs and rights of the students and families who rely on Section 504 protections. Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your thoughtful consideration and hope for a positive resolution. Sincerely, /s/Stormy Gage-Watts, President of the Caddo Parish Commission.

Mr. Epperson, Mr. Jones, Mr. Burrell, Mr. Jones, Mr. G. Young, Mr. Cothran, and Mr. Thomas all asked to be cosigners for this letter.

PUBLIC HEARING ON ZONING ORDINANCES & CASES

President Gage-Watts opened the public hearing on the following zoning cases:

- *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*
- *Ordinance No. 6515 of 2025, PZC Case No. 24-45-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 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

There being no one to speak in favor or against these zoning cases, President Gage-Watts closed the public hearings. The Commission then moved onto Public Hearing on Ordinances.

PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCES

President Gage-Watts opened the public hearing on the following ordinances:

- *Ordinance No. 6513 of 2025, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Capital Outlay Fund to change an appropriation from the construction and improvement of Greenwood water lines to the construction of the Dawson Road extension, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

Mark Dickerson came and spoke in opposition to Ordinance No. 6513 of 2025 and gave the following comment:

I'm here to oppose moving the funds for Greenwood water supply. We need them to desperately rebuild our system to help build our tanks that are desperately fallen apart, if you could keep the money in Greenwood, I'll appreciate it. Y'all have a great day.

Jerry Steel came and spoke in opposition to Ordinance No. 6513 of 2025 and gave the following comment:

I'm the Alderman of District 2, and I'm here in opposition of 6513 of reallocating funds. It was already allocated to upgrade Greenwood water system. Thank you.

Prudy Coleman came and spoke in opposition to Ordinance No. 6513 of 2025 and gave the following comment:

I am here to speak in opposition of Ordinance No. 6513 of 2025. We have a couple that's with us that did not want to speak. Her husband had to leave out because of a coughing spell, I'd like for her to raise her hand to be acknowledged. I understand the concerns that the residents on Dawson Road, however, I urge you to vote no on this ordinance due to the reallocation of \$750000 that was designated for the Town of Greenwood in Ordinance No. 6014 of 2020. I look forward to Mayor Davis working with you all in collaborating to bring betterment to Greenwood and the rural areas in Caddo Parish. Thank you.

Jon Glover came and spoke on Ordinance No. 6513 of 2025 and gave the following comment:

When I first read this legislation, I became concerned. I became concerned so much so that I did some homework and in doing the homework, I learned a lot of information. It gave me more insight into what is going on in this particular legislation. I do note and notice that an effort was made to address the same project the Dawson Road situation, but it was also turned down. Now my concern was, how is it that \$750k reallocation of those dollars can compare to a price tag back then in 2015, \$3.5M with a 15 year period, it would go as high as \$7.9M. Now, both may be crucial—and I did hear some residents speak about Dawson Road and the things that they met. When we are going to make a decision to reallocate funds, we need to make sure we're doing it in the best interest of all of the citizens. When you have fifty-one—as the article said that I shared with each of you all in an email—fifty-one residents on Dawson Road compared to 1,500 who will utilize the services of those waterlines in the Town of Greenwood, one still has to ask, 'what's really going on again?' If that price tag is in the millions, what would \$750k do for the millions? It makes no sense. So if there's something that I'm missing with my doing my homework, then I asked you all to correct me because I don't want anyone to believe that my intense and purpose is other than making sure that we're doing the best for all the citizens in Caddo Parish. And because there are two groups of people we're dealing with regards to what we're doing, reallocating those \$750k from Dawson Road Project—I'm sorry from the Town of Greenwood water lines project to Dawson Road, I just really need to understand how it is that such whereby those dollars will indeed meet the needs of those residents altogether. Thank you.

Mayor Justin Davis came and spoke in opposition to Ordinance No. 6513 of 2025 and gave the following comment:

For those of you who don't know, I'm the Mayor for the Town of Greenwood. I come here today, first and foremost, I want to express my gratitude to the Parish Attorney, Ms. Frazier, and also to Commissioner Ken Epperson and Assistant Administrator Walker. Thank you all for meeting with us or meeting with me in our meeting that we had a week or so ago. I do appreciate having that discussion

regarding the essential needs for the Greenwood water system. Our conversation highlighted the importance of reallocating those funds from Ordinance 6014 of 2020. It aligns better with the current priorities about the Greenwood water system. I look forward to working with the Commission to ensure that we meet our objectives in a manner for all parties involved. Therefore, I respectfully ask you to vote no on Ordinance No. 6513 of 2025, in order to maintain the funding allocated to the Greenwood water system. Thank you for your attention in this matter.

- *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*
- *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*

Cleveland Mouton, III came and spoke in favor of Ordinance No. 6518 of 2025, and gave the following comment:

I just want to speak to that, uh, I hope that you all are in favor like they stated, there are several properties and not just within the Highland area, but across Shreveport. I happen to live next door to one that burned down, 358 boulevard, which is 2 houses on that one lot. I called. I emailed, sent a message on Facebook, everything we could do to possibly save that home before it caught fire. I knew it would be one of the next ones, and eventually, it was and so those 2 properties burned. They burned my neighbor's house as well. And so we just working to try to save our neighborhood to save our street. We appreciate our Commissioner. He's always out there, assisting us and cleaning up the block and everything. So we just hope that you all continue to make sure that when we say we love Shreveport, we truly mean that. Thank you.

William Hartman came and spoke in favor of Ordinance No. 6518 of 2025, and gave the following comment:

I'm here on behalf of the Highland Neighborhood. I'm the Executive Director of Revitalize Historic Highland, and I am in support of 6418. As you've heard, the issue is really extreme in Highland. There are a lot of reasons why Highland is getting the brunt of this damage done by homeless people, but its happening all across the City, Allendale, Lakeside; its happening everywhere. People within the City government do care; they know what the issues are; they are making efforts to work with social service agencies, the Police Department, the Fire Department. They're getting together with people in the neighborhood to address the problem; however, basically everyone's hands are tied because there's this law that says you can't do this. There's that law that says you can't do that. So, ultimately, what needs to happen is legislation to change the way the laws are structured. It's probably going to have to happen at the State level. Other states, Alabama, has done a good job. They passed legislation at the state level that helped Mobile address very similar problems that Shreveport is now facing. So I think you starting to pass a legislation that is at least directing money to address this problem is a first step? I think we need to work with our local representatives at the state level to try to make something happen. I'm sure you would get support from people in New Orleans and Baton Rouge. They already have some very well organized, uh, land banks. There is one in Shreveport, that's just now getting underway. That is that's not a way to deal with this particular issue--the land bank, but we have to change the laws so that you don't have multiple limited liability companies that are tied to one entity to one person who owns-- I believe close to 600 properties within Caddo Parish. It is nearly impossible to track down who the actual owner is. It is beyond me how these investment entities can lay down money on a property in the City of Shreveport, and then just let it rot. I don't know what finance mechanisms are in place that they use, but something has to happen. Because Highland is a historic neighborhood. It is the historic heart of the City, outside of the downtown core. If we just let it go--and you hear people all the time, say, 'well, if you live in Highland you deserve what you get'--that is so wrong. We have to let everyone know that we care and we have to do something about it, so I support this legislation.

Janie Lipscomb came and spoke in favor of Ordinance No. 6518 of 2025, and gave the following comment:

Many of y'all have heard from me about the change in the Alabama state law. It helped save Mobile, Alabama, eliminated 75% of their blight in 2 years when they change the law. Again, apparently, it's very difficult to get a clear, clean quick title for properties. And I've asked virtually every person imaginable-- anyone that will open an email to talk to our legislators. Because apparently this has to be changed at the state level. I went to Mobile, Alabama, and talked to the mayor there. And this was what they had to do and y'all would know better than I would what needs to be done appropriately. We only have people who are the slum lords buying property adjudicating property and letting it sit around 4, 5, 6, 7 years, then they become an LLC, and it continues that way. We need people who will come in and by homes and renovate it and have some tax abatements, and so forth to rebuild our neighborhoods. If it has to be happened at a state level, then y'all are the people who have the power to create that. I've done this--I've been talking about this for 10 years. I've been torturing some of these folks for 10 years, but I mean, I

have all that information right here and sent it time and time again, but someone has to take the step that creates the solution, please do it.

Matthew Linn came and spoke in favor of Ordinance No. 6518 of 2025, and gave the following comment:

It's wonderful to see y'all. I think I was going to say something that hadn't been said--it is my understanding and from memory--the Parish receives a milage of 5.89 from property within the City of Shreveport is that close to correct? I know that there's one, there's multiple millages. But yeah, the Parish's, I believe is 5.89, so as these properties burn; as the City burns across our area, y'all are losing tax money, and I ask that at some point you extinguish that fire. And you regain your money and do something in whatever pathway that you would like to do to instill ownership responsibility for these property owners so that people are not scared to attend Centenary College. So that property value is not just in Highland, but South Highland, Broadmoor, and everywhere, Queensboro, Cedar Grove, in all of these neighborhoods that there is some safety created for the people that choose to live there. Because people have a choice. They can talk with their feet, and they can move and a lot of people do, but we need to keep that tax base in Caddo Parish. Caddo Parish does receive tax revenue from the Highland neighborhood. Anyway, thank you for your good time.

There being no one else to speak in favor, or against, this ordinance, the President closed the public hearing.

ZONING ORDINANCES (for final passage)

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 adopted. Motion carried unanimously.*

ORDINANCE NO. 6514 OF 2025 PZC CASE NO. 24-39-P

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

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 IT ORDAINED by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened, that Volume II of the Code of Ordinances of the Parish of Caddo, as amended, the Caddo Parish Unified Development Code, is hereby amended and re-enacted to read as follows, to wit:

The official Zoning Map of the Shreveport Metropolitan Planning Area of Caddo Parish, Louisiana, be amended by rezoning property located on the west side of Dean Road, approximately 800 feet south of Green Terrace Road, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, more particularly described below, be and the same is hereby amended **from R-A Rural-Agricultural Zoning District to R-1-7 Single-Family Residential Zoning District:**

24.19 Acs. M/L- Lot 1, Thompson Acres Sub. Section 7, T16N, R14W, Caddo Parish Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that if any provision or item of this ordinance or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end, the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that this ordinance shall become effective ten (10) days after publication in the official journal.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that all ordinances or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

It was **moved by Mr. G. Young**, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *that Ordinance No. 6515 of 2025, PZC Case No. 24-45-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 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.*

Mr. G. Young explained that the residents of the area would like a condition placed saying that these homes will be for purchase. The investors are happy to do so, he said, so it would need to go back to the PZC.

At this time, Mr. G. Young's motion carried unanimously.

ORDINANCES (for final passage)

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *that Ordinance No. 6513 of 2025, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Capital Outlay Fund to change an appropriation from the construction and improvement of Greenwood water lines to the construction of the Dawson Road extension, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto be adopted.*

Mr. Epperson referenced the Home Rule Charter, Section 2-05 Special Powers. He said that this Commission has the authority to pass ordinances to protect and preserve the general welfare, safety, peace, and good order to the constituents of this Parish. He said that the people of Dawson Road have the right to be safe. Mr. Epperson said that this extension would provide access to Dawson Road residents and the Jolly Napier area, enhancing public safety and well-being. Mr. Epperson pointed out that Dawson Road is in the unincorporated areas of the Parish and emphasized the need for another way for the residents to get out of the area in case of natural disasters, such as flooding. Mr. Epperson also said that he requested Greenwood's Mayor to provide information regarding the Greenwood Water System; he offered this open invitation to Mayor Davis. He asked that the Commissioners vote in favor of this ordinance.

Mr. Cothran wanted to know if this ordinance was for a feasibility study. He also wanted to question the origin of the \$750k budget. Mrs. Bryant explained that the \$750k came from an undedicated source, so the scope can be changed. She also said that this budget would not complete the road, so a study is needed to be completed first.

Mr. Cothran then wanted to know what was the original project. Mrs. Bryant said that the Commission voted to approve \$750k for water lines for Greenwood.

It was mentioned that a feasibility study is needed to determine the cost of completing the Dawson Road extension. Mr. Cothran asked again if the Commission is voting on a feasibility study. Mr. Epperson said that this ordinance is to do a feasibility study.

Mr. Burrell agreed and said that these funds will cover a feasibility study; the remaining amount will either supplement the Dawson Road project or be reallocated.

Substitute motion by Mr. Atkins, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *that Ordinance No. 6513's language be amended to read: an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Capital Outlay Fund to the repair and improvement of the Greenwood water lines and associated systems.*

Mr. Atkins said that his amendment proposed redirecting the funds allocated for new waters to repair existing lines to improve water quality.

Mr. Burrell said that the initial plan involved building new waterlines along Hwy 169, but this amendment suggests prioritizing existing system repairs.

Mr. Jones wanted to know if the complaint is with the system or the water lines. He feels that the complaint is with the system. Mr. Atkins said that his objective is water lines and associated systems.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if this amendment is to maintain the water lines. Attorney Frazier said that Mr. Atkins motion is to do whatever needs to be done to the water lines and associated systems.

Mr. Epperson said that the Town of Greenwood wants to replace membranes and water tanks. He is requesting that they provide a detailed report of what they would like to do.

Mr. G. Young pointed out that there will not be anything material whether or not the Commission votes in favor or against this ordinance. Mr. G. Young expressed the importance of clean potable water.

Mr. Jones said that the Commission would have to come back to vote on another ordinance to satisfy the needs for the Town of Greenwood, whether or not this ordinance is adopted or not. Mr. Atkins

pointed out that his substitute motion addresses this.

Substitute motion by Mr. Cothran, seconded by Mr. J. Young, *that Ordinance No. 6513 of 2025* be remanded to the Long Range Planning Committee.

Mr. G. Young suggested that Mr. Epperson's request be approved to conduct a feasibility study.

Mr. Lazarus pointed out that this ordinance does not mention a study; it mentions the construction of Dawson Road. Mrs. Bryant said that a study is needed prior to constructing the road.

Call for the Question by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Burrell. Motion carried by acclamation.

At this time, Mr. Cothran's substitute motion failed, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Jones, and J. Young (6). NAYS: Commissioners Epperson, Gage-Watts, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, and G. Young (6). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, Mr. Atkins' substitute motion failed, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Kracman, Lazarus, and J. Young (5). NAYS: Commissioners Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Thomas, and G. Young (7). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, Mr. Epperson's original motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Thomas, and G. Young (7). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Kracman, Lazarus, and J. Young (5). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

ORDINANCE NO. 6513 OF 2025

BY CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

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, AND TO OTHERWISE PROVIDE WITH RESPECT THERETO

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission adopted Ordinance 6014 of 2020 to appropriate \$750,000 for the extension of the water distribution system along Highway 169 South; and

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission would like to reappropriate these funds to construct the Dawson Road Extension; and

WHEREAS, the addition of the Dawson Road Extension would reduce emergency response times and address flooding issues in and around the Dawson Road and Jefferson Paige Road intersection; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to amend the 2025 Budget in order to update the appropriation of the funds for the construction of Dawson Road Extension, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened, that the Budget of Estimated Revenues and Expenditures for the Capital Outlay Fund for the year 2025 is hereby amended as follows:

	<u>Budget Increase (Decrease)</u>
Capital Outlay Fund:	
Greenwood Water Line Extension	(\$750,000)
Dawson Road Extension	\$750,000

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that if any provision or item of this ordinance or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that this ordinance shall take effect upon adoption.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that all ordinances or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

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 adopted. Motion carried unanimously.

ORDINANCE NO. 6516 OF 2025

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

AN ORDINANCE TO CLOSE AND ABANDON AN UN-NAMED PUBLIC DEDICATION IN THE NORTHWOOD HILLS SUBDIVISION, LOCATED IN SECTION 35, TOWNSHIP 19 NORTH, RANGE 15 WEST, IN THE PARISH OF CADDO, AND TO OTHERWISE PROVIDE WITH RESPECT THERETO.

WHEREAS, the Parish of Caddo has received a request from Mayor Jim Galambos, representing the Town of Blanchard, to close and abandon an un-named dedication in the Northwood Hills Subdivision. The portion to be closed and abandoned lies between Lot 2, Northwood Hills Subdivision and Lot 2, Re-Plat of Lots 3 & 4, Northwood Hills Subdivision; and

WHEREAS, on October 27, 1986, Northwood Hills Subdivision was filed and recorded under Instrument No. 01115006 of the Conveyance Records of Caddo Parish, Louisiana. This conveyance established an un-named strip of land between Lots 2 & 3, running from Beechwood Hills Drive to the golf course property; and

WHEREAS, all of the adjacent property owners are in support of this legislation; and

WHEREAS, neither the Parish of Caddo nor the Town of Blanchard have any facilities located within this public dedication and foresee no future use of this dedication.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened, that the un-named public dedication between Lot 2, Northwood Hills Subdivision and Lot 2, Re-Plat of Lots 3 & 4, Northwood Hills Subdivision, and as shown on Exhibit A is hereby closed and abandoned and released for public use.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a copy of this ordinance and plat marked Exhibit "A", displaying the portion of un-named public dedication in the Northwood Hills Subdivision to be closed and abandoned and released shall be filed in the Conveyance Records of the Parish of Caddo.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that if any provision or item of this ordinance or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items of applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end, the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that this ordinance shall become effective ten days after publication in the official journal.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that all ordinances or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

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 adopted.

Mr. J. Young said that this is needed in all of the districts. He asked that the Commissioners support this ordinance. Mr. Thomas agreed and said that this is a step forward to address the issues of blight and litter.

Mr. Atkins agreed that this is needed, but has concerns with allocating Parish monies for inner-city challenges. He does not feel that this is appropriate for the Parish to do. Mr. Atkins pointed out that the City has a \$5.9M budget to address this type of activity. I think this is more of a process related challenge than it is a money related challenge, he said.

Mr. Burrell pointed out that the citizens do not "give a hoot" about whether this is a Parish issue or a City issue. He then wanted to know how these monies will be dispensed. Mrs. Bryant said that she would need to get with her team to determine how to use the funds within the confines of the law.

Mr. Jones does not understand why the Commission is ok with giving money to the Town of Greenwood, but not for the City of Shreveport. Mr. Thomas explained that the City and Parish are willing to move forward via a CEA. Mr. Jones said that some of the Commissioners are tired of having blight and fires and litter. He pointed out that the Commission can allocate funds towards both issues.

Mr. G. Young said that there is an issue with blight, as well as, an issue in Greenwood regarding water lines.

Mrs. Blake said that there were several discussions at the PJAL regarding blight, infrastructure, and water. She pointed out that larger municipalities can play a crucial role in assisting smaller ones with water-related problems, which is a complex issue involving various factors, such as crime, mental health, blight, etc.

Mr. Cothran said that anything that this Commission does should benefit the Parish as a whole.

Mrs. Gage-Watts pointed out that the Caddo Parish Commission has partnered with the City of Shreveport in the past.

Substitute motion by Mrs. Blake, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *that Ordinance No. 6518 of 2025* be remanded to the Long Range Planning Committee.

Mr. J. Young said that this has already been vetted through the Long Range Planning Committee. He said that a Commissioner's role is not to deal with day-to-day operations; it is Mrs. Bryant's role. Mr. J. Young said that Mrs. Bryant will devise a plan of action, along with a CEA, and implement that plan. He does not see the reason for this to go back to the Committee. Mr. Thomas agreed.

Call for the Question by Mr. Cothran, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts. Motion carried by acclamation.

At this time, Mrs. Blake's motion failed, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Kracman, and Lazarus (6). NAYS: Commissioners Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (6). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, Mr. J. Young's original motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (8). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Kracman, and Lazarus (4). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

ORDINANCE NO. 6518 OF 2025

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET OF ESTIMATED REVENUES AND 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

WHEREAS, the Parish of Caddo strives to enhance neighborhoods and their citizens health, safety, and general welfare through efficient and effective parish code enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the illegal entry and occupation of vacant properties in Caddo Parish, including municipalities such as the City of Shreveport, have led to an increase in hazardous activities, including arson, creating significant public safety risks; and

WHEREAS, multiple incidents of fires have been reported in abandoned properties, endangering neighboring homes, residents, and first responders, while also straining emergency response resources; and

WHEREAS, property owners have largely abandoned these vacant properties, leaving them without proper maintenance, security, or oversight, contributing to neighborhood decline and increased criminal activity; and

WHEREAS, trespassing, unauthorized habitation, and illegal activities within these vacant properties negatively impact the quality of life for residents and erode public confidence in local safety measures; and

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission recognizes the urgent need to

establish a fund that will provide financial resources to nonprofit organizations to assist with property standards enforcement and the mitigation of hazardous vacant properties; and

WHEREAS, additional funds are needed to increase property standards within the Parish; and

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission would like to appropriate an additional \$100,000 for property standards; and

WHEREAS it is necessary to amend the 2025 Solid Waste Fund and the Riverboat Fund in the amount of \$100,000 for property standards; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened, that Budget of Estimated Revenues and Expenditures for the Solid Waste and Riverboat Funds for the year 2025 is hereby amended as follows:

	<u>Budget Increase (Decrease)</u>
<u>Riverboat Fund</u>	
Transfer to Solid Waste	\$100,000
Fund Balance	(\$100,000)
<u>Solid Waste Fund</u>	
Property Standards	\$100,000
Transfer from Riverboat	\$100,000

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that if any provision or item of this ordinance or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that this ordinance shall take effect upon adoption.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that all ordinances or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

There were no Zoning Ordinances for introduction by title, so the Commission moved onto Ordinances for introduction by title.

ORDINANCES (for introduction by title)

- *Ordinance No. 6519 of 2025, an ordinance declaring certain adjudicated properties to be surplus and to authorize the Parish Administrator, or a designee, to sell the Parish of Caddo's tax interest in certain surplus adjudicated properties and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6520 of 2025, an ordinance amending the 2024 Budget to amend the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Head Start Fund and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6521 of 2025, an ordinance amending the 2024 Budget to amend the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Housing Choice Voucher Program Fund and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6522 of 2025, an ordinance to authorize the transfer and acceptance of donation of a tract of land and temporary construction servitude in J.N. Howell's Subdivisions, Unit No. 3, adjacent to the Parish Health Unit, from Solomon Rental, LLC, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

**WORK SESSION MINUTES
RESOLUTIONS**

It was **moved by Mr. Cothran**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, that the following items be adopted:

- *February 18, 2025 Work Session Minutes*
- *Resolution No. 4 of 2025, a resolution approving the amending 2024 and proposed 2025 budgets of the North Louisiana Crim Lab Commission, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 7 of 2025, a resolution urging and requesting the Louisiana State*

Legislature to hold a Special Session to enact insurance reforms that would reduce premiums on auto, home and commercial insurance, and otherwise providing with respect thereto.

- *Resolution No. 8 of 2025, requesting the Secretary of State to authorize adding an additional early voting location in Caddo Parish and otherwise providing with respect thereto.*
- *Resolution No. 9 of 2025, a resolution of support for House Bill No. 6 of the 2025 Louisiana Regular Session regarding misappropriation of funds by apartment complex owners, and otherwise providing with respect thereto.*

At this time, Mr. Cothran's motion carried unanimously with Mr. J. Young being absent.

RESOLUTION NO. 4 OF 2025

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE AMENDED 2024 AND PROPOSED 2025 BUDGETS OF THE NORTH LOUISIANA CRIMINALISTICS LABORATORY COMMISSION AND TO OTHERWISE PROVIDE WITH RESPECT THERETO

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened this 9th day of January, 2025, that it hereby approves the amended 2024 and proposed 2025 budgets of the North Louisiana Criminalistics Laboratory Commission, as presented.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if any provision or item of this resolution, or application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end, the provisions of this resolution are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall become effective immediately.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

This resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

MEMBERS:	YEAS:	NAYS:	ABSENT:	ABSTAIN:
Chris Kracman	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Gregory Young	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Victor Thomas	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
John-Paul Young	_____	_____	<u>X</u>	_____
Roy A. Burrell	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Steffon D. Jones	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Stormy Gage-Watts	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Grace Anne Blake	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
John E. Atkins	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Ron Cothran	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Ed Lazarus, Sr.	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____
Ken Epperson, Sr.	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	_____

And this resolution was declared adopted on this, the 20th day of February, 2025.

RESOLUTION NO. 7 OF 2025

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

A RESOLUTION URGING AND REQUESTING THE LOUISIANA THE STATE LEGISLATURE TO HOLD A SPECIAL SESSION TO ENACT INSURANCE REFORMS THAT WOULD REDUCE PREMIUMS ON PROPERTY, HOME, AUTO, COMMERCIAL AND HEALTH INSURANCE, AND OTHERWISE PROVIDING WITH RESPECT THERETO.

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission recognizes the importance of use our voices as elected officials to address matters that are of concern of Caddo Parish citizens; and

WHEREAS, while legislative reforms in 2024 marked a significant step toward stabilizing

Louisiana's troubled insurance market, more comprehensive measures are needed to address longstanding issues of excessive litigation and escalating costs, according to a recent report by the Insurance Information Institute (Triple-I); and

WHEREAS, Louisiana, even after reform, remains one of the least affordable states for personal auto and homeowners' insurance; and

WHEREAS, commercial insurance rates are also extremely expensive; and

WHEREAS, more work is needed to make insurance rates in Louisiana more affordable.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, regular and legal session convened, that the Caddo Parish Commission does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Legislature to hold a special session in 2025 to enact insurance reforms that would reduce premiums on Auto, home and Commercial insurance by changing the current structure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be provided to Phillip DeVillier, Speaker of the Louisiana House, J. Cameron Henry, Jr., President of the Louisiana Senate and Governor Jeff Landry.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED if any provision or item of this resolution or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end, the provisions of this resolution are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall take effect immediately.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

RESOLUTION NO. 8 OF 2025

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION

REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO AUTHORIZE ADDING AN ADDITIONAL EARLY VOTING LOCATION IN CADDO PARISH AND OTHERWISE PROVIDING WITH RESPECT THERETO.

WHEREAS, La.R.S. 18:1309 provides that the Registrar of Voters may conduct early voting at one or more branch offices located in public buildings; and

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission recognizes that early voting is an important part of elections; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Caddo Parish Commission to ensure that early voting is as convenient as possible for citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission believes that adding an additional early voting location to the two current Caddo Parish locations will increase convenience to the citizens, thus increasing voter participation; and

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission believes that a suitable site would be the Oil City Community Center, as there is currently no early voting location in North Caddo Parish; and

WHEREAS, the late Commissioner and former Commission Clerk Todd Hopkins long advocated for an early voting site in North Caddo and the Commission would like to honor his efforts by seeing this goal to fruition.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Caddo Parish Commission, in due, legal and regular session convened, does hereby request the Louisiana Secretary of State to authorize adding an additional early voting location at the Oil City Community Center in Caddo Parish, under La.R.S. 18:1309.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be provided to Dale Sibley, Registrar of Voters, and Nancy Landry, Secretary of State.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if any provision or item of this resolution or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items, or applications of this resolution which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications and to this end

the provisions of this resolution are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall take effect immediately.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

RESOLUTION NO. 9 OF 2025

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 6 OF THE 2025 LOUISIANA REGULAR SESSION REGARDING MISAPPROPRIATION OF FUNDS BY APARTMENT COMPLEX OWNERS, AND OTHERWISE PROVIDING WITH RESPECT THERETO.

WHEREAS, recently in Caddo Parish, there have been at least three instances of water cut-offs to apartment complexes because of excessively past due water bills; and

WHEREAS, the tenants in these complexes were subject to leases where rent included payment for water; and

WHEREAS, the landlords in these complexes accepted lease payments and failed to pay the water bill; and

WHEREAS, as a result, the tenants, who had paid their rent in good faith to include water, are now forced to relocate and many of them do not have the funds to do so.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, regular and legal session convened, that the Caddo Parish Commission does hereby support the passage of HB 6 of 2025, which provides criminal penalties for landlords that misappropriate rental funds that should be used for utility payments.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution is effective immediately upon its passage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution will be forwarded to the Speaker of the Louisiana House, the President of the Louisiana Senate, the Caddo Parish legislative delegation and Governor Jeff Landry.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED if any provision or item of this resolution or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end, the provisions of this resolution are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

NEW BUSINESS

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that action item requesting and approving relocation assistance for residents impacted by non-payment of Master Meters at Apartments complexes, to include Village Square and Southern Oaks who are scheduled to lose access to water on February 27, 2025.*

Mr. Atkins asked for clarity on this item. Mrs. Bryant said that Administration has worked with Providence House in the past to set up a process in which citizens can apply for relocation assistance.

At this time, Mrs. Gage-Watts' motion carried unanimously with Mr. J. Young being absent.

COMMUNIQUES & COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Mr. Thomas thanked the attendees for being in the audience today.
- Mr. Jones said that the Juvenile Justice Committee will meet next Wednesday at 11:30 a.m.
- Mrs. Gage-Watts reminded the Commissioners to send in their nominations for the Youth Council.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned

at 6:37 p.m.


Michelle Nations
Assistant to the Commission Clerk


Stormy Gage-Watts
President