

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 14th DAY OF APRIL, 2025

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Work Session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mr. Epperson, acting President, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and Mr. J. Young (9). ABSENT: Commissioners Blake, Gage-Watts, and Kracman (3).

Mr. G. Young gave the invocation, and Mr. Atkins led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance. There were no Agenda Additions, so the Commission moved onto Citizens Comments.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

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

Before I start with my comment on our new entry system out front, I want to thank the Chair of the Economic Development Committee. Today, I learned a lot. I learned that there is not just one set of NGOs, there are two—and with learning that, it gave me a better picture of how it was and is that Oasis, House of Louisiana had come to submit an application. For that, Chair, I thank you for that information. Now, moving onto getting into the building. I came in earlier today, coming into the Committee meeting, and I was met with—and I have no problem with being scanned—but, I had a problem with having my picture taken, me having to put my name into the device when I'm coming to a public meeting. I can only imagine how chaotic that would have been had it been a number of us standing waiting to come into this setting. Not only that, but because there was not an awareness of the Committee meeting, having those personnel's of the Commission to find out who it is that I need to attach your name to that you are going to be saying, 'this is where you are going to be'. I think its very invasive. I think its overreach. Again, I have no problem going through the scanner and making sure there is nothing on my possession or even on my persons that could bring harm to anyone that comes into this Chamber—but to have my picture scanned, that is not needed. You know...to come into a public meeting. Now, if this is something that we're starting new, we definitely need to get the word out. Because, can you imagine? I'm just one that came to the committee meeting that did not appreciate having to stand there, put my name in the system, then, you know, have your face scanned—and I never appreciated why that was necessary at all. Again, I thank you all for your time. I thank you for services you provide for us. Chair, I thank you for what you did again for me learning what I learned today because knowledge is power, and when you don't have that knowledge, no power is present. Thank you.

Marvin Muhammed came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

To the Caddo Commissioner, the Parish Administrator, to the rest of this esteemed Commission, I rise to speak on an item that is under Consent Agenda, number 14.4, which is dealing with the Hosston rock and travel center that was previously finished. First of all, I want to say is that I am grateful to this body, not this one particularly, but the one previously that voted me in to sit on the Caddo Parish IDB, and while I was a member of the IDB, we had the privilege and the honor to host members of Edgemont Holdings, their legal team, and former Parish Administrator Dr. Wilson, the Parish Attorney, Dr. Frazier, and also at that meeting the Parish Clerk, Mr. Everson. In that meeting, there was a discussion of and the resolution came forward. When I say a resolution, I mean the final resolution that was in this resolution was a cooperative endeavor agreement where the Parish agreed to go into an agreement with Edgemont Holdings and in the tune of about two parts. The first part was a reimbursement pilot because they invested over \$1.8M just into the infrastructure because there wasn't any water; there wasn't any electricity; there wasn't any gas; there wasn't any fiber, so we went into a—so we agreed to do a reimbursement pilot for that, which would have commenced only after the building was completed. The second part of that agreement that we went into was that—we agreed to create an economic development district where the Parish would level a 2% sales tax and/or a 2% hotel occupancy tax. So to the Commission that authored this ordinance was in fact moving in the spirit of what the Parish had already agreed. I would like the Parish to reach out to legal counsel and ask, 'what is the risk of us not forward with something that we have already agreed to do?' Thank you.

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

VISITORS

- Kristen De La Houssaye
Capital Area Finance Authority

Ms. De La Houssaye said that they are a local housing finance authority in Baton Rouge. They entered into a CEA with the Parish in 2021 to offer down payment assistance to the community here. She said that it has been a successful program. About a year and a half ago, they issued a \$40M bond, and there is approximately \$1.4M left. They've completed 46 loans just this quarter.

Ms. De La Houssaye further explained that they go to each Parish and ask for permission to offer these services to their citizens. Currently, they are in 62 of the Louisiana parishes. Caddo Parish

was number two with the 46 loans they did, which was about 24% of the \$40M.

On May 15, CAFA will go before the Bond Council to get more volume cap, but this time, they are asking for \$100M. They will parse that out into three, so the first one they roll out will be in June. When they go before the Bond Council, it will be a TAFR hearing. She is asking that the Parish provide a resolution stating that CAFA is allowed to offer its services to Caddo Parish citizens.

Mr. Atkins asked for more clarification regarding the services that are offered to the citizens of Caddo Parish. Mrs. De La Houssaye explained that this tax exempt bond is for first-time homebuyers. The person has to be 80% below the area median income, credit score of 620, and debt to income ratio has to be 50%. The first time homebuyer will receive 5% assistance on the final loan amount. This could help with their down payment, buyer's compensation on realtor, etc. She also said that there is a lockout period of 10 years. If the person stays in their home for 10 years, then they do not owe anything.

Mr. Atkins then wanted to know if the Parish has any liabilities. Mrs. De La Houssaye said that the Parish does not.

Administrator Bryant pointed out that the Parish does collect a fee for this program, and these dollars are used for the wheelchair ramp program.

Mr. Cothran wanted to know how a citizen could participate in this program, and he also wanted to know the rate for the bond. Mrs. De La Houssaye said that it is a fixed rate, but they will not know what that rate is until the TAFR hearing in May. She also mentioned that they have several different marketing campaigns, such as social media and word of mouth recommendations.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- Juvenile Detention

Parish Administrator, Erica Bryant, said that there are sixteen children in the Detention Center; one of which are OJJ. There are two 17-year olds, and twenty-four children at CCC. There are 423 children on probation.

- Pin Ceremony

Mrs. Bryant announced that the Pin Ceremony will be hold on May 2 at 1:30 p.m.

- Love the Boot

Mrs. Bryant said that the Parish participated in the Love the Boot campaign by picking up litter in different districts. Several departments joined in the War Against Litter.

- 2025 March Financials

Mrs. Bryant said that the 2025 March Financials are attached to the agenda, as well as, being placed at each Commissioners' station.

- Caddo Day at the Capitol
April 24, 2025

Mrs. Bryant said that Caddo Day at the Capitol is scheduled for April 24, 2025.

COMMISSION REMARKS

- Mr. G. Young said that they had several discussions in the Economic Development Committee, and these discussions will continue during the May 5 meeting.

- Mr. Cothran thanked everyone who participate in the Love the Boot. He said that there were citizens picking up trash and litter throughout the different communities in the Parish. Mr. Cothran encouraged everyone to pick up litter and take pride in their communities.

Mr. Cothran attended a funeral today involving a homeless veteran. He said that some people went overseas, but never came back. Mr. Cothran said that people should recognize veterans for the sacrifices they make.

- Mr. Epperson talked about the funeral that Mr. Cothran attended. The gentleman did not have anyone to attend his funeral, so the Buffalo Soldiers, American Legions, and other veterans ensured that he was interred with people there.

He then talked about the soldiers who passed away during a training exercise in Lithuania. Mr. Epperson recognized and offered condolences to Sgt. Jose Duenez, Jr., 25, of Joliet, Illinois; Sgt. Edwin F. Franco, 25, of Glendale, California; and Pfc. Dante D. Taitano, 21, of Dededo, Guam.

Mr. Epperson announced that a press conference will be held on Thursday at 2:30 p.m. Ms. Beauchamp added that the press conference will be about the War on Litter. Mr. Epperson would like the student Commissioners will be in attendance.

- Mr. Atkins asked about the security protocols to attend meetings in the Chambers. Administrator Bryant explained that the citizen would just let the security personnel know that they are attending a meeting. Those citizens do not have to go through the process of entering their name and taking a picture. Administrator Bryant said that the citizen would need to enter their name and take a picture if they had a meeting or business on the other floors of Government Plaza. Mr. Atkins expressed his discomfort in making the process onerous for a citizen to attend a meeting in the People's Chambers.

Administrator Bryant also mentioned that the elevators do not work without a badge.

There was not a President's Report or Old Business, so the Commission moved onto New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, Mr. Jones, *that Ordinance No. 6529 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, relative to the manufactured homes, with all their provisions included herein, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction and remanded to the Parish Zoning Commission. Motion carried unanimously.

It was **moved by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *to englobo and move the following ordinances to Thursday's agenda for introduction:*

- *Ordinance No. 6530 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 west side of Linwood Avenue, approximately 770 feet south of Flournoy Lucas, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, from I-2, Heavy Industrial Zoning District, to C-3, General Commercial Zoning District, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6531 of 2025, an ordinance to close and abandon the street dedications in the Merriwether Woods Subdivision, in Section 32, Township 17 North, Range 14 West, in the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6532 of 2025, an ordinance authorized the lease of flood acquisition property located at 1014 Riding Club Lane, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6533 of 2025, an ordinance to authorize the lease of flood acquisition property located at 1020 Riding Club Lane, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6534 of 2025, an ordinance to authorize the lease of flood acquisition property located at 9794 Mustang Circle, Keithville, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

At this time, Mr. Jones' motion carried unanimously by those members present with Commissioners Blake, Gage-Watts, and Kracman being absent (3).

It was **moved by Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mr. Jones *that Ordinance No. 6535 of 2025, an ordinance to set the General Purpose and Special Purpose Millages providing for millage rate adjustments, as allowed by Article VII, Section 23 of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974 and LA R.S. 47:1705 (B), levying and imposing taxes and assessments for 2025 on all the property subject to taxation in the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Substitute motion by Mr. Thomas, seconded Mr. Jones *to englobo and move the following ordinances to Thursday for introduction with public hearings being set for June 5, 2025:*

- *Ordinance No. 6535 of 2025, an ordinance to set the General Purpose and Special Purpose Millages providing for millage rate adjustments, as allowed by Article VII, Section 23 of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974 and LA R.S. 47:1705 (B), levying and imposing taxes and assessments for 2025 on all the property subject to taxation in the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6536 of 2025, an ordinance to set the General Purpose and Special Purpose Millages providing for an increase in the millage rates not in excess of the prior years maximum rates, as allowed by Article VII, Section 23 of the Louisiana*

Constitution of 1974 and LA R.S. 47:1705 (B), levying and imposing taxes and assessments for 2025 on all the property subject to taxation in the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto

- *Ordinance No. 6537 of 2025, an ordinance setting the Parish Millage for the purpose of paying principal and interest, due in 2025, on outstanding Parish bond issues and to instruct the Assessor to include said millage on the tax roll of the Parish of Caddo for the year 2025, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6538 of 2025, an ordinance setting the assessment of property classified as timberlands and to instruct the Assessor to include said assessment on the tax roll of the Parish of Caddo for the year 2025, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6539 of 2025, an ordinance to adopt the values fixed, or to be fixed, by the Louisiana Tax Commission on all assessment for railways and other public service corporations, and to instruct the Assessor to extend such assessments and values on the tax roll of the Parish of Caddo for the year 2025, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

Administrator Bryant said that these are annual ordinances that are adopted by the Commission. She did point out that Ordinance No. 6535 of 2025 is the maximum authorized rate.

At this time, Mr. Thomas' substitute motion carried unanimously by those members present with Commissioners Blake, Gage-Watts, and Kracman being absent (3).

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that Ordinance No. 6540 of 2025, an ordinance dedicating fifty percent (50%) of the income generated from the Parish's share of sports wagering receipts to the Economic Development Fund and amending the General Fund and the Economic Development Fund for sports wagering revenues, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. Epperson said that this would put 50% of the sports wagering bets in the Economic Development Fund.

At this time, Mr. Epperson's motion carried unanimously by those members present with Commissioners Blake, Gage-Watts, and Kracman being absent (3).

It was **moved by Thomas**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that Resolution No. 25 of 2025, a resolution opposing Senate Bill 74 of the 2025 Regular Legislative Session of the Louisiana Legislature relating to the adult prosecution of juveniles and otherwise providing with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's Regular Session for consideration.

Mr. Thomas asked that this be moved to Thursday's agenda for discussion due to the author being absent. Mr. Cothran encouraged everyone to read this bill thoroughly.

At this time, Mr. Thomas' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (8). NAYS: Commissioner Atkins (1). ABSENT: Commissioners Blake, Gage-Watts, and Kracman (3). ABSTAIN: None (0).

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

- *Resolution No. 26 of 2025, a resolution to authorize the acceptance of the Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire*
- *Proclamation for National Parish/County Government Month*
- *Proclamation for Autism Awareness Month*
- *Special Resolution for Caddo Day at the State Capitol*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition for NAACP Officers*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition for Top Ladies of Distinction*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition for HBCUAC's Track & Field Tournament*
- *Special Resolution for Jazz on the Red*

- *Selection of the Poet Laureate*
- *Leone Fitzgerald as a Visitor for Thursday's agenda*
- *Chief Wayne Smith as a Visitor for Thursday's agenda*
- *Appointment of Henry Brown the Caddo Sewer District No. 2 Board*
- *Authorization of Commission travel for Caddo Day at the Capitol*

At this time, Mr. Jones' motion carried unanimously by those members present with Commissioners Blake, Gage-Watts, and Kracman being absent (3).

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Thomas *that the appointment of Whitney Abner, R.S. to the Animal Services Board* be moved to Thursday's agenda for consideration.

Mr. J. Young will be abstaining from this vote due to the current situation involving a dog biting him, as advised by Legal.

Mr. Travis Clark, Director of Animal Services, explained that the members on the board come from specific fields. These members are recommended from the board and forwarded to him, which is then forwarded to the Commission for approval. The body understood.

At this time, Mr. Epperson's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, and G. Young (8). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Blake, Gage-Watts, and Kracman (3). ABSTAIN: Commissioner J. Young (1).

COMMUNIQUES/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Mr. Thomas talked about the Jazz on the Red event. It was a successful event, and he encouraged all to attend the next one. Mr. Jones agreed and said that this was a family friendly event that highlighted the local talent in this community.

CONSENT AGENDA

- *Ordinance No. 6526 of 2025, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Oil & Gas Fund and the Riverboat Fund to provide an appropriation of \$30,000 for Youth Outreach Services dba Jewell House, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6527 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. 6528 of 2025, an ordinance to donate surplus property under Chapter 19, Article II, Division 3 of the Code of Ordinances, relative to the donation of adjudicated property acquired by the Parish under LA.R.S. 47:2236 et seq., to authorize the donation of property to the City of Shreveport, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *I-49 North Corridor Economic Development Resolution No. 2 of 2025, a resolution establishing a sales tax within the boundaries of the I-49 North Corridor Economic Development District in connection with the pilot agreement with Edgemont Holdings, LLC, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Appoint additional member to the Caddo Parish Youth Commission*

At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the Commission adjourned at 4:50 p.m.


 Assistant to the Commission Clerk