

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 3RD DAY OF APRIL, 2025

The Caddo Parish Long Range Planning Committee met in legal session on the above date at 2:15 p.m. in the Government Plaza Chambers, with the following members were present constituting a quorum: Commissioners Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Lazarus, and Thomas (5). ABSENT: Commissioner Kracman (1).

The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were given during the previous committee. There were no Agenda Additions, so the Committee moved onto Public Comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Good Evening, Commissioners. Back when this item first came to you all's agenda, which was in the March Session, matter of fact, it was at the Regular Session—March 20, 2025—the item that you are going to be discussing here was sent to the Long Range Planning Committee. Now, information that has been shared that I got here today—it shows a disseminating of funding, but it does not show how it is that those dollars will weed their way down to the Parish of Caddo. So, if it is that, and someone can help me to appreciate what it is that you all are looking at at this particular juncture outside of the language of the legislation, particularly the dollar amount, because if I'm looking correctly —as of today, seemingly 2025 to the date \$30,235—I guess that's what that represents. Now, one would ask the question since you have three different years on here—are all these years sitting in the queue waiting to be allocated to some of these dollars to the Parish of Caddo? And, fi so, how is it done? Because, according to these percentages, they just don't add up. So if I could get some explanation as you all discuss this item, I would really appreciate it.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Discuss Ordinance No. 6525 of 2025, an ordinance dedicating fifty percent (50%) of the income generated from the Parish's share of sports wagering receipts to the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust Fund and amending the General Fund and the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust Fund for sports wagering revenues, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

Finance Director, Mrs. Barnett, gave the following brief history of the Sports Wagering Revenue:

- Passed in 2022, R.S. 27:625(G) and 628 outlines how the money generated by sports wagering is to be spent
- A little less than half of the tax revenue, 41.5%, is allocated to specific funds, and the rest is available as state general funds. The following is a percentage breakdown:
 - 2%, or \$500,000, whichever is greater, goes to the Behavioral Health and Wellness Fund.
 - 2%, not to exceed \$500,000, will be credited to the Disability Affairs Trust Fund.
 - 2.5% will go to the Sports Wagering Purse Supplement Fund.
 - 10% will go to the Sports Wagering Local Allocation Fund.
 - 25%, not exceeding \$20 million, will go toward the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund.

In 2023, \$400,690 was collected; in 2024, \$349,11 was collected; and in 2025 to date, \$30,235 has been collected.

Mrs. Barnett also explained that the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust Fund was established a few years ago as a revolving loan fund with the purpose of helping developers establish quality, affordable housing, mixed use development, etc. The Commission transferred some initial funding into the fund to establish it. It has been used since then for the ERAP dollars. There is no revenue stream for the fund, she said.

She further explained that a budget does not need a revenue stream to be established, but \$1 cannot be spent without a budget for an expenditure. Mrs. Barnett also said that the Revenues should not equal the Expenditures. Expenditure budgeting is crucial to prevent overspending, even with surplus revenue.

Mr. Cothran wanted to know what the funds would be used for. Mrs. Bryant said that it could be for potential housing projects, such as repairs, emergency rental assistance, new developments, etc.

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that the other 50% of the sports wagering funds be dedicated for Economic Development Fund.*

Mr. Epperson said that this revenue is not from tax dollars, but from voluntary spending. He feels that this would be a suitable use of those funds.

Mr. Thomas clarified that the revenues from sports wagering revenues is from recreational activities, not property taxes.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know if this would need to be a separate ordinance. Attorney Frazier agreed that this would need to be a separate ordinance because the title would be different.

At this time, Mr. Epperson withdrew his motion.

Mrs. Gage-Watts said that the previous introduction of Ordinance No. 6525 of 2025, said that these dollars would be used to address blight and housing concerns in Caddo Parish. She wanted to know if this would be inclusive of Shreveport. Mrs. Bryant said that these dollars are not restricted dollars.

Attorney Frazier explained that this fund's purpose is a revolving loan fund to aid developers in facilitating homeownership, mixed-use development, and private investments. She further explained that the fund can only be used if their purpose aligns with facilitating homeownership, mixed-use development, and encouraging private investment in collaborative economic and neighborhood development.

Mrs. Gage-Watts wanted to know where the Commission was in addressing blight in Shreveport. Mrs. Bryant explained that several programs are being considered, but current legal issues with the City limit collaboration on cleanup projects.

Mrs. Gage-Watts mentioned that additional funding is being allocated through Bloomberg to address blight in Shreveport. Grants will target specific zip codes to tackle issues stemming from dilapidated properties.

Mr. Thomas is in support of establishing a continuous funding source for this fund. He emphasized future benefits, particularly for housing development projects.

Mr. Thomas also suggested the establishment of the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust Fund Technical Review Committee to vet through projects and housing repairs.

Mr. Cothran wanted to know if the proper language is in place to accomplish all of the goals that were mentioned during this committee.

Attorney Frazier pointed out that housing is not prescribed as an authority of the Commission. She said that there are other mandates where the funding could be used.

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *to recommend to the full body to postpone Ordinance No. 6525 of 2025, an ordinance dedicating fifty percent (50%) of the income generated from the Parish's share of sports wagering receipts to the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust Fund and amending the General Fund and the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust Fund for sports wagering revenues, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto.*

Mrs. Gage-Watts thanked Attorney Frazier for reminding the Committee of what the Commission's charges are.

At this time, Mr. Epperson's motion carried unanimously by the members who were present, with Commissioner Kracman being absent (1).

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned
2:49 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant to the Commission Clerk