

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 7TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2024

The Caddo Parish Long Range Planning Committee met in legal session on the above date at 2:00 p.m. in the conference room of Government Plaza Chambers, with Mr. Chris Kracman, presiding, and the following member in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, and G. Young, and J. Young (5). ABSENT: (0).

Mr. G. Young gave the invocation, and Mr. Thomas led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiances.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Charles Grubb

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Mayor, and members, I'm Charles Grubb most of y'all, some of y'all probably know me as a lawyer. The first thing I want to say as a retired lawyer, I voluntarily relinquished my license 3 years ago, because I was having trouble retiring and. So I'm here today and not to represent anybody just me so I sort of followed the situation about the baseball stadium, paper, and I had a few conversations and the comments I want to make a short and sweet. This is not the first time and I know (inaudible) presented with. Something more by the original aiding streets or something like that, as always different opinion as to whether you want to go forward with something or not so I know the mayor, for example, investigated this a lot of investigating particularly (inaudible). Anyway, You know, I'm in mind when you stay with originally built I was a city attorney and Mayor Arceneaux had to do to me, it was controversial that the people that didn't think that the money ought to be spent, the bond issue was controversial, raise the money forward with the council and the mayor persevered. It turned out to be a good idea the project. I grew up in New Orleans, like 60s when the big deal was building the Superdome. And caused all kinds of (inaudible) for a long time. Finally persevered and convince the political, our structure that they are built Superdome, even though the Superdome in there a guaranteed (inaudible), but we all know what it guaranteed the city is the commission within 10 years or so, (inaudible) That was controversial There's a lot of them opposition to the public why build a 2000 sq foot building the inspect for a building with no tenants or accidents? But the commission persevered and finally realized that there would be that there was a need for it, although it wasn't signed on a dotted line. Once they made that decision that they want to pursue it, the hard questions like who is going to pay for it? Was the Parish going to lose any money at all that stuff. That worked out after the decision first it was made that we want to pursue it and the commission part so keep doing that for a good while, but as y'all know now, that's an asset, the parish has actually made money on the transaction, if anything the people that y'all did business (inaudible) folded on their responsibility Several hundreds of people working out there and it's an asset. So having said that I draw parallel with the baseball stadium, to me the commissions didn't say (inaudible) the city for that matter. With the baseball stadium we have to decide if it is rehabilitated, is this city going to be better off, this is going to be an asset to the city and you've had some people and I'm sure other support with detail. Different entities. Like the Y, the church league, the school board, the state fair, (inaudible). They've all expressed some interest in using the stadium as I understand it if it's rehabilitated. So my suggestion, my bottom line suggestion is that that y'all were focused on whether the city would be better off with this stadium field, whether. There really is a need for the stadium that will enhance not just the city, but the Queensborough neighborhood there and all that and if you think you conclude that it is then do the hard part of trying to work out the details who's going to pay, how much for it, can we get money from the state and all of that, for me the most important thing for all to decide? Is the parish been better off we have to stay. That's all I've got to say, Mr. chairman.

Bill Robertson

Mr. Chairman members of the committee, I'm bill Robertson with friends of Fairground Field and we have a number of people here that would like to visit with you today about Fairground Field. Okay so I will not take a long time we met with the mayor last week, it's nice to see him again. The item before you is the resolution of similar, that's all it is it's not a commitment of money, it's not an assumption of liability. It's simply a statement of support for friends. Appreciate Commissioner Young offering the the resolution and we hope that you'll vote in favor of it so we can advance to your full commission and make the arguments there. As Mr. Grubb said the question before you is Shreveport, Caddo Parish better off with fairgrounds, feel or not this feel like we're in today. There's a cooperative endeavors between the city and the parish, so we're not talking about something unprecedented most recently, I think the parish made an agreement with the school board. To take over pbs pitch back park in west Shreveport, West Caddo Parish to make it into a part, Dr. Dozart is here. She's with the school board, she can speak to that as well. We don't therefore cooperation, we've approached the city with a cooperative deal to make a new ownership of fairground field happen, and this committee is really our first step in It's going beyond the city agenda to engage other folks, so if I can, I'd like to recognize the folks who are here, Ms. Williams from the Queensborough neighborhood, Link Coleman from UL Coleman as I said, Dr. Dozart here from the school board, Commissioner Burrell has been a longtime supporter the state fair property and if we can look beyond simply the ballpark and think of what could happen at the state fair and what could happen with the inner city of our community finally almost sit down, but I want to ask the question. A Shreveport stopped the Parish because I don't think it did, excuse me of the parish commission is relevant to Shreveport, then let's make that, let's make that happen, let's make those at best, what's happened in our city? Thank you.

Unknown Speaker (female)

On last week I came to you and I asked you too. I appeal (inaudible), now I want you to know close your eyes just to make everyone close eyes, just, you know. Remember when you can hang on up in the the 50s and the 60s, the way it was what you had and what was given to you back then. Now open your eyes, I am appealing to you to do this not only for our kids, but all Shreveport communities when we work together, so the greater good, all these happened, these kids and from every community need our help. someone helped you, someone gave you a chance, it's time for us to give back Shreveport. I've got kids and grandkids that are coming up now, that stadium would it be the best thing for Shreveport! I remember when I went to Booker T. Washington high school, we had 6 different titles that you could go and train Mr. Millard for photography, Mr. White for white cleaners, Papa Hall for auto mechanics, Mr. Mr. Shelbury whites card holders, all these people. It gave somebody a chance. I was heard by Mr. Bowman. He said, every child is not going to college, why not use his fairgrounds for a training center for those kids that can't go to college. Give them a chance, if you love Shreveport, like you say you do, show it, thank you.

Stevan Walpool

I'm sorry Steven Walpool, Queensborough neighborhood association.

Unknown Speaker (male)

I wanted to go because, going out there you had better choices and better things to do. Back home you see all these opportunities gone, it hurts. I know we got trade schools and I know we have a lot of stuff the children can do, but this is really good for the community. To be honest, money does make a big difference, but tell someone that really cares about their community. (Inaudible) I don't want them to go out of town and come back home and can't (inaudible) When I came home I got pushed away several times. Shreveport can have more opportunities not just for the children but for the community as a whole. I cared for a lot of boys and young men (inaudible) I see other cities and states taking our young people. I feel like there is a place for tat and we can do something with it.

Shane Sharkey

In 2018 our first approach to city council, we created playball Shreveport and at the time, I've actually made 4 of (inaudible) to the city council and I just kind of want to talk to you about some of the physical aspects of the state, but some kind of a pragmathematic person out of a real background. The first thing was whenever you go to flip our renovate a park or anything like that to our check out the foundation back in 2018. I have my friend Sam Vanny, who built Willis Knighton hospital and Willis Knighton cancer treatment center and remodeled different facilities. (inaudible) Go get to the stadium, go underneath the stadium and check out establishing if it structurally sound. The concrete would need to blown up to get rid of it. So, we address the foundation and (inaudible) We brought a bat company (inaudible). Eradication company in the country to get us an estimate of what up it would cost not only to eradicate to eliminate the bats. Do a cleanup in the facility, but also sterilize all surfaces because we want them make it safe for kids to come and play and utilize it because our vision, which is the same thing (inaudible) We're going to repurpose it back to what is original, the designation and say it was a multipurpose sports facility, for youth, high school, and college right? So, we've got we knew what it would cost to make take care of the bats, we brought up some geology department to figure out what the drainage problems with the area. And then the flooding that happens on for 3rd, they're being said, we needed through Dr. Beeler, and my son, who's graduated from Centenary with Geology now he has his doctorate in physical therapy go figure. We knew how to solve the flooding problems and we also brought in a company that can do an estimate artificial turf and cleared up all of all the drainage issues and then talk to some people with the people who have a city engineering department to fix the drains and then ditches around the stadium, which have been neglected for years. So, I know you may have an idea of her that the stadium is beyond repair, that it can't be salvaged. What the true fact is what they've done to the same as far as the demolition stage. It was what we were already going do to get down to the bare bones to where now renovates saving to make it useful for all kids in this area. Can you guys, name me another facility that is that accessible to public transportation? I can't think of that you have a steady bus line right there, running it's to make it accessible all schools, let's make it out for all sports. Thank you.

Lynn Coleman

While They are handing things out, I would just like to say thank you to everybody for letting us speak, you know, we have that said, and I want to emphasize, this is a lot more than this fairground fields, our city has a serious issue to some of you heard this. We lost 30,000 people in the last since 1980. In the last 10 years, our city brought to a 1000 petition and we have about \$2 billion under the infrastructure in our city, the streets water system, consumers. They're time as of 2022, we have \$244 billion of unfunded pension funds and funded pension funds in 1960. We had about 4500 people per square mile of Shreveport. Today, we have about 1700 people per square mile, our city is being hollowed out. This is a call to action, you know, if we could turn to back 5 to 50 years, you know, we need it for our citizens to be more engaged. We had to work closely with our government officials, and we can't. It's not fair to rely a 100% of the government officials and ask them to do all this without citizen input. So, this is a thing that if we could all turn our clock back. We've seen a lot better position financially and every other way today, have we been able to do that. We have here a here, let me just say a package that of information that we shared last time is that it has information on it, the management operation funding. In the 3 minutes, we don't have a time to cover all that, but you know what I would say to you is that you know we need to do this for our community. That means it you know; we have a divided city in many words and we need to

work together in all aspects and so. That's a thing that is critical to our city. Common denominator that we do have as our youth and our sports and that helps bring everybody together in community and interaction together, you know, the kind of what I was going to say is one of the things that you have here is a simple, better mechanic that was put together between the parish and the city. And we would like to submit that for review with the parish at the full meetings, so that's a key element. I think Mayor Arceneaux knows Bill colleges. He's one of our friends' groups stay in shelter hospital. President of committee one hundred, Bill's very involved in the city, and one of the best things in the city, but they'll prepare this letter of intent. This is very simplistic, and you know all of the details would need to be worked out while risky. Thank you, we'll try to be very efficient with this and you know I would say, the Letterman can is a way to cap size all this and so the area to bring all these people together over the last 2 years that we found out that the city intent to tear down. Town on turns out in the summer of 2022. Since that time we've been told that we can't have access to the stadium The few of my city officials before Mayor Arceneaux of this, the city official did not want to give anybody access to this idea because they didn't want to citizen to think that there was an opportunity to do anything with the stadium. We didn't understand that if we tried the time every all the issues. That the city brought up as we asked, we said, we're here to help to help, and not be antagonistic, and all of the city the issues are and let us let us answer this, so this letter intent, since that time would not have access to the state, we've not been able to. Have met with the parish, the school board and private sector and all those people said that we're here they are willing to consider this, but we need to see it, it would give us the green light to operate. So, since that time the city has the city has yes.

Roy Burrell

Mr. Chairman, I don't know if mine would be a public comment but I 'm up for the comment and deals with the biohazard experience out there (inaudible) I met with Calumate and some other substations to try and bring light Still, safety men brings life back to Queensboro area. It has lost, so many of residences in the last census, we have to redraw our lines pretty much all the districts had to redraw the lines my district in mind, because we lost of course people so as we say before it was hollowed out. When this fairground field became an issue. My concern was the biohazard that was there on the bat guano. I had found out that Indiana haad a similar situation when they tore down a stadium similar to fairground field, and it infected over a 100,00 people and 13 died from the complication of plasmosis. So I felt as commissioner, all those in this city, I have a responsibility for public health. If you contact the governor I contact the governor's office just so happened to governor on that same day, I was on the news. He was at Calumet Of course he contacted the Department of Health and they shut the project down shut the demolition and at that time. Since then, I've met with the mayor and asked him for a meeting, he was gracious enough to get us a meeting last week and my biggest issue other than in development and based on the meeting that we just recently had was the abatement and the biohazard of the bat guano. Based on a meeting we just had a gentleman who was there a company was there called Insulam supposed to be specialized in Biohazards, I guess? And they committed at that time. That they would abate the bat guano by additional cleaning, bringing out the waste that's there. If they find some, water to abate the airborne dust particles, they're going to use air monitors while I'd recommend that they use of monitors in the city at the air pollution. They will also have a bio expert on site. I'm sorry is that right Mr. Mayor? Okay, all I'm saying is it was in the meeting that we had that you bought, Mr. Mr. Stone? I guess an asking a question, I'm not going back-and-forth with the mayor, Mr. Chairman. Just go down and look went on at the meeting. You don't want to give you can't miss fine, but it's not a fact enough. Can I proceed Mr. chairman, now I would just expert the mayor since we were there, I can call this gentleman here who's supposed to be experts, but that's that I understood? I'm supposed to satisfy the question that I have on biohazards. We have poor people that live in that area, and maybe they have some people that don't give a damn about it, but I do because I represent that area for 25 years and know pretty much everyone in that area and around that stadium, you have a hospital that's there, you have a boy's club that's there you have poor neighborhoods that's their poor neighborhoods and because of that yet, I objected myself. Into this at that time. In order to try to get this situation, at least, some sense of comfort for the people whom is in that district that they were coming to them asking about concerns of but plasmosis, although they didn't know anything about it, they just knew it was respiratory, so because of that. I felt that it's my responsibility to do because I'm sure it would be your responsibility for your district so, um, so again, we met and this was the what I understood was the assurance, I thought that that's what we left with, but now, I'm not so sure. Oh, it's my understanding that. That's part of the, if suit, that was filed, I wasn't a part of that, this situation would be resolved before this project goes forward, so I'm not sure where that is at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Unknown Speaker (female)

I would like to say a few things, you know us females don't to much get in men business and I don't want to be even say, but I know I have a child out there for fairgrounds. I have an adult child volunteering. Oh, she's been there since open and she's saying most of those businesses seemed like they would be coming from different places and they are about to go out of business and I didn't even discuss it with him I knew that somewhere I had heard that the fair might be moved if we don't start doing something about the fair that's existing today. Now in their activity, they gonna move that down further south and once we lose that fairground fields, they are going to see it a lot of the fair, we're going to start losing more and more activities for our city and from the picture that I've been listening to. We need to think this over we need to think, seriously. I'm a classroom teacher from 36 years and it hurts my heart to know that we have failing schools. We didn't have that when I was teaching and I see this failing now. So, I'm saying from a female point of view. We need to think seriously about making some changes to improve. It's noy my area even though I don't live in this area, when I'm on the board, I don't speak for just one district. I speak for all districts, all the Shreveport and hopefully Bossier City, thank you very much.

Tom Dozart

It's me Tom Dozart people would like to address (inaudible) So, what's the first thing you see when you come to Shreveport Bossier? Next to the fairgrounds, Lawyer signs, sue, sue, sue, it's hard to bring businesses in Louisiana if everybody wants to sue everybody. If Shreveport is (inaudible) I understand the freedom of speech, but (inaudible) I counted 23 lawyer signs, Gordan and Gordan going from one end of town to the next in Shreveport, um because of the lawyer signs and everybody wants to sue everybody (inaudible) I propose top golf in Margaritaville and address the group cause, that's the only way to allow the city to grow, thank you.

Lynn Coleman

I would like to speak for 30 seconds. I would like to say that any idea this is a lot more than the fairgrounds field. This is about the overall campus, it's deteriorating, and I think this the fairgrounds fields could be a catalyst for doing all that to help rejuvenate all the commercial and residential areas and the biggest employer we have in our area is this medical community. And they right in the middle of this and we need to do everything we can to preserve them, they employ probably 10,000 people collectively. So we need to do everything to (inaudible) You know, this is all about our inner city and so, thank you very much Mr. Chairman.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Discuss and make recommendations related to Resolution No. 65 of 2024 and matters related to Fairgrounds Field.*

The clerk suggests moving on to new business, specifically discussing Resolution 65 of 2024 related to Fairground Fields. Mr. Kracman thanked the mayor for being present and asked about recent discussions with Fairgrounds Field The mayor mentioned he would be brief about the ongoing litigation; stated he would be cautious with their words. They note that the contract is ready for the decision of demolition and believe it represents the best financial option.

Mr. J. Young thanks the mayor and expresses satisfaction with the management of city resources and the plan to address health risks during demolition, emphasizing the importance of careful planning. They acknowledge the costs associated with preserving landmarks like Fairgrounds and express a preference for minimal risk to the neighborhood during the proposal's execution. Mr. J. Young encourages the city government to proceed with their demolition plan responsibly.

Mr. Thomas asks if there is a vision for development once demolition happens and highlights the economic potential that the group present could contribute. They are exploring various development possibilities but acknowledge a previous proposal's high costs. Mr. G. Young expressed hope for future enhancements to Fairgrounds Field that would positively impact the area. Mr. Thomas emphasizes the importance of collaboration with interested parties to bring financial support for potential developments in the future.

In a meeting, Mr. Kracman acknowledges the presence and investment of stakeholders expresses gratitude, and makes a motion to table resolution 65, stating concerns about the city's involvement in local business and emphasizing trust in elected officials to make prudent decisions. He also mentions support for youth baseball and community initiatives, suggesting that there are opportunities for investment in local sports and activities. They share a personal nostalgic story related to their past and prefer focusing on the future rather than dwelling on nostalgia.

A letter that they received was brought up by Assistant Administrator Clay Walker, clarifying that they had not heard of it before and that the administration had not approved it or committed to managing any related facility. The discussion continues with a focus on preventing empty spaces in areas where buildings have been torn down, aiming to improve and draw attention to those locations. The session involves further comments and the motion to table resolution 65 ultimately carries support from the group, moving to the next agenda item.

It was **moved by Mr. Kracman**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *to table resolution 65* at this time, Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (5). NAYS: (0). ABSENT: (0)

- *Discussion of and possible recommendation for [Resolution 72 of 2024](#) supporting raising the Constable's hourly rate for litter enforcement, and otherwise providing with respect thereto.*

The committee spoke about the agenda, to which involves discussing a recommendation for resolution 72 of 2024 related to increasing the constable's hourly rate for litter enforcement. It was expressed surprise at having many questions regarding the matter and the significance

of the proposed \$10 raise. Mr. Kracman invites questions from others and comments on the ongoing issue of litter. It notes that there are many questions because of a lack of familiarity with the constables' processes. A discussion about litter and the potential use of cameras to capture information about littering. Mr. Kracman raises a question for Attorney Bernstein about a constable in south Louisiana coming for discussions and the anticipation of engaging with the constables and their excitement to address litter issues and adds hope for positive outcomes. Near the end, Mr. J Young suggests having a virtual meeting instead of an in-person one to facilitate communication.

J. Young proposes a motion to amend resolution 72 by adding \$5,000 for deer cameras. The need for a budget ordinance related to this matter was mentioned. Public Works contributes to the discussion, indicating they have some cameras and mentioning the challenges of effectively using them, including their placement and visibility. Assistant Director of Public Works, Josh explains that they are testing a few cameras but notes difficulties in concealing them in public spaces. He suggests that they may not need the proposed \$5,000 since Public Works is already working on the issue. He also reflects on the challenge of camera effectiveness in capturing cars and dumping activities, emphasizing repeated dump sites as focal points for monitoring. Mr. J. Young suggests directing cameras away from traffic toward problem areas. Ultimately, Mr. J. Young proposes retracting the amendment and submitting the matter to the full body for discussion and passage.

It was **moved by Mr. J. Young**, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *to submit the matter to the full body, Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (5). NAYS: (0). ABSENT: (0)

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.



Ashlyn King
Office Specialist