

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S  
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THE 22<sup>nd</sup> DAY OF MAY, 2025

The Caddo Parish Appropriation Committee met in legal session on the above date at 2:00 p.m., in the Government Plaza Chambers, with Mr. Thomas, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, and Thomas (5). ABSENT: Commissioners Blake and J. Young (2).

The Pledge of Allegiance and invocation were given during a previous meeting. There being no Citizen's Comments nor Agenda Additions, the Committee moved to New Business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- *Discussion regarding 2026 NGO Appropriations process*

The committee met and discussed the appropriations process. These discussions included refining the scoring process, enhancing application clarity, and improving outcome reporting.

Mr. Burrell had concerns about the scoring process. Mrs. Bryant explained that the Commissioners can determine how to score, if the scores need to be adjusted, if there's something that does not need to be scored, etc. She said that Administration is putting together the applications, and the criteria can be changed based on the Committee's recommendations. Mr. Thomas agreed and said that there were recommendations made, but they would not change or alter the process significantly. He is open to any suggestions regarding the scoring process. Mr. Burrell understood and said that the score should weigh heavily on how monies are appropriated.

Mr. Cothran requested that the previous recommendations be brought before this committee. He also has concerns regarding the NGOs completing the applications. He said that some organizations may not be as savvy when it comes to this. He suggested that Ms. Jalisa Thomas be brought in the scoring process. Mrs. Bryant said that there will be some language in the application to help the organizations write their narratives. She said that they could draft a mock application for the Committee to peruse.

Mr. Thomas asked about the Outcomes Report. Ms. Thomas said that there are five questions that are asked: How their year went; What were their pitfalls; How they could do better; What they did well in; and what were they going to do moving forward. She also explained that this has to be attached to the application. The organizations will not be able to proceed with the process without attaching this.

Mr. Burrell does not know how the bias could be taken out of this process.

Mrs. Bryant said that the organizations have training and opportunities to ask questions about the application process. Mr. Cothran went through the training and said that it was clear and easy. He also mentioned that it is not Ms. Thomas' responsibility to "fix and patch everything that come through the door". Mr. Cothran explained that the organizations should have the accountability to submit their applications and required paperwork.

An assessment to determine whether or not an organization is ready to apply was discussed. Mr. Thomas said that this Committee did vote favorably to help non-profits in this area to be able to build the capacity to apply. He asked that the Committee peruse the handout he provided regarding LSUS Institute for Nonprofit Administration & Research.

Mr. Cothran asked about the estimated cost of \$25k for the LSUS training. He suggested that Ms. Thomas review the curriculum. Mr. Cothran wanted to know if it would be a requirement for the NGOs to participate in this training. Mr. Thomas said that it would not be a requirement, and this would be an expansion to the training that Administration provides to the organizations. He further explained that this is geared more towards new NGO applicants.

Mrs. Bryant said that this could not happen for the 2026 process. She also mentioned that this would have to go through legal to find out the basis for paying for this training if this not a requirement.

Mr. Thomas requested the previous application, as well as, the revised copy at the next meeting.

- *Discussion regarding mid-year appropriations*

The current policy of "no mid-year appropriations" is being reviewed. A proposal is made to change the language to allow mid-year appropriations as needed. This change aims to clarify the process and address unforeseen circumstances.

Mr. Burrell wanted to know if there is mid-year request, it would need to come to the

Committee first before going to the full body. Mrs. Bryant agreed and mentioned that Administration is not opening a process for mid-year applications.

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *to recommend to the full body to remove “no mid-year appropriations” and add “allow as needed”*.

Mr. Cothran said that these types of appropriations should be far and few between. Mr. Thomas agreed and explained that this amendment is to stay in compliant with the policy and process that is in place.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know if there was an amount budgeted. Mrs. Bryant said that it would have to be a budget amendment.

At this time, Mrs. Gage-Watts' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, and Thomas (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Blake and J. Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

- *Review and make recommendations to the full body regarding Oasis of Hope*

A funding request for Oasis of Hope was reviewed and recommended to the full body, but the request was initially considered by the Economic Development Committee. Administration suggested that this request would be more appropriate coming from the NGO Appropriations Committee. Attorney Frazier pointed out that education programs are not normally economic development, thus the reason it is in this Committee.

Mr. Cothran talked about being a former educator and that anything with education would come from the education system, not the other local governing bodies.

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *that the funding request by Oasis of Hope be forwarded to the full body. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, and Thomas (5). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Blake and J. Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

  
Michelle Nations  
Assistant Commission Clerk