

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 30th DAY OF JUNE, 2025

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Work Session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mrs. Gage-Watts, President, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (12). ABSENT: None (0).

Mr. Epperson gave the invocation, and Mr. Thomas led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ADDITIONS

It was **moved by Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mr. J. Young, *that the agenda be expanded and Special Resolution commemorating the 190th Anniversary of the signing of the Caddo Treaty be added under New Business.*

Madame President opened the floor for anyone to speak for or against the agenda addition.

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

Will we get any specifics on this anniversary that we're asking, or you all will be addressing whereby we will know the potentials or the specifics of what it entails. Thank you.

There being no one else to speak, so President Gage-Watts closed the public hearing.

At this time, Mr. Thomas' motion to expand the agenda carried unanimously with Commissioners Burrell, Jones, Kracman, and G. Young being absent (4).

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Tiffany Hyde came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Would you or would you not agree that the seats you sit in are not thrones? In fact, we recently had a "No Kings" event here locally of which most of you supported. Would you or would you not agree that Mike Johnson has never been given a proclamation? Mike Johnson is from our area and is literally the Speaker of the House! The 3rd highest power in the United States. Would you or would you not agree that it has become a pattern for some sitting up there in that horseshoe to abuse their power? Not just among the people, like myself when removed from the waterboard unethically simply because I was looking into the past books, but that we as citizens see other citizens treated as peasants and completely disrespected? Publicly? Would you or would you not agree that the bullying, strong arming, and using your position as "commissioner" to tell another commissioner that you will not support something of theirs if they don't support you, is fair judgment and reason for making a final decision that affects the entire parish? Would you or would you not agree that if the tables were turned, things would be seen as disheartening as well as downright disgusting or even as the most "favorable term" we seem to hear so often, "racist"? Would you or would you not agree that if I go buy a dress and then tell my husband a week later, that's one thing. (I can ask for forgiveness. It's not illegal. It only affects my home.) But, if the commission breaks a law, the rules of order, or is unethical as a body of government, then comes back a week later and asks for forgiveness on behalf of an entire parish, it should be considered okay? Dismissed? Forgiven? Forgotten? Would you or would you not agree, that as a business owner, if an employee went behind backs and did something without consent or was unethical, against the rules and handbook, yet asked for forgiveness after, you would fire them? What example would that leave for other employees if you did not? I can answer that. You would agree if you took the time to break it all down. You did break the rules. This was unethical. You owe an apology of which I'm sure none will ever receive. However, It is too late to ask for forgiveness now. I pray no one ever betrays YOU personally the way you have betrayed US as a body of citizens. This is not just about the matter at hand of a plaque or photo op, this is hard evidence and a perfect example of how abuse of power continues to divide our area. Do better.

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

I stand before you as I often do when I have concerns about an item on your agenda—specifically today's Work Session, item number 11.2 Ratification of Special Resolution for Senator Bernie Sanders. Now, I did some homework before I decided to stand before you all to make sure that what I will allege, I did, and can substantiate you all have a process in place in how you will address agenda items. In doing so, you will all follow that pattern that you all have before you. That was not the case in this instance. And this incident, you went outside of your own process and those that founded it unnecessary when called to task. Now, we're seeing ratification. Would there have been a ratification had not been called to task? You'll have to answer that for yourselves. But, at the end of the day, when it is that our elected officials can take it upon themselves to exercise a practice, not a privilege, but a practice that causes so much tension, then we hear the word, 'marginalized'. How? How can you all be marginalized if you're looking at the term marginalized? Or marginalization? Because there was none of that here with what you all brought before

the public. We are citizens of Caddo Parish, and we have indeed gone into the ballot boxes, and we have voted on whom we thought would address our needs as a representative, but it wasn't a blank check. It was that you would bring to our attention those issues that warranted our attention, and then when we bring to your attention what we find is questionable, then we ask that you all indeed are listening and you are hearing what we say. We're not here to scold anyone, but we're here to ask you all if you're going to do the work that we've entrusted you to do, then you're going to have to hold yourselves accountable to your own practices; to your own ordinances, resolutions, whatever you may want to deem it as. At the end of the day, what we all saw as citizens of Caddo Parish was distasteful, but then it was even worse when we had to see our hit justifications, or excuses. There's no excuse for doing wrong. If know to do right, and you don't want to do it, that's with you, but we're asking you to represent us with the highest of integrity; with the highest of respect and honesty. Thank you.

VISITORS

- Rev. Lee Jeter, Fuller Center for Housing

Rev. Jeter came before the Commission and gave a presentation on the Fuller Center for Housing. This organization builds new homes and offers a path to homeownership for low-to-moderate income families. The Fuller Center seeks to build 5-10 new homes in 2026.

He mentioned the Over the Edge event to help raise money to build the homes. The goal for this event is to get individuals to repel 22 stories off of Fairmont Tower, or pay to not repel. Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Blake both expressed interest in participating the event.

Mr. J. Young thanked Rev. Jeter for his work in providing homes to people in need. He said that there are several vacant lots in the Highland Neighborhood and suggested Rev. Jeter look into the Reinvest Caddo program to acquire some of those lots.

Mr. J. Young also asked about donating items to the Fuller Center. Rev. Jeter said those working items can be donated at the Fuller Center location off of Linwood.

Several Commissioners thanked Rev. Jeter and the Fuller Center for their work in the community and with the veterans. Mr. Thomas shared a personal story of how the Fuller Center helped a family member of his. President Gage-Watts thanked Rev. Jeter for coming and giving this presentation.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- Senator Sam Jenkins—July 3rd Legislative Update

Administrator Bryant stated that Senator Jenkins will attend the July 3rd Regular Session to provide a legislative update.

- NACo Achievement Award

Administrator Bryant announced that the Parish has received a NACo Achievement Award for the work being done for the veterans in the community.

- Juvenile Detention Center census

Administrator Bryant said that there are 17 children in the Detention Center, six of which are OJJ. There are 461 children on probation. Twenty-three juveniles are at CCC.

Mr. Atkins inquired about juvenile detention numbers being low. Assistant Parish Administrator Walker explained that June, July, and August are typically the lowest months for juvenile detention.

Mr. G. Young questioned whether the law incarcerating 17 year olds in CCC has impacted juvenile detention numbers. Mr. Walker said that those children are not being detained at the detention center, but at CCC due to the new law. Mr. J. Young wanted to know if the children at CCC are in due to serious charges. Mr. Walker said that it would be safe to assume they are in for serious charges.

- Pickleball update

Administrator Bryant also announced that there is now a pickleball website where citizens can go to expressed their ideas, concerns, and questions. That website is caddo.gov/pickleball.

COMMISSION REMARKS

- Mr. Epperson announced that there will be a press conference on July 3, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. to release the booklet for the Disaster Committee.

- Mr. Thomas shared information regarding events about the Shreveport Farmer's Market, film industry meetups, and other community events. He also requested a personal proclamation for former Mayor John B. Hussey. He also announced that Mrs. Deborah Ross will be sworn in as the first African American woman to serve on the Bossier City Council.
- Mr. J. Young complimented Mayor Arceneaux and Chief Smith on their efforts for the Block By Block event. He also said that Chief Smith asked him if he would like to do a ride-along, but he said that he was there to pick up trash.
- Mr. Burrell requested that the City include the urban Commissioners on the surveys they are conducting on neighborhood blight.
- Mr. Thomas thanked the Public Works Department, City of Shreveport, and Representative Jackson for cleaning up the ditch in Cherokee Park. He also asked that parents be mindful of the youth.
- Mr. Cothran announced that the Long Range Planning Committee will meet on July 3, 2025 at 12:00 noon.
- Mr. Atkins pointed out that the pickleball approval will be voted on during the July 3 Regular Session. He reached out to Parks & Recreation with several questions. If there isn't enough time to answer those questions, Mr. Atkins said that he might asked for additional time before approving the ordinance.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Madame President gave the following statement:

This resolution that is up for discussion, is one that welcomes Senator Sanders. I'm sure that you will hear it being read here shortly, but it's one to welcome a sitting U.S. Senator Sanders to our community, and to recognize his visit and our commitment to respectful dialogue and democratic engagement and discussion. Regarding the investigation, we are working with legal counsel to determine and better understand the scope and basis of the complaints made and what violations are alleged to have occurred. Thank you.

President Gage-Watts also talked about violence and hate. She asked that everyone keep the families, who suffered at the hands of senseless violence, in their prayers.

There being no Old Business, the Commission moved onto New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

It was **moved by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mr. Thomas, *that Special Resolution for LaShawn Benita Harley-Hill* be moved to Thursday's Regular Session for consideration. Motion carried unanimously by all members who were present.

It was **moved by Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that the ratification of Special Resolution for Senator Bernie Sanders* be moved to Thursday's Regular Session for consideration.

Mr. Atkins went on the record to say, "I'm opposed to the content of this special resolution; I'm opposed of the process through which it was forwarded; and I'm opposed to the presentation that was made prior to the agreement of the majority of the body in a formal sense."

Mrs. Blake went on the record to say, "This is a no for me, not just for the content for the resolutions, however, for the manner in which this resolution was brought forward. Thank you."

Call for the Question by Mr. G. Young, seconded by Mr. Thomas. Motion carried unanimously by all members who were present.

At this time, Mr. Thomas' 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).

It was **moved by Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that Special Resolution Southern University System's National Alumni Association National Convention* be moved to Thursday's Regular Session for consideration.

Substitute motion by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *that the following items be englobed and moved to Thursday's Regular Session for consideration:*

- *Special Resolution for Cathedral Fivefold Ministries Fellowship*
- *Special Resolution Celebrating the 190th Birthday of Booker Cherry*

- *Special Resolution commemorating the 190th Anniversary of the signing of the Caddo Treaty*
- *Advance Confirmation of Maurice Carson as the Director of Facilities & Maintenance*
- *Advance Authorizing the Administrator to pursue the implementation of the West Caddo and North Caddo early voting sites through the Secretary of State's office for use during the 2026 election cycle*

Friendly amendment by Mr. Atkins *that the advancement of authorizing the Administrator to pursue the implementation of the West Caddo and North Caddo early voting sites through the Secretary of State's office for use during the 2026 election cycle be removed from the englobo. Mr. Jones agreed.*

At this time, Mr. Jones' motion to englobo and advance carried unanimously by all members.

It was **moved by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *that the authorization of the Administrator to pursue the implementation of the West Caddo and North Caddo early voting sites through the Secretary of State's office for use during the 2026 election cycle be advanced to Thursday's agenda.*

Epperson: This came out of the Public Safety Committee. It's my understanding that Secretary of State and whomever, the quarters are in Baton Rouge had authorized an early voting site in West Caddo. However, we put in a resolution to authorize early voting size of West Caddo, as well as North Caddo, so therefore, they approved the North Caddo site. So we met in committee and we discussed it. The vote came out of Committee that we would implement both West Caddo and North Caddo voting sites in 2026 because there will be more voting activity. So, that's basically what that is just recommended that they activate those two sites for 2026. I ask for your support on that. Thank you.

Atkins: Thank you, Madam President, thank you for that summary Commissioner Epperson. I was in that committee meeting, but upon reflection, I've grown concerned—Mrs. Bryant, so to date, the State has indicated they're willing to invest in a North Caddo voting site, but they're not willing to invest in a West Caddo site, at least not in 2026. They want to do the North Caddo site first, right?

Bryant: So the State indicated that they had approved the site for North Caddo, but that they were still considering the one for West Shreveport—not they would invest in it. They were still considering that one, and that they will look to approve that one in 2026.

Atkins: Oh, so they're going to do the North Caddo one in 2025? And they hope to do the West Caddo—

Bryant: That was the goal to do it in 2025. Given the time—and I don't know if we could get it done for 2025, but when they initially communicated, it was for 2025.

Atkins: So, if we do not send them a resolution, they're planning to do it at North Caddo in 2025? They aspire to do North Caddo in 2025 and West Caddo in 2026?

Bryant: Yes, but that would be working with the Registrar of Voters and them working with us because we would have to pay the costs to establish that location, but yes, their original goal was to try for 2025.

Atkins: I'm very supportive of that schedule and those goals. I'm afraid that if we send something to the State, they may just—it may disrupt the apple cart, and it may cause problems with the North Caddo site. For that reason, I'm going to vote no after reflecting on this issue. Thank you, Madame President.

Kracman: Thank you, Madame President. I'm unsure of why these are tethered together. The North Caddo location was completely approved, correct?

Bryant: We've received information from the Secretary of State's Office that they would go forward with the North Caddo.

Kracman: And, did they say what criteria wasn't met in West Shreveport.

Bryant: They didn't say that a criteria wasn't met or that it couldn't be done. They just said that at this time, they approved the one in North Caddo. Not that the other one would eventually be—

Kracman: So, we could un-tether these and open one in North Caddo now. And we're approved for everything?

Bryant: At this point, since we have a recommendation from the Public Safety Committee, it would be up to this body to determine how they would like to move forward at this point.

Kracman: I mean, I can't ask the Public Safety Committee if they would be willing to separate the two. Again, maybe, Chairman Epperson could answer, but I'm quite unsure of why these got tethered together when one was completely approved and should be open this year without any questions. And the other one wasn't approved, I don't know why. I have talked to the Registrar, but I know that the location in North Caddo met all of the requirements of population, parking, etc. I would appreciate those answers of how these ended up being put together.

G. Young: Thank you, Madame President. I guess my question, Administrator Bryant, involves—well, its two-fold. So, the Secretary of State's Office approved one of our requests, and that is to have the voting site in North Caddo. Is that accurate?

Bryant: Yes sir.

G. Young: Ok, and they did not approve the site in West Shreveport?

Bryant: Not at this time. They are just not doing it now.

G. Young: Let's just make sure that our understanding doesn't get lost in semantics, ok? When they approve, does that mean essentially that simply, it would be a legally constituted site, and they would provide the funds to operate it? Or, is it only that North Caddo would be a legally constituted site in order to conduct elections in Louisiana? Which is the case?

Bryant: The legal constituted site. We would cover costs.

G. Young: Yes ma'am. So, in terms of the money that will be allocated for a state site, whether its West Shreveport or North Caddo, that resides with this body. Is that correct?

Bryant: That's correct. We have appropriated those dollars for the early voting locations.

G. Young: Ok, so you're saying that the money has already been appropriated for both of these sites?

Bryant: That is correct, well, the estimate that we have. Yes, we appropriated certain moneys for them. We appropriated dollars for early voting locations—starting with South Hamilton. As far as the operating costs, we have to fund the Registrar of Voters Office.

G. Young: So, what we essentially did—and if you'll just indulge me for just a second—we approved funding for both sites.

Bryant: For funding, yes.

G. Young: Prior to these two sites becoming legally constituted sites.

Bryant: Yes sir.

G. Young: Ok, I just wanted to get that out there. Thank you very much, Madame President.

Burrell: I think I was really actually pretty much asking the same question that Commission Young, but just for clarification purposes, is it the authority of the Parish Commission to accept both sites or just either site? Question. [inaudible] of the Parish Commission to accept both sites or just either site. I know the State authorized it, but they don't pay for it.

Bryant: That's just a decision as to whether or not you'd accept both sites or one site. That's not necessarily the authority—we have to coordinate with the Secretary of State to accept any site. They have to approve. Any early voting location has to go through the Secretary of State, starting with the Registrar of Voters, but since we have to cover operating costs and equipment costs, there has to be an agreement between us and the Secretary—

Burrell: But, they don't pay for nothing.

Bryant: They're not in this instance. I can't tell you—I don't know what they have, but we will be covering some of the costs to establish the site. That was part of when we requested it. That was part of when we requested it—part of our...the advantage to try to help locate these sites was that we would cover costs.

Burrell: And based upon the Secretary of State, under this Administration—well, not under his Administration because she's elected also. She selectively chose North Caddo and not West Shreveport. Is that what I understand in this instance?

Bryant: Their office made the determination of right now that they would start with the North Caddo location. That they would start with them; not, that they would not do the other one, but that they would start with the North Caddo one.

Burrell: But that's still open-ended.

Bryant: yes, we would follow back up to try to continue to get the other—

Burrell: Ok, well, based on the fact that we have two here. It is better to have a bird in the hand and one in the bush because 2026 may not ever come for West Shreveport from my perspective. So, this is a situation that we definitely need to consider. Thank you, Madame Chair.

J. Young: Thank you, Madame President. Administrator Bryant, have we already voted to have an early voting site in North Caddo?

Bryant: You all passed a resolution for both, North Caddo and West Shreveport.

J. Young: And we got approval for North Caddo from the State.

Bryant: Yes.

J. Young: And we've appropriated the money? Is that correct?

Bryant: Yes.

J. Young: Is there anything in the world—is there any legal thing that could prevent us from having a site in North Caddo?

Bryant: Right now, this vote if you all decide to wait, then we won't—Administration won't proceed with North Caddo.

J. Young: But if we vote to implement North Caddo and West Caddo, you'll do North Caddo? Is that correct?

Bryant: I think this particular—when I read it, it said together.

J. Young: Does that mean you won't do North Caddo without West Caddo?

Bryant: I am going to follow the direction of—if you all pass this resolution, I'm going to follow the direction that's in the resolution, which is saying both and together. That's the way I read it.

J. Young: I think I understand that, but we don't have approval for West Caddo, but we want one in West Caddo. So as soon as the approval comes through, we'll be ready to finalize that. Is that right?

Bryant: The step I would take if this resolution passes on Thursday is to get with the Secretary of State's Office to get West Shreveport approved. Once West Shreveport is approved, then we would proceed with both locations, if this resolution passes on Thursday.

J. Young: And so, if this isn't approved, then you won't do North Caddo? If this passes?

Bryant: I am going to follow the direction of the Caddo Parish Commission.

J. Young: Sure. I'm trying to understand what the direction is to what we are voting—

Bryant: You can ask the maker of the resolution. I'm just giving you my interpretation. When I read the resolution, it seems to me that its telling that they both have to be approved in order to proceed, but I won't speak for Commissioner Epperson.

J. Young: May I ask Commissioner Epperson that, Madam President?

Gage-Watts: That's why I was asking for a point of order because I think the question is that you are continuing to be repetitive to the same questions, and you're getting the same answer. So, the Chair will allow you to ask the sponsor—the maker of the motion as well any questions that you have regarding—

J. Young: Thank you, Madame President. Commissioner Epperson, is it your understanding that we're requesting to do North Caddo and West Caddo or neither? Or, can we do North Caddo, and then also prepare to do West Caddo and wait for approval for when that comes in.

Epperson: North Caddo and West Caddo to take effect in 2026 election cycle. I think the resolution for West Caddo was put in previously. The funding was put in for both. I don't understand why we could not have approved the West Caddo site, as well as the North Caddo site. That's basically it. We'll start them off at the same time.

Gage-Watts: Thank you for answering the question.

J. Young: Well, I'm just saying I think that we need both of these sites. One is better than neither, so I would rather proceed with the one we have permission to proceed with, and also do our very best to do what we can for the West Caddo site. Because, even though we don't agree with every single partisan issue, we do all agree that we need to make it easier for people to vote no matter which way they vote. I think this seems a little too limiting. I would rather have North Caddo, since that's a bird in hand, as Commissioner Burrell said and work for West Caddo. We've got the money ready. So, I guess, I'll vote no on this even though I want both of these sites for our citizens.

Blake: Thank you, Madam President. Is it correct that the Secretary of State's Office can only allow one voting site within a cycle within a year? This is a question that was brought up at a meeting I attended with the Police Jury Association, and she spoke on it. I was wondering if we have the reasoning why we are not doing two at one time. I believe that it had to do with the fact that they were limited with what they could do within a time period. Do we know what the reasoning is?

Bryant: That may be the case. I don't have the letter in front of me, but I think distance may have had something to do with it.

Blake: And I would also like to point out is it not true that North Caddo residents have the furthest to drive to get to an early voting location?

Bryant: They do have a long distance. I think that—

Blake: And does not every other district have access to bus transportation to get to the early voting—

Bryant: I cannot say that because, you know, we have citizens that are coming from outside of city limits of Shreveport and they don't have bus access. So, if you don't live in the city limits of Shreveport, you live in Greenwood or—

Blake: So, there would be two—ok, I'm just trying to understand the reasoning for not wanting to help the citizens that have the furthest to drive in. Ok, thank you very much.

Thomas: Thank you, Madam President. I want to make it clear that we are not against giving citizens the access to early voting locations. I want to applaud Commission Ken Epperson and the other members of the Public Safety Committee who brought this issue of giving North Shreveport an early voting location. So, thank you for that. I think one of the major questions right now is the West Shreveport location was asked for first. Not only that, the West Shreveport location and the North Caddo location have both been—the funds have been allocated for that. I think the more appropriate question is to the Secretary of State is to either, one, clarify this there can only be one location set up within a cycle; and two, giving us reasons or criteria or a better understanding of why the West Caddo location is not able to be put up right now—if its because of population or distance, we'd like to have that information in writing. So, I don't know if its appropriate for us to once again, remand this back to Public Safety, until we have that information, or until we can get some clear explanation from the Secretary of State.

Bryant: Yes, we can reach out to the Secretary of State to get further clarification in writing.

Call for the Question by Mr. Cothran, seconded by Mr. Epperson. Motion failed, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Thomas, and G. Young (6). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Kracman, Lazarus, and J. Young (6). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Due to the call for the question failing, the Commission continued the discussion.

Substitute motion by Mr. Atkins *that the authorization of the Administrator to pursue the implementation of the North Caddo early voting site for 2025, and continue to pursue the implementation of the early voting site for West Caddo for 2026.*

President Gage-Watts called the motion dead due to the lack of a second. There were disagreements within the Commission body on whether or not the motion died. President Gage-Watts stood on her call that the motion died.

Thomas: Point of clarity. You mentioned in your substitute motion for 2025 and 2026. This item is for the 2026 election, and given the Administrator's apprehension with us being able to put up a site for 2025. Did you want to put that for 2026?

Atkins: Let me clarify my intent. I'm just trying to—in my view, the 2025, the North Caddo site has already been approved for the 2025 action according to Mrs. Bryant and the Secretary of State. So, what I'm trying to do is just say, ok, we'll do—now that we have North Caddo lined up in 2025, and we'll do West Caddo in 2026. I just don't want to give up that bird in the hand that we already have for 2025. So, I'm sure the Clerk could handle the wording on that. I think everybody understands what I'm trying to do here. It's hard to do work these things on the fly.

Gage-Watts: Mr. Parliamentarian, the motion was made, and there was not a second given.

Atkins: There was—

Gage-Watts: The Chair declared it null and void because a second was not given.

Atkins: Are you really going to do that?

Thomas: Point of Order, please. I believe Madam President is speaking.

Lazarus: I seconded the motion.

Gage-Watts: I did not hear a second.

J. Young: I also heard a second.

Gage-Watts: After I said, 'that dies for the lack of a second'.

Kracman: Point of Information, can Attorney Frazier weigh in on this, please?

Frazier: I did hear a second. I'm not sure if it was before or after you said. I thought it was before, but what I heard—I'm not running the meeting, but I did hear a second.

Burrell: I'm sitting right to the second. It was after.

Atkins: The point of the matter is that the Chairwoman didn't allow sufficient time to even get a second, and you know the will of the body is to have a second.

Gage-Watts: Commissioner Atkins, I always allow appropriate time for a second. I did not hear a second, and that's why I declared that motion failed due to the lack of a second.

Atkins: You know the intent.

Gage-Watts: If you want to get back on the board to remake that motion, but the Chair stands on what I said. There was no second that was given before I declared that motion died. You still have the floor. If you would like to get back on the board to remake that motion, that is absolutely fine with me.

Atkins: I dropped off the board. I'm back on now, so I can make a motion? That's a question.

Gage-Watts: No, you may not. There are other Commissioners who are waiting to speak.

Atkins: Then, I'll drop off and come back on.

Gage-Watts: Absolutely. Commissioner Kracman.

Substitute motion by Mr. Kracman, seconded by Mr. Lazarus, *that the authorization of the Administrator to pursue the implementation of the North Caddo early voting site for 2025, and continue to pursue the implementation of the early voting site for West Caddo for 2026.*

Kracman: So I made the exact motion that John Atkins just made—that Commissioner Atkins just made. You know, I'm not much of a person that believes in fair other than you know what's between the foul lines on the ballfield; however, we have two early voting sites within Shreveport. We have nothing in North Caddo where they have to drive 50 minutes to the early voting location. This whole deal is ridiculous. We're tethering these two together to ensure that the North Caddo one falls to the wayside, just like the West Shreveport one. I don't know how they review these things or what they require or whatever, but I do know that the North Caddo location is already a polling location. It meets all the requirements, whatever they may be. The folks in North Caddo deserve that, and we passed that resolution unanimously. We made an amendment to put it in the name of Commissioner

Hopkins. It passed the State; our Administrator endorsed it; it passed with flying colors! Now, we're trying to sink it by tethering it together with this other one. I don't understand that. We say that we want folks to be able to vote, and that we support early voting, but not in North Caddo. That's what we just said.

Gage-Watts: What we will not do—

Kracman: is interrupt me.

Gage-Watts: and if you want to talk to a Commissioner—if you want to talk about the issue that we're discussion. We will not talk to each other in that manner.

Kracman: I reclaim my time. I would appreciate everyone to support my substitute motion to go ahead and get this going for our unanimous support in the name of Todd Hopkins. And our Administrator's support. And the Secretary of State's support. Again, this is something that the people have been begging for over a decade. The West Shreveport one, I don't know anything about that. You have to get with the Secretary of State. Pass that one on its own to urge them to find out what the requirements are that need to be met, but don't hurt North Caddo due to that location. Thank you, Madame President.

Gage-Watts: Let me say this. I don't believe that it's the intention of any Commissioner to sink one of these voting locations over the other. I think that's the first thing that needs to be said here. it has also been since I became a Commissioner to make sure that we had an early voting site in every area of Caddo Parish, including the North, South, East, and West. I co-sponsored that legislation, along with you. However, the West Caddo location was submitted before the North Caddo. We don't know which the reason is, we're still asking. We're still advocating to have both West Caddo and North Caddo. That's the purpose of having a committee outside of this body to make these types of discussions and recommendations. So, I do not want to paint a façade that we are attempting to do something against one side over the other. We're collectively saying that we would like to support two other locations to have early voting sites in Caddo Parish. I think that is very important to make sure that everyone understands that.

Burrell: I, too, remember when we were selecting the site for Southwest Shreveport because Commissioner Mario Chavez was one of the ones who recommended that site. We were also recommending the [inaudible] Caddo site at the time, but the choice was Southwest Shreveport. We talked about the West Shreveport site, in which we did not do initially. But we eventually put that in there with this. I'm going to say from my perspective and having been down there at the State under the circumstances that we presently have, I would not take the chance in adding another site in 2026, not under the present environment. I'll say that unequivocally. It is my perspective that we do both, or we do none. I'll put that on the record. Thank you, Madame President.

Cothran: Thank you, Madame President. If I'm not mistaken, what we're talking about right now, we're just talking about moving this to Thursday. Am I correct?

Gage-Watts: yes.

Cothran: And the thing is, we very clearly have one that has been supported by the State. We have one that everybody—I think around this horseshoe—supports as well, which would be a total of two. I think at this particular time, between now and Thursday, I would hop that the Administration of someone—whether it be the Clerk of Court or whomever it may be—to be able to give us some additional information. And by the time we come here Thursday, and we can make the right or the best decision that we think going forward. At this time, I don't see the reason why we don't support going forward and make that decision on Thursday, pro or con, once we get the rest of the information coming from the State, if that's possible.

Lazarus: Thank you, Madame President. It just seems to me like the North Caddo site has already been approved by the Secretary of State. I think we ought to move forward with it and keep pushing for the West Caddo site. I would love to see one out there, but this is the bird in hand that Commissioner Burrell spoke of earlier.

Burrell: No, that's not the bird that I spoke of earlier.

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

It was **moved by Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that the discussion regarding ratification of Special Resolutions* be moved to Thursday's agenda. Motion carried, as shown by the

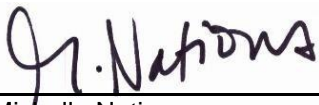
following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (10). NAYS: Commissioners Blake and Kracman (2). ABSENT: None (0). ABSTAIN: None (0).

There were no Communiqués/Committee Reports nor Citizens Comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

- *Ordinance No. 6547 of 2025, an ordinance amending Article III of Chapter 19 of the Code of Ordinances relative to the E. Edward Jones Housing Trust Fund, to expand the Technical Review Committee, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6548 of 2025, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Debt Service Fund and the Capital Outlay Fund to provide an appropriation of \$10,000,000 for the construction of a pickleball park, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6549 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 unnecessary and inconsistent zoning district, with all their provisions included herein, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6550 of 2025, an ordinance to deem property surplus and authorize the sale of surplus property owned by the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6551 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. 6552 of 2025, an ordinance to close and abandon a portion of the 15-foot wide utility easement in the Northwood Trace Subdivision, Unit No. 2, in Section 36, Township 19 North, Range 15 West, in the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6553 of 2025, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund and the Oil & Gas Fund to provide an appropriation to Northwest Louisiana Food Bank and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the Commission adjourned at 5:23 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk