

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
NGO & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT JOINT COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 5TH DAY OF JUNE, 2025

The Caddo Parish NGO & Economic Development Committee met in legal session on the above date at 12:00 noon in the Government Plaza Chambers, with the following members were present constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (8). ABSENT: Commissioners Blake and Burrell (2).

Mr. Epperson gave the invocation, and Mr. Cothran led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance. There were no Agenda Additions nor any Public Comments, so the Committee moved onto New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Discussion regarding 2026 NGO Application, Process, and Timeline*

Mr. Thomas advised that the proposed changes that Ms. Jalisa Thomas and the Finance Department provided aims to ensure accountability and transparency within the NGO funding process. Mrs. Bryant explained that the proposed changes aim to align the questions in the applications with the scoring matrix.

The term "mid-year" was discussed in the context of emergency applications and potential confusion it may cause. Alternative phrases like "out of cycle" or "late submissions" to replace "mid-year" were suggested. There were also concerns regarding subjectivity in determining emergencies and the need of objective criteria. It was clarified that those applications are only available at the request of a Commissioner, not directly to the public. The discussion includes the possibility of establishing a hard cap on funding and defining what constitutes an emergency. Mr. Thomas would like to continue this discussion at a later meeting.

Ms. Thomas continued with the revisions to the NGO applications. The narrative section of the application is restructured to align with the rubric, adding questions to each section. She also said that scoring is simplified from 200 points to 100 points to make it easier to articulate and understand. Mrs. Bryant also mentioned that the organization has to score at least 60% to be considered. Outcome reports are made a requirement for all applicants, regardless of previous funding. Applicants are required to be more transparent about their funding sources and how they compare with parish funding.

Mr. Thomas mentioned the need for a workshop to provide resources and opportunities for organizations outside of approaching the Caddo Parish Commission for funding. Ms. Thomas said that if there is clarity needed on any project or organizations need help, she is more than willing to help out.

Mr. J. Young wanted to know would it be helpful for the organizations to receive the applications earlier. Ms. Thomas does not suggest giving the applications early, but she does provide a watermarked application, if the organization requests one. Mrs. Bryant also explained that there would be an issue with providing required data in the application, if it were given out earlier.

Mr. G. Young raised an issue with organizations not receiving their funding. Ms. Thomas explained that the organizations have to submit their reports from July to December from the previous year by January 31st. She said that there is a process of reviewing sixty organizations and every dollar they spend to Legal creating their CEA. She reaches out to every organization up until May. Attorney Frazier agreed and said that sometimes these organizations have additional information that needs to be submitted. Attorney Frazier said that the consistent barrier with the organizations is the failure to follow instructions. Mr. G. Young emphasized the importance of providing tools and information to organizations to improve the application process.

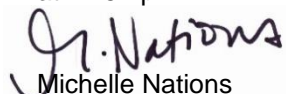
Mr. Thomas suggested creating a tracking system or matrix for applications to increase clarity and visibility. Attorney Frazier said that it may just be easier for the Commissioners to call and check or the organization to call and check rather than constantly updating a rubric.

Its was **moved by Mr. Cothran**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *to recommend to the full body the revisions of the NGO application, as well as striking the "mid-year" language.*

Mrs. Gage-Watts withdrew her second. Mr. J. Young seconded Mr. Cothran's motion.

At this time, Mr. Cothran's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Cothran, Epperson, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (7). NAYS: Commissioner Gage-Watts (1). ABSENT: Commissioners Blake and Burrell (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:52 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk