

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION  
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION  
HELD ON THE 3<sup>rd</sup> DAY OF JULY, 2025

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Regular Session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mrs. Gage-Watts, 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).

Mrs. Gage-Watts gave the invocation and Mr. G. Young led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance were given during a previous Committee meeting.

**AGENDA ADDITIONS**

It was **moved by Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mr. Epperson, *that the agenda be expanded and Special Resolution of Recognition for former Shreveport Mayor John Hussey and Special Resolution commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Strand* be added under New Business.

President Gage-Watts asked if there was anyone to speak in favor or against expanding the agenda.

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

I rise to speak in opposition of the additions, not based on their merit, but the procedure itself. When it is that a procedure is not followed, then you open the door for opposition. Thank you.

Mr. Thomas said that he received this request on Tuesday for events on Tuesday and Wednesday. This is why it was not on the Work Session agenda.

Mr. Thomas also deferred to legal regarding any legalities of this agenda addition. Attorney Frazier explained that the Commissioners, as individuals, have the right to present things. She also said that there is confusion on what it is called because the Charter specifies that resolutions need seven votes to pass, but because they are styled as resolutions, they would need to be ratified at some point. Attorney Frazier is working on the By-Laws to address these concerns.

At this time, Mr. Thomas' motion failed, 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, and Lazarus (4). ABSENT: Commissioner J. Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Irma Rogers came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

To Madam Chair Watts, Vice-President Epperson, and all of the Commissioners and to Mrs. Bryant and your administration. I'm here to bring some updates on some of the work that we've done within the past four years since the beginning of the pandemic. Because primarily a lot of what we did and do had to deal with some of the ramifications from that. What I mean that that senior socialization had to change to senior stabilization for about 2 and a 1/2 to 3 years. In other words, so many of our seniors are liable to COVID, so we made pandemic kits, and we spread them out from like Vivian to Keithville by different other organizations coming to us and asking for the monies that we had, not just from this organization, but from others. So, we sent those wherever they requested, from Cooper Road to Cedar Grove. Then after the seniors came out of that, and they were what I mean by a pandemic hit they had tall cans of Lysol, in them, they had gloves, they had a permanent mask, two throwing masks, and sanitizers and wipes. That was a true pandemic kit, ok? We have people still asking us for that. Then we came back in once we came back in beginning last year, we came back to senior socialization, which is a once a month participation right now. And it does have medical ramifications, from a local neurologist who has told me these meetings are really good, but these seniors, they have to alleviate them from going into things like Alzheimer's and dementia, because they have an activity, they have things to look forward to. Now regarding our educational process and the monies that we spent on education. Beginning in 2021, we started summer basics. At that time, we turned in data on about 99 children. We had more than that in enrolled, but the pre and post data, it could only be given for the 100 or so that we actually tested pre-and post. That data shows that going back to basics, really matters. Right now, if you listen to our state superintendent, Dr. Kade Bromley. He has been touting basics. So these things have shown I will just give you one example of one of the schools. All of the schools that we worked with, in other words, Pine Grove, Cherokee Park, and J.S. Clark are all elementary schools. J.S. Clark and Cherokee Park came out of the F status a year or so ago. Now we have just received this data in the last couple of days, only the social studies additions are not here—but our local principal is reporting, they have gained at least F points, which would bring them out of the F status. I think J.S. Clark last year was one point away from C status, and I believe Cherokee Park was close also. So the monies that we spent all of these projects, you can see the

differences by looking at what's happening within our schools. The things that we offer not a lot of field trips, and when we do enrichment is a little different. We offer dance and theater, caring for your nails, basic karate—Mr. Baser does yoga for mix group. We have mental health resources. A mental health nurse practitioner comes in and speaks to our children. Etiquette by Ms. Margaret Thomas and others; those are the kinds of things that we do with the monies you give us. So I just want to tell you all thank you so much, Madam Chair and to my district Commissioner, Mr. Young. We do want you to know we do what we do with our monies that you ask. MLK Community Development Corporation.

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

I rise to bring to your attention again, agenda item 8.2 the ratification for the special resolution for Sen. Barney Sanders. Again, it is not the merit of your decision that you made, it is the process that you all negated to get to this determination. I would ask that you all not ratify because you did not follow your own procedures. Thank you.

Carla Buntyn came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I know you guys usually see in my face here for Compassion for Lives. Today, I'm here to introduce to you guys, a new, online nonpartisan publication. It's by the name of the Ark-La-Tex Gazette. I know you guys, maybe some of you haven't heard about it, and some of you have, I just want to let you guys know that we will be reaching out to you individually, or collectively. The reason why we start at the online nonpartisan online publication, which is Ark-La-Tex Gazette, is because we do see here in the City of Shreveport, even and just in this region, there is a gap in legislation with people understanding especially our Generation Z and Generation Ys. And this publication is going to bridge that gap. We'd like to speak with local official here coming soon about legislation, where are we going with legislation, so they can know. Like I said, before, this is nonpartisan. We are looking to just get our Generation Zs and our Generation Ys. We want them to have an understanding. And sometimes even me as in Generation X does not have an understanding. So I just wanted you guys to know that I will be calling someone from the staff will be calling. This is not a nonprofit organization. We're out here and we want our community to know. We want them to learn more. Like I said, this is a non-partisan publication. We will not, you know, slander anyone. This is not about white or black; this is about what's going on here in our community. As Generation Z's and Y's, we do see a lack in voting in those demographics, and we need them to understand. I have been speaking with them, ok, in this community about why they're not voting. Do they even understand what's going on here at the Commission or the Council, and they have no idea? So, this news publication will be out there. I wish that you do honor our request that we ask to speak with everyone, not just anyone in particular, just so that we can get, you know, your thoughts and what you can do to help us with the Generation Z and Y. Once again, the name of it is the Ark-La-Tex Gazette. Please take a look at our website. It will be soon rolling into a mobile app. Thank you guys so much.

### **VISITORS**

- Senator Sam Jenkins  
Legislative Update

Senator Jenkins shared legislative updated, focusing on the State's budget and the potential impacts of federal cuts to Medicaid and SNAP benefits. The budget includes funding for education, roads and bridges, and economic development initiatives, including tax credits for motion picture production. Senator Jenkins discussed urban revitalization efforts, including the State Land Banking Authority, as well as addressing concerns about insurance rates.

The 2025 Louisiana Legislative Session finalized the \$47.9 billion state budget for FY 2025-2026, including a \$12.3 billion State General Fund. Notably, \$23.7 billion—more than half of the total budget—comes from federal funds, underscoring the state's significant reliance on federal support for healthcare, education, infrastructure, and other critical services. Lawmakers also enacted several significant changes.

#### **Major Legislative Impacts:**

**Film Tax Credits (SB 232 I Act No. 44):** Effective July 1, 2025, the Motion Picture Production Tax Credit offers up to 40% credit with a \$125 million annual cap. New applications cease, but existing projects continue until 2030. The "office of entertainment industry development" within LED will oversee the program, considering economic impact and statewide funding. This continuation is vital for Shreveport, especially with G-Unit Studios' plans for a production hub, providing a stable framework for attracting film and television projects, contributing to the local economy and diversifying the job market.

**Speed Cameras (SB 99):** From August 1, 2025, cameras are restricted to school zones with clear signage; violations won't incur criminal fines or negative credit reporting. **Easier Contesting:** Provides easier ways for vehicle owners to contest citations if they were not the driver, including requiring self-addressed envelopes or online portals.

Urban Revitalization (SB 189 / Act No. 443): This vital legislation, authored by Senator Sam Jenkins, establishes the State Land Banking Authority Act (R.S. 40:599.1 through 599.32). It creates a comprehensive framework for local governments (municipalities and parishes) to establish "land bank authorities" as quasi-public nonprofit entities. Their primary purpose is to combat urban blight and its associated issues (unemployment, deteriorated structures, high crime rates) by acquiring and redeveloping abandoned properties.

Severance Tax: No major changes were enacted to the state's severance tax rate or structure. Discussions regarding its role in the state's revenue stream are ongoing, but no significant alterations were passed in this session.

Federal Funding Concerns: Lawmakers voiced concerns over potential federal cuts to Medicaid and SNAP. Significant federal reductions (some proposals suggest up to \$880 billion nationally over a decade) could lead to a multi-billion-dollar loss for Louisiana, severely impacting healthcare access for over 1.6 million residents (including low-income families, children, seniors, and those relying on mental health/substance use services). Rural hospitals would be particularly vulnerable. Cuts to SNAP would increase food insecurity for thousands of families, including many in Northwest Louisiana, straining local food banks and charities. The potential for these federal cuts hangs over the state, and their realization would necessitate difficult decisions and directly impact the well-being of many residents.

Teachers' Pay: Investing in Our Educators: A significant commitment was made in the budget to support educators.

- The 2025-2026 state budget includes \$2,000 pay raises for certified teachers and \$1,000 raises for support staff across the state (continuation of stipends).
- A permanent pay raise (teachers: \$2,250; support staff: \$1,125) is proposed for 2026-2027, contingent on voter approval of a constitutional amendment in April 2026 to restructure education trust funds.

Municipal Privilege for Unpaid Utility Fees (SB 63 / Act No. 99): Also, by Senator Jenkins, this Act provides for a privilege (lien) by municipalities against multifamily residential properties for unpaid sewage disposal and water system service charges or user fees. Impact on Shreveport: This gives the City of Shreveport a stronger tool to recover unpaid water and sewage bills from multifamily properties by allowing the city to place a lien, incentivizing property owners to ensure services are paid, reducing financial strain on the municipal utility system, and promoting better upkeep of rental properties.

Insurance Commissioner Authority (HB 148 - Act 11): This new law significantly boosts the Commissioner's power to reject "excessive" insurance rate increases and order refunds, aiming for consumer protection despite warnings from the Insurance Commissioner himself that it could destabilize the market. The Governor championed it as consumer protection.

Inventory Tax Status: A Local Option, Pending Voter Approval: Perhaps one of the most anticipated changes, the Legislature passed House Bill 366 (Act No. 221) regarding the inventory tax. This bill does NOT eliminate the tax statewide. Instead, it proposes a constitutional amendment that, if approved by Louisiana voters on April 18, 2026, will grant local governing authorities the option to reduce or eliminate the inventory tax within their jurisdictions for tax periods beginning on or after January 1, 2027.

#### Immediate Repeal:

If a parish chooses an immediate, full exemption, the state will pay the taxing authorities three times their actual 2026 inventory tax collections. There is a minimum payment of \$1 million and a maximum payment of \$15 million.

#### Phased-in Exemption:

For a phased-in exemption (up to five years), the state will pay the actual 2026 collections, spread over the exemption period. There is a minimum payment of \$500,000 and a maximum of \$10 million.

The exemption or reduction only applies if the sheriff, school board, and parish governing authority all agree to exempt business inventory taxation.

#### Budget Highlights

The total state budget, as enacted for the Fiscal Year 25-26, is 47.9 billion. This number excludes double counts and contingency legislation until all legislation is enacted into law. State funds represent roughly one-half of the total contributing \$24.2 billion. The other half of the budget is federal funding, contributing roughly to \$23.7 billion. Over \$16.4 billion of the total amount of federal funding supports the Department of Health.

The four largest allocations of funding within HB1 are:

1. The Department of Health at \$23 billion, of which \$16.4 billion comes from federal funds and \$3.2 billion is state general funds and the remaining are fees and

dedications.

2. The Department of Education receives \$6.5 billion, mostly State General Funds in the amount of \$4.2 billion
3. Multiple Executive agencies receive \$5.3 billion, which is mostly federal funds for disasters in the amount of \$3.8 billion.
4. Higher Education receives \$3.5 billion, of which \$1.3 billion is state general funds.

Use of Revenue Stabilization Funds

- Roads and Bridges-\$699 million in DOTO
- Economic Development- \$283.7 million for various Economic Development initiatives
- The Water Sector Program -\$75 million
- Criminal Justice and First Responder needs- \$21.9 million

Constitutional Amendments (2026 Ballot): Six amendments will appear on the 2026 ballot (five in April, one in November), proposing changes such as:

- Raising the judicial retirement age (70 to 75).
- Allowing legislative reclassification of civil service positions.
- Granting parish-level funding authority to the St. George Community School System.
- Permitting parishes to reduce/exempt business inventory from property taxes (contingent on April 2026 voter approval).
- Redirecting specific education funds to the Teachers' Retirement System.
- Increasing the property tax freeze program's income limit to \$150,000.

Shreveport Specifics:

The Shreveport Regional Airport received \$55 million from Capital Outlay for expansion and improvements, in addition to federal grants for safety upgrades and the establishment of a new SkyWest Airlines maintenance base creating 150 jobs. 5 million of the capital outlay fund distribution will be distributed in cash.

Although the project experienced some delays with the design of the project exceeding the budget, as of 07/25/2025, with OFC approval of a \$10 million budget increase, the Northwest State Office Building at 500 Fannin Street is back on track. The development of the plans is progressing well with anticipated completion of the plans in late Spring 2025. Final pricing by the contractor is expected in early summer for the anticipated start of construction in the Summer of 2025. Estimated construction completion is Spring 2027.

All of local college campuses (SUSLA, LSUS, Med School, Northwestern Louisiana Technical College, BPCC) are all receiving funding for buildings, classroom, and security needs.

The majority of towns/ villages in North Caddo are receiving funding for infrastructure and water/ sewer maintenance and construction.

Several Commissioners expressed gratitude to Senator Jenkins for his leadership and accessibility, particularly regarding the land bank legislation. The Land Bank Authority is a step forward in addressing blight and repurposing adjudicated property. Commissioners expressed the importance of collaboration and communication among community leaders.

**ADOPT REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**

It as **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that the Regular Session Minutes from June 16, 2025 be adopted. Motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Burrell being absent (1).*

**SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS**

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Thomas, *that Special Resolution for Senator Bernie Sanders be adopted. 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).

**SPECIAL RESOLUTION  
SENATOR BERNIE SANDERS**

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission is pleased to welcome United States Senator

Bernie Sanders during his visit to Shreveport, Louisiana on Saturday, June 21, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Senator Sanders has served as a member of the United States Senate since 2007, and previously as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1991 to 2007, making him the longest-serving Independent member of Congress in American history; and

WHEREAS, throughout his tenure, Senator Sanders has supported legislation and initiatives addressing critical national issues that impact Caddo Parish residents, including funding for community health centers, rural hospital programs, workforce training, and expanded access to higher education; and

WHEREAS, Senator Sanders has served as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs and currently serves as Chair of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, through which he has worked on legislation addressing issues that impact the daily lives of Caddo Parish residents, including workforce development, rural health access, and education affordability; and

WHEREAS, Senator Sanders has consistently supported investment in public infrastructure, including broadband expansion, transportation, and public transit, which are key areas of growth and development for both rural and urban communities in Northwest Louisiana and his longstanding advocacy for community health initiatives, public education, and economic fairness reflect priorities shared by many in Caddo Parish and across the state of Louisiana;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission, that it does hereby formally welcome United States Senator Bernie Sanders to Caddo Parish, Louisiana and recognizes his decades of public service and advocacy on matters of importance to citizens throughout the nation;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be presented to Senator Sanders as a token of appreciation for his visit and in acknowledgment of the Commission's commitment to respectful civic dialogue and democratic engagement.

It was **moved by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mr. Thomas, *that the following items be adopted:*

- *Special Resolution for LaShawn Benita Harley-Hill*
- *Special Resolution Southern University System's National Alumni Association National Convention*
- *Special Resolution for Cathedral Fivefold Ministries Fellowship*
- *Special Resolution celebrating the 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday for Booker Cherry*
- *Special Resolution commemorating the 190<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of the Caddo Treaty*

At this time, Mr. Jones' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, J. Young, and G. Young (10). NAYS: Commissioner Kracman (1). ABSENT: Commissioner Burrell (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

#### **SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION LASHAWN BENITA HARLEY-HILL**

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission desires to recognize and commend individuals in our community who demonstrate extraordinary perseverance, determination, and achievement in the face of adversity; and

WHEREAS, LaShawn Benita Harley-Hill, a resident of Caddo Parish, exemplifies such spirit, having recently earned her Master's Degree from Louisiana State University in Shreveport at the age of 54; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Harley-Hill's journey to this academic milestone is nothing short of remarkable, having experienced complete blindness in 2017 due to complications from diabetes, yet refusing to let this life-altering circumstance define or limit her future; and

WHEREAS, with courage, resilience, and unwavering faith, Ms. Harley-Hill returned to higher education, mastering adaptive technology, overcoming physical and emotional challenges, and completing rigorous graduate coursework—proving herself to be a true inspiration to all; and

WHEREAS, her success is a powerful testament to the human capacity for resilience, the

importance of inclusive educational opportunities, and the strength found in pursuing one's goals regardless of obstacles; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Harley-Hill now serves as a role model for individuals with disabilities, adult learners, and women pursuing academic excellence later in life, inspiring those around her with her intellect, grace, and determination;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, regular, and legal session convened, that it does hereby heartily congratulate LaShawn Benita Harley-Hill on the occasion of earning her Master's Degree from Louisiana State University Shreveport and commend her for her extraordinary example of perseverance, dedication, and achievement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be recorded in the official records of the Caddo Parish Commission and that an official copy be presented to Ms. Harley-Hill as a symbol of the Commission's pride, support, and admiration.

#### **SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF WELCOME SUSLA NATIONAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NATIONAL CONVENTION**

WHEREAS, the Southern University Alumni Federation will hold its prestigious 2025 National Alumni Conference in the City of Shreveport and Caddo Parish, Louisiana, bringing together alumni and supporters from across the nation to celebrate excellence, leadership, and the proud legacy of Southern University and A&M College; and

WHEREAS, the Southern University System is a vital pillar of higher education in Louisiana and the only historically Black university system in the United States, producing generations of scholars, leaders, and professionals who have made significant contributions to public service, science, education, business, the arts, and civil rights; and

WHEREAS, the Southern University Alumni Federation Conference is a time-honored gathering that fosters unity, honors achievements, and supports the mission of the University by raising scholarship funds, promoting alumni engagement, and enhancing the visibility and impact of the Southern University System; and

WHEREAS, Shreveport and Caddo Parish are proud to host this year's conference, which includes the Southern University Alumni Honors and Hall of Fame Celebration, recognizing distinguished alumni whose lives and accomplishments reflect the spirit of excellence and service for which Southern University is renowned; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 conference further strengthens the bond between Southern University alumni and the North Louisiana region, enriching our community culturally, educationally, and economically, while reinforcing the importance of historically Black colleges and universities in the fabric of American life; and

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission enthusiastically supports the mission of the Southern University Alumni Federation and joins with local leaders in welcoming conference participants and celebrating this historic event.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, regular, and legal session convened, that it does hereby extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to the Southern University Alumni Federation and all guests of the 2025 National Alumni Conference to Caddo Parish.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission expresses its appreciation for the outstanding leadership and continued dedication of Southern University alumni, and wishes them a successful, inspiring, and memorable conference.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to the leadership of the Southern University Alumni Federation and shared during the 2025 conference proceedings as a token of esteem and support from the people of Caddo Parish.

#### **SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION CATHEDRAL FIVEFOLD MINISTRIES FELLOWSHIP**

WHEREAS, Cathedral Fivefold Ministries Fellowship is a registered religious organization committed to the divine mission of winning souls for Christ and advancing the Kingdom of God through the edification and empowerment of the Church; and

WHEREAS, this fellowship of independent ministries stands as a spiritual and organizational covering for its affiliates, united by a shared vision and mandate to promote faith, unity, and service across communities; and

WHEREAS, the Cathedral Fivefold Ministries 2025 Convocation represents the annual convening as mandated by its Bylaws, where affiliate churches, ministries, and independent partners gather for corporate worship, fiscal reporting, ordination, ministerial appointments, and training in the Word of God; and

WHEREAS, this gathering serves as a sacred time of fellowship, renewal, and empowerment—equipping leaders, strengthening congregations, and reinforcing the mission to build, maintain, and sustain the vision and purpose of each affiliate; and

WHEREAS, The Parish of Caddo recognizes and honors the commitment of Cathedral Fivefold Ministries to fostering spiritual growth, accountability, leadership development, and holistic ministry throughout our parish and beyond;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, we the members of the Caddo Commissioner, do hereby proclaim July 23-25, 2025 as Cathedral Fivefold Ministries Convocation Days in the Parish of Caddo, and call upon all citizens to recognize and commend the vital work and faithful stewardship of this organization.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be recorded in the official records of the Caddo Parish Commission and that an official copy be presented to Cathedral Fivefold Fellowship as a symbol of the Commission's appreciation, support, and admiration.

#### **SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION BOOKER CHERRY'S 90<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY**

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission desires to give special recognition to citizens of Caddo Parish who have reached significant milestones in life and whose legacies reflect a lifetime of service, devotion to family, and commitment to community; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Booker Cherry, affectionately known as #2 of the beloved Cherry Clan of Cedar Grove in Shreveport, Louisiana, is celebrating his 90th birthday, a momentous occasion for his family, friends, and the entire Caddo Parish community; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cherry devoted 30 years of honorable service in the United States Army, rising to the esteemed rank of Command Sergeant Major before his retirement in 1984, and distinguishing himself as a courageous paratrooper with over 100 completed jumps during his 18 years in airborne service; and

WHEREAS, never one to rest on his laurels, Mr. Cherry continued his pursuit of knowledge and excellence following his military career, earning a Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the National Christian University School of Law; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cherry's enduring spirit and zest for life were on full display when, at the age of 75, he accomplished a tandem parachute jump—checking off a long-held dream from his bucket list and inspiring others to live life fully at every age; and

WHEREAS, a devoted family man, Mr. Cherry is married to Mrs. Melody Cherry, and together they have a beautiful blended family of 11 children, 17 grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren, lovingly known as “his, hers, and ours”; and

WHEREAS, Mr. and Mrs. Cherry are active members of White House Church of God in Christ under the pastoral leadership of Elder Waymon Stewart, where their faith and commitment to service continue to enrich their church and community; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cherry's life is a testament to dedication, strength, faith, and family—a legacy that has positively shaped the lives of all who know him;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, regular, and legal session convened, that it does hereby extend its warmest congratulations to Mr. Booker Cherry on the celebration of his 90th birthday, and gratefully honors his lifetime of service, achievement, and inspiration.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, regular, and legal session convened, that it does hereby extend its warmest congratulations to Mr. Booker Cherry on the celebration of his 90th birthday, and gratefully honors his lifetime of service, achievement, and inspiration.

#### **SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION 190TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE CADDO TREATY**

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission recognizes the importance of preserving and acknowledging the historical foundations of our region, particularly the profound contributions and sacrifices of the Indigenous peoples whose presence long predated modern settlement; and

WHEREAS, on July 1, 1835, representatives of the United States government and the Caddo Nation signed what became known as the Caddo Indian Treaty, through which the Caddo people ceded their ancestral homelands in northwest Louisiana—lands that now include Caddo Parish and the City of Shreveport; and

WHEREAS, the treaty marked a pivotal moment in the history of this region, laying the groundwork for future development while simultaneously representing a solemn and complex chapter in the displacement of Native American communities; and

WHEREAS, the Caddo people, known for their advanced agricultural practices, diplomatic culture, and deeply rooted ties to the land, had established thriving communities in the region long before European contact, and their influence continues to resonate in the place names, geography, and cultural memory of northwest Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the 190th anniversary of the signing of the Caddo Treaty provides a meaningful opportunity for reflection, education, and commemoration of the history, heritage, and enduring legacy of the Caddo Nation; and

WHEREAS, the Shreveport Downtown Development Authority, in partnership with local historians and community stakeholders, will host a public ceremony to observe this anniversary on Monday, July 1, 2025, at 4:00 PM at the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce, inviting the public to engage in an honest exploration of the region’s shared past; and

WHEREAS, this occasion allows us to honor the memory of those whose stories and contributions are too often overlooked, and to reaffirm our collective responsibility to pursue justice, understanding, and reconciliation in the telling of our community’s history;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Caddo Parish Commission [tentatively to be adopted on July 3rd] that it does hereby commemorate the 190th anniversary of the signing of the Caddo Indian Treaty, recognizes the lasting significance of this historical event, and honors the continuing legacy of the Caddo Nation and its people.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be presented to the Shreveport Downtown Development Authority on the occasion of their commemorative ceremony as a gesture of the Commission’s support for efforts to educate and engage the public on the history of our parish.

**ADMINISTRATION REPORT**

Parish Administrator Erica Bryant congratulated Facilities & Maintenance Director Kevin Lawrence on his retirement. Several Commissioners thanked Mr. Lawrence for his years of service to the citizens of Caddo Parish and wished him well on his future endeavors. Mr. Maurice Carson is being recommended as the new Director of Facilities & Maintenance.

**COMMUNIQUE & COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Mrs. Blake encouraged everyone to attend a community theater.
  - Mr. Thomas shared information about upcoming community events, including the Shreveport Farmer’s Market, film industry events, and youth programs. He also addressed a past mistake regarding public comment rules and issued a public apology.
  - Mr. Jones expressed grief over a domestic violence incident and called for more comprehensive ways to protect women. Mrs. Gage-Watts asked that Mr. Jones add this to the next Juvenile Justice Committee meeting.
  - Mr. Epperson raised concerns about disruptive behavior during public comments and requested measures to address it. Attorney Frazier is working on updating the By-Laws to address these issues, as well as the difference between Resolutions and Special Resolutions.
- He also mentioned that the Citizens Disaster Committee was dismissed as of today. The booklet is available for anyone who would like a copy.

- Mr. Cothran said that the Long Range Planning Committee met today to discuss the fee schedule for the 2026 budget. This will be on August’s agenda.



## **PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

Mrs. Gage-Watts wished her husband a Happy Anniversary and gave the follow mid-year recap of the Parish’s accomplishments and initiatives:

*As we reach the midpoint of 2025, Caddo Parish celebrates a series of impactful milestones and continued progress that reflect the Parish’s commitment to leadership, sustainability, community engagement, and cultural enrichment.*

*January – New Leadership for the Caddo Commission: The year began with the selection of new leadership for the Caddo Parish Commission. This transition marked a renewed focus on transparency, innovation, and community-driven governance as the Commission set priorities for 2025.*

*March – Keep Louisiana Beautiful Grant Awarded: In a major environmental win, Caddo Parish was awarded a Keep Louisiana Beautiful grant to bolster anti-littering initiatives. This grant supports efforts to enhance community education, litter prevention, and clean-up programs throughout the Parish.*

*April – MLB Network Visits Caddo Parish: Caddo Parish hit a home run in April with a visit from the Major League Baseball Network, shining a national spotlight on the region. The visit highlighted local talent and celebrated the role of sports in uniting communities.*

*April – Celebrating Parish Government Month & Caddo Day at the Capitol: April also saw Caddo Parish actively participate in Parish Government Month, underscoring the importance of local government in everyday life. During this time, officials and residents gathered in Baton Rouge to mark Caddo Day at the Capitol, advocating for the needs and accomplishments of the Parish on a statewide stage.*

*May – Crystalym Whitaker-Nelson Named Caddo Parish Poet Laureate: In May, Caddo Parish proudly named Crystalym Whitaker-Nelson as its new Poet Laureate. Her appointment celebrates the rich artistic and cultural landscape of the Parish and affirms a commitment to fostering the literary arts.*

*June – Walter B. Jacobs Nature Park Groundbreaking: A groundbreaking ceremony was held for the revitalization of Walter B. Jacobs Memorial Nature Park, signaling a significant investment in environmental stewardship and family-friendly recreation for future generations.*

*June – SkyWest Relocates to Caddo Parish: Economic development reached new heights with SkyWest Airlines relocating key operations to Caddo Parish. This strategic move brings job opportunities, expands transportation access, and affirms Caddo’s position as a growing hub in regional logistics and business.*

## **PUBLIC HEARING ON ZONING ORDINANCES**

President Gage-Watts opened the floor for anyone to speak in favor or against the following zoning ordinances and cases:

- *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 districts, with all their provisions included herein, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

There being no one to speak in favor or against the zoning ordinances, the President closed the public hearing.

## **PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCES**

President Gage-Watts opened the floor for anyone to speak in favor or against the following ordinances:

- *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*

Edward Best came before the Commission and gave the following comment in opposition to Ordinance No. 6547 of 2025:

Good evening Commissioners, my name is Edward Best, and I'm here today as a concerned citizen and a taxpayer of Caddo Parish. I want to speak out against the proposed \$10M investment in the pickleball facility. I don't have anything against pickleball. It's fun; it's a growing sport. I'm glad people enjoy it. The spending \$10M of public funds on something that only benefits a small portion of our community is not a wise decision with our taxpayer dollars. We've got real issues in Caddo Parish. So, I think everybody knows that our roads need repair; our schools are underfunded; youth programs are already stretched thin as it is; and we are considering an item like a \$10M pickleball court? That \$10M could go towards solutions for these problems. It could support job training, community centers, safer neighborhoods, or infrastructure upgrade that serve everyone, not just a few people with paddles. I truly don't see how \$10M pickleball court in Southeast Caddo Parish will help a younger teen on MLK Drive. Or, North Shreveport or a young person from Vivian getting involved in this sport. I just don't see how it can help. Let's be honest, pickleball courts are not expensive to build on existing infrastructure. They're not. Across the country, entire complexes are going up and for a fraction of this price. Many communities are converting underused things like tennis courts. We have a plethora of tennis courts in the City of Shreveport and in the Parish. All this stuff can be repurposed, and I don't see why that's not even being brought up. We don't need a luxury facility. We need practical equitable investments. Wouldn't it be more feasible to convert the old tennis courts at Keithville Middle School, which is a Caddo Parish publicly funded park, if I'm not correct—ok? Would it not be more feasible to repurpose the tennis courts out there? I was a baseball coach for twelve years. We practiced out there every single day, 4 or 5 or 6 days a week. I've never seen anybody use those tennis courts at Keithville Middle School. Maybe I'm wrong at this point because nobody every uses them Why can't we repurpose those into a pickleball court? I'm 100% for that, ok? So, I just don' understand something like that. We do for \$50k-\$100k, not \$10M. Or, how about entering into an agreement with the City that the Parish will financially assist to convert some of the courts at Southern Hills to pickleball courts? Bill Cockrell Park is another city park that can be repurposed into pickleball courts/tennis courts as well. The basketball courts at these Parish facilities that we already have are easy conversions. They can be used as basketball courts or pickleball courts. I just don't understand. They could be multi-use courts for basketball and pickleball if they really wanted them. The YMCA already does this at their facilities. I'm a member of the YMCA. I'm not against this for the YMCA. I'm against using taxpayer-funded dollars to fund \$10M item. It just makes no sense. If there's truly a demand for a large pickleball complex, let the private sector handle this. Entrepreneurs and recreational businesses would gladly set this up, if its profitable.

Stacy Brown came before the Commission and gave the following comment in support of Ordinance No. 6547 of 2025:

I appreciate y'all, allowing us to come today, talk a little bit more. About the pickup all facilities, as some of you may know, I didn't introduce myself. Sorry, Stacey, Brown 629 spring street, Shreveport, Louisiana, thank you as some of you may know last year, we commissioned a study to review sports tourism and provide us with a strategic plan and facility recommendations. You should have received this last year, but one of the top recommendations in this study was to really concentrate on pickleball and building a facility that would not only be available to local people and to build the support, but also to drive economic development and economic impact and sports tourism by designing a facility that would host not only local, but regional and national tournaments. I think there have been a number of misconceptions about this project and what it can do for our facility and even how it's funded. I would like to commend the staff for doing a tremendous job. That's really, truly making this a facility that can drive economic impact too often we see facilities that are beautiful. They're wonderful, and they're great for locals but they really don't translate into driving economic impact because they are not It's built to host tournaments. I think earlier it was mentioned possibly turning other facilities in repurposing courts. Those are all great things for us as locals and help us to bring to compete and learn the sport; however, they don't bring in that economic impact by bringing in people from outside the community to come to Shreveport. But for one thing, it raises the level of the sport so that our local people can compete in these regional and national tournaments; it builds interest in the sport and makes it bigger in our community; but one of the best things it does by bringing those out of town visitors in has them staying in our hotels, eating in restaurants, going to the gas station, and doing their shopping while they're here. I'm also looking at attractions and going to visit them in our community. So it is, but not only does it drive that economic impact, it provides tax dollars that can be used for other things. The great thing about the way this facility funding is to be. It's designed to fund itself through those revenue bonds, so it's not taking away from streets and drainage. It's not money that could be used for those things, however, it can drive economic development and impact that can provide for those types of things. So this facility as I mentioned--the top professionals in pickleball, to make sure that the location of the courts was such that it would not only provide it's great facilities, but looking at the angle of the Sun and how the facilities are laid out so that it can really drive that economic development through regional and national tournaments. In just a minute, Sarah Nelms, our director of sports, we'll talk to you a little bit more about tournament directors, and they've already heard a little bit about the facility and are interested in going ahead and start booking that facility. So what a great opportunity for us to be on the front end of a strong growing trend before that, it's overpopulated, so we're also looking forward to, you know, some there's concern of there are a number of facilities already. Before pickleball, the reports here and there but those can be complementary to this facility as the sport grows, we will need more than just those that can also just be for practice or sometimes

a facility may be more than one location because of their tournament has run so large, so we're very excited about this opportunity. And again, thank you for looking at the value of sports tourism in our community and how it can drive economic impact it can provide a better quality of life for our citizens.

Sarah Nelms came before the Commission and gave the following comment in support of Ordinance No. 6547 of 2025:

I'm a Sarah Nelms, so my main job duty is actually to generate tourism through sporting events at the Sports Commission. So, we have been working with multiple rights holders which are groups who own events. So, we've been working with the Southern Pickleball Association, the United States Pickleball Association, the National Collegiate Pickleball Association, the Professional Pickleball Association Tour, and USA Pickleball. So, all of these rights holders, they own events, and they're interested in this facility. We have shown them the renderings, and they are very excited about the opportunity. The nation actually has a shortage of dedicated pickleball facilities because the sport has grown so fast since 2020, especially during COVID, so this would be a great opportunity for us. It would definitely be a sellable asset for our community, and we would be able to bringing several tournaments to generate its economic impact for the community. Thank you.

Dr. Shelly Armstrong came before the Commission and gave the following comment in support of Ordinance No. 6547 of 2025:

I'm a resident of the 12 Oaks Neighborhood near the Lash YMCA. I'm a mother of two teenage girls and a strong supporter of fitness health, well-being, and social connections of our citizens here in Caddo Parish. Pickleball is more than just a sport that brings people together across generations and demographics. It is fun, engaging and accessible to all people of all skills, making it the most perfect sport for our young and older residents. Our gentleman, Mr. Lawrence, who is retiring and going to The Villages--you go to The Villages for two reasons, Golf and pickleball. They have over 250 pickleball courts in The Villages. We can keep our residents here in Shreveport, with more pickleball facilities, okay, that is one reason. But, we live in a world of isolation and inactivity, these are serious concerns, and pickleball offers a solution. It promotes physical wellness. It keeps our people active, and it promotes a platform for building new friendships and forging meaningful connections. As been mentioned, it is the fastest growing sport nationwide. This isn't something that our commission wants is not something that I want. There have been numerous studies about the service gaps within the Master Plan within the recreational analysis over the past few years, and they continue to come back that we need pickleball facilities in our area. This is a service gap incited over and over and over by external reviewers. Pickleball is obviously very popular in the nation and it is the future of our community. We have been left behind in many ways, in terms of recreation. I have raised my girls, and we have spent weekend after weekend year after year in Natchitoches, and Ruston, and Monroe. I spend thousands of dollars in those communities on hotels, on dinner, shopping, at top Golf, at Maine Event when we could have been doing that back here and we have an opportunity to not be left behind in this sport. So I asked you to consider this opportunity so that we can become a niche for a pickleball destination, and our people are not going elsewhere to utilize this type of sport. So, I ask that we do this for our existing players that we can attract new players that we can make this community more vibrant, an engaging place to live and visit. Thank you, thank you.

Megan came before the Commission and gave the following comment in support of Ordinance No. 6547 of 2025:

I know we had a concern citizen up here earlier who made some really great valid points. Although those are great points, oftentimes, it's just that we don't actually know different details through the funds we do need to spend money on roads, who do need to spend money on education, all those things. With the funds that are being allocated to the pickleball, courts are not those funds that would go towards roads. It is not that like we're taking money out of that pot to put it in the other so and also the suggestion of repurposing old courts is a great idea. But there's been a lot of research done to make sure that the location is premium Jeffrey Goodman, of the Y. I'm saying he's already mentioned that every day, there's about a 1000 people already coming through the YMCA at the Lash Facility, so it's already getting a lot of visibility. Also I teach classes at the Y and I can tell you that you mentioned that there's already pickleball games happening at the Y. I can tell you it is oversaturated. I tried playing with a friend of mine at the Y, and you literally are just sitting around waiting for your turn to get in. It's like a rotation process, and I was there an hour, and I played one game. I mean, there's more demand than there is ability to play further. I teach some kid fitness classes at the Y, and when the weather is not great, we bring them indoors, and we'll take them into the gym to have them running around and being active. Well, the pickleball has taken over and now that's being the gym is being used more and more for pickleball purposes, and so and for some of the kids, you know, it's just, I will say we do have it at the Y, but it's already kind of taken on its own, and so there is a need to be more available. Thank you.

- *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*

There being no one to speak in favor or against the zoning ordinances, the President closed the public hearing.

### **ZONING ORDINANCES (for final passage)**

It was **moved by Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *that 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 districts, with all their provisions included herein, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto be adopted. Motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Burrell being absent (1).*

### **ORDINANCE NO. 6549 OF 2025**

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

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 DISTRICTS, WITH ALL THEIR PROVISIONS INCLUDED HEREIN, AND TO OTHERWISE PROVIDE WITH RESPECT THERETO.

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission, on recommendation of the Shreveport-Caddo Parish Metropolitan Planning Commission, adopted the Caddo Parish Unified Development Code;

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Planning and Zoning Commission has determined that certain provisions in that Code should be changed to address recent issues and improve the application and administration of that Code and land use within the Planning and Zoning Commission's jurisdiction within Caddo Parish;

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission, having considered the recommendations of the Caddo Parish Planning and Zoning Commission, agrees that such changes are desirable.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened, that volume II of the code of ordinances of the Parish of Caddo, as amended, the Caddo Parish Unified Development Code, to amend and delete various provisions not applicable to the rural character of the of unincorporated areas of the planning area, with all provisions included therein.

1. **Add "Removed Districts" in ARTICLE 1. TITLE, PURPOSE, AND APPLICABILITY,**

#### **SECTION 1.4. TRANSITION RULES in the Caddo Parish UDC.**

##### **I. Removed Districts**

When a zoning district is removed from this code, any property that is located within the removed district shall be automatically rezoned to the near equivalent district that is less restrictive in use that the removed district. For example, if the Industrial Mixed-Use District (IMU) is removed from the code, the property will automatically be rezoned to Light Industrial (I-1) or if the Office Research District (OR) is removed from the code, the property would automatically be rezoned to Heavy Commercial District (C-4)

2. **Repeal-and-Replace ARTICLE 3. - ZONING DISTRICTS AND ZONING MAP in the Caddo Parish UDC.**

**[Note (3): See Exhibit "C" for revised ARTICLE 3. - ZONING DISTRICTS AND**

**ZONING MAP]**

3. **Repeal-and-Replace ARTICLE 4. - ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**
  - [Note (4): See Exhibit “D” for revised ARTICLE 4. - ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS]
4. **Repeal-and-Replace TABLE 5-1: USE MATRIX in the Caddo Parish UDC.**
  - [Note (6): See Exhibit “E” for revised ARTICLE 5. - USES]
5. **Repeal-and-Replace ARTICLE 5. - USES in the Caddo Parish UDC.**
  - [Note (7): See Exhibit “H” for revised ARTICLE 5. - USES]
6. **Amend ARTICLE 6. – USE STANDARDS, SECTION 6.1 PRINCIPAL USE STANDARDS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**
  - a. **Delete subparagraph 4. in paragraph 6.1.L Data Center**
    4. ~~In the I-MU and OR-District, the maximum permitted size is 80,000 square feet in gross floor area. However, this size limit may be exceeded as part of a special use permit approval.~~
  - b. **Amend subparagraph 1.J in paragraph 6.1.Q Food Truck Park – Minor**
    - J. All food truck parks ~~outside of those located in the D-1 District~~ must provide off-street parking. Off-street parking may be provided by way of shared or joint off-site parking arrangements within 1,000 feet of the park. One space is required for each 300 square feet of the area.
  - c. **Delete subparagraph e. in paragraph 6.1.Y Parking Lot and Parking Structure (Principal Use)**
    - e. ~~Parking structures in the D-1-CBD Sub-District must include non-residential uses along 50% of the ground floor, excluding required access areas from the calculation, when adjacent to a public right-of-way~~
  - d. **Amend Figure 6-4 by deleting the following text:**

~~In the D-1, CBD Subdistrict, parking structures must include non-residential uses along 50% of the ground floor when adjacent to a public right-of-way.~~
  - e. **Amend subparagraphs 3.f & g In paragraph 6.1.FF Self Storage Facility: Outdoor and Climate Controlled**
    - F. Within the commercial ~~and downtown~~ districts, any façade that abuts a public right-of-way must include non-residential uses on the ground floor, such as retail, restaurant, or office uses, which may include offices for the facility and the common entry to access the storage units.
    - G. Within the commercial ~~and downtown~~ districts, no storage units located on the first floor may be located within the first 50 feet of the front façade. No storage units located on the first floor may be visible from any public right-of-way.
7. **Amend ARTICLE 6. – USE STANDARDS, SECTION 6.2 TEMPORARY USE STANDARDS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**
  - a. **Amend subparagraph 3 in paragraph 6.2.C Farmers Market**
    3. ~~With the exception of the D-1 District, e~~Off-street parking is required for a farmers’ market; ~~no off-street parking is required in the D-1 District.~~ One space is required for every 300 square feet of covered area used for the farmers’ market. Such off-street parking facilities may be located within 600 feet of the market.
  - a. **Amend paragraph 6.2.D Food Truck Vendor**

These regulations are intended to allow for food truck vendors to operate within Caddo Parish on private property and Parish- owned property for a limited period of time. ~~This section does not apply to sidewalk vendors, which require appropriate Caddo Parish Public Health Unit permits and~~

~~sidewalk vendor permits, which are permitted through the Downtown Development Authority.~~ Food truck vendors operating within the public right-of-way require a food truck license and must comply with the operational requirements in this section and Chapter 12 of the Parish Code of Ordinances. Food trucks require approval of a temporary use permit.

8. **Amend ARTICLE 7. - ON-SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS, SECTION 7.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**
- a. **Amend subparagraph 1 in paragraph 7.1, A Number of Structures on a Lot**
1. In the R-A, R-E, R-1-12, R-1-10, R-1-7, ~~and R-1-5, and R-UC~~ Districts there must be no more than one principal building per lot.  
This does not include permitted accessory structures, permitted accessory dwelling units, or agricultural structures. This also does not apply to educational facilities. In all other districts, more than one principal building is permitted on a lot, provided that it complies with all dimensional standards of the district.
9. **Amend ARTICLE 7. - ON-SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS, SECTION 7.3 ACCESSORY STRUCTURES AND USES in the Caddo Parish UDC.**
- a. **Amend subparagraph 3.a Barbed Wire and Razor Wire Fences, in paragraph 7.3, L Fences and Walls**
- a. Barbed wire, razor wire, spiked posts, or fences of similar material are only permitted on a lot used for a utility in any district, or in the R-A, C-4, ~~I-MU~~, I-1, or I-2 District.
10. **Amend ARTICLE 8. - OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING, SECTION 8.5 DESIGN OF VEHICLE PARKING SPACES in the Caddo Parish UDC.**
- a. **Delete subparagraph 2b Non-Residential Uses, in paragraph 8.5.A Permitted Vehicle Parking Locations**
- b. ~~In the IC District, required parking is fulfilled by all parking areas on the campus, including non-contiguous areas. In these districts, the 600 foot distance restriction of this section does not apply on the campus.~~
11. **Amend ARTICLE 8. - OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING, SECTION 8.11 PARKING EXEMPTIONS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**
- a. **Delete subparagraph 1&2, in paragraph 8.11.B Exemptions from Parking Requirements**
1. ~~The D-1 District is exempt from all off-street vehicle parking requirements.~~
2. ~~Lots of 5,000 square feet or less in lot area in the R-UC District are exempt from all off-street vehicle parking requirements.~~
- b. **Amend subparagraph 3, in paragraph 8.11.B Exemptions from Parking Requirements**
3. Non-residential uses of 2,500 square feet or less of gross floor area in the C-1, ~~C-UC~~, and ~~I-MU~~ Districts are exempt from all off-street vehicle parking requirements. Non-residential uses of 2,500 square feet of gross floor area or less located within a multi-tenant retail center are not eligible for this exemption and must provide the required parking.
12. **Amend ARTICLE 9. - SIGN REGULATIONS, SECTION 9.3 ILLUMINATION STANDARDS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**
- a. **Amend subparagraph 9.3.G**
- G. The use of neon or LED lighting as a sign material or sign accent is permitted only in the commercial districts, ~~downtown districts~~, and industrial districts, ~~and IC District~~. When lit, lighting must be continuously illuminated. Flashing neon or LED lighting is prohibited.
13. **Amend ARTICLE 9. - SIGN REGULATIONS, SECTION 9.6 NO PERMIT**

**REQUIRED: PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY SIGNS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**

- a. **Amend subparagraph 7.a.i., Non-Government Flag**
  - i. Non-governmental flags are permitted for non-residential uses in the commercial, ~~downtown~~, and industrial districts.

14. **Amend ARTICLE 9. - SIGN REGULATIONS, TABLE 9.2: SIGN TYPES REQUIRING PERMIT DISTRICT PERMISSIONS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**

[Note (12): See Exhibit “F” for amended Table 9.2 SIGN TYPES REQUIRING PERMIT DISTRICT PERMISSIONS

15. **Amend ARTICLE 9. - SIGN REGULATIONS, TABLE 9.2: SIGN TYPES REQUIRING PERMIT DISTRICT PERMISSIONS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**

[Note (12): See Exhibit “G” for amended TABLE 9.3 FREE STANDING SIGN REGULATIONS AND TABLE 9-4 PROJECTING SIGN REGULATIONS

16. **Amend ARTICLE 9. - SIGN REGULATIONS, SECTION 9.8 BILLBOARDS SIGNS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**

- a. **Amend subparagraph B.2.c**
  - c. All static and electronic billboards are prohibited in the following zoning districts: R-A, R-E, R-1-12, R-1-10, R-1-7, R- 1-5, R-UC, R-TH, R-2, ~~R-3, R-4~~, R-MHS, R-MHP, C-1, ~~C-UC, C-UV, D-1, OR~~, NA, and OS, and IC Districts.

17. **Amend ARTICLE 10. - LANDSCAPE AND TREE PRESERVATION in the Caddo Parish UDC.**

- [Note (12): See Exhibit “H” for deleted SECTION 10.7 REQUIRED SHADE TREE PLANTING

18. **Amend ARTICLE 10. – LANDSCAPE AND TREE PRESERVATION, SECTION 10.9 NON-RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT AND USE REQUIREMENTS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**

- a. **Amend subparagraph A.1.b & c, Landscape Buffer**
  - b Where a non-residential district abuts a residential district. This does not apply to the ~~D-4~~, NA, or OS Districts or to any public parks.
  - c. Where ~~OR, L-MU~~, I-1, or I-2 District abuts a commercial district.
- b. **Amend subparagraph B.2.a Planting Area Size**
  - a. The landscape planting area in the ~~OR~~, I-1, and I-2, and IC Districts must be a minimum of 15 feet in width. In all other districts, the landscape planting area must be a minimum of seven feet in width.

19. **Amend ARTICLE 10. – LANDSCAPE AND TREE PRESERVATION, SECTION 10.10 RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT AND USE REQUIREMENTS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**

- a. **Amend subparagraph A.1.a & b, Landscape Buffer**
  - a. Where an R-2, R-3, or ~~R-4~~ District abuts a R-A, R-E, R-1-12, R-1-10, R-1-7, R-1-5, ~~R-UC, R-HU~~, or R-TH District. This does not apply to any single-family – detached or attached, and two- family dwellings
  - b. Where a multi-family dwelling is located within a R-A, R-E, R-1-12, R-1-10, R-1-7, or R-1-5, ~~R-UC, or R-HU~~ District

20. **Amend ARTICLE 14. – CODE ADMINISTRATORS, SECTION 14.4 ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS in the Caddo Parish UDC.**

- a. **Delete and Reserve Section 14.4**  
**14.4 ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS Reserved**

~~The Zoning Board of Appeals has the following powers pursuant to this Code:~~

~~A. To make final decisions on variance applications.~~

~~B. To make final decisions on zoning appeals.~~

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that if any provision or item of this ordinance or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that this ordinance shall take effect upon adoption.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that all ordinances or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

**ORDINANCES (for final passage)**

It was **moved by Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *that the following ordinances be englobed and adopted:*

- *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. 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*

**ORDINANCE NO. 6547 OF 2025**

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

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.

WHEREAS, more than 18,000 renters in Caddo Parish pay more than 30% of their household income for housing and are considered to be housing cost burdened;

WHEREAS, in Caddo Parish, 48 percent of renter households are housing cost burdened; WHEREAS, a recent Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed

(ALICE) study by the United Way of Northwest Louisiana found that housing affordability in Caddo Parish was rated poor;

WHEREAS, the ALICE study cites affordable housing and paths to homeownership as the keystone of financial stability for working families;

WHEREAS, increasing the supply and diversity of housing supports economic



growth and is an important tool in reducing poverty in Caddo Parish;

WHEREAS, housing trust funds have been established in over 600 state and local jurisdictions to address the housing needs of the working individuals/families and the most vulnerable low income populations using dedicated sources of public funds leveraged by private funding sources;

WHEREAS, a housing trust fund can help a variety of developers facilitate homeownership, mixed used development and encourage private investment and collaborative economic and neighborhood development;

WHEREAS, the Parish of Caddo proposes to create a technical review committee to assist the Parish of Caddo in implementing and administering the housing trust fund in a way that positions it to attract public and private investment and provide good quality affordable housing to boost the prosperity of the entire parish;

WHEREAS, the late Dr. E. Edward Jones worked tirelessly over five decades to improve the lives and economic conditions of all Caddo Parish residents with a special passion for those of limited means; and

WHEREAS, the late Dr. E. Edward Jones utilized a similar public private model to help fund the Galilee City Townhome Development;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened, that Article III of Chapter 19, Caddo Parish Code of Ordinances, is hereby amended to read as follows:

**Chapter 19. HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

\* \* \* \* \*

**ARTICLE III. DR. E. EDWARD JONES HOUSING TRUST FUND**

**Sec. 19-71. Housing Trust Fund Technical Review Committee.**

There is created and established a technical review committee known as the “Housing Trust Fund Technical Review Committee,” referred to in this chapter as the “technical review committee.”

**Sec. 19-72. - Membership and term of office.**

The technical review committee shall be composed of seven members, who shall serve as such without compensation. One member of the committee shall be the president of the Caddo Parish Commission or his/her designee. One member of the committee shall be the chairperson of the economic development committee of the Caddo Parish Commission or his/her designee. One member of the committee shall be the chairperson of the long-range planning committee or his/her designee. Two members of the committee shall be representatives from the banking industry of which one member shall be a representative of a community bank. Two members shall be community members who are Caddo Parish Citizens. One member shall be a member of the Caddo Planning and Zoning Commission. ~~Those members shall serve terms of one year.~~ One member shall be the executive director of the Shreveport Metropolitan Planning Commission of Caddo Parish or his/her designee. One member shall be a representative from the United Way of Northwest Louisiana, designated by that organization’s Executive Director. The community members and representatives of the banking industry shall serve terms of one calendar year; however, if they are appointed during initial board appointments made prior to the end of the calendar year, they shall serve from the time of initial appointment in addition to the next calendar year.

**ORDINANCE NO. 6550 OF 2025**

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

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.

WHEREAS, the Parish of Caddo no longer needs the above equipment and said equipment should be deemed surplus, obsolete or unused for present and future parish needs; and

WHEREAS, the Parish of Caddo is authorized to dispose of certain supplies and equipment determined to be surplus; and

WHEREAS, the Parish of Caddo desires to dispose of listed equipment, by public auction;

and

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission concurs in the finding that the items described are surplus and are no longer needed for public purposes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened that the above described property is no longer needed for parish public purposes and is declared surplus property which is to be disposed of, by public auction.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that the items described are being offered on an "as is" basis, without warranty of title or recourse whatsoever.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that the Caddo Parish Administrator or her designee shall be authorized to do any and all things and to sign any and all contracts and other documents in a form acceptable to the Caddo Parish Attorney necessary to effectuate the purposes set forth herein.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that if any provision or item of this ordinance or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end, the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that this ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that all ordinances or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

#### **ORDINANCE NO. 6551 OF 2025**

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

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

WHEREAS, the hereinbelow described properties are no longer needed for public purposes and should be declared surplus properties; and

WHEREAS, the Parish of Caddo has received offers to purchase its tax interest in the hereinbelow described properties as indicated below.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened, that the hereinbelow described properties are no longer needed for public purposes and are surplus properties.

WHEREAS, the Parish of Caddo has a tax interest in the hereinbelow described properties which have been adjudicated for the non-payment of Parish property taxes; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that the Caddo Parish Commission does hereby authorize the sale of its tax interest in the hereinbelow described properties.

**Property No. 1**, Lot 85 & E/2 of Lot 84, Valencia Subdivision, in the City of Shreveport of Caddo Parish, Louisiana as per plat recorded in Book 150, Page 412, of the Conveyance Records of Caddo Parish, LA (**GEO # 171317-006-0239-00**)

**Property No. 2**, Lot 44, Western Park Subdivision, Unit No. 2, in the City of Shreveport of Caddo Parish, Louisiana as per plat recorded in Book 650, Page 39, of the Conveyance Records of Caddo Parish, LA (**GEO # 181435-009-0044-00**)

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that the Caddo Parish Administrator, or his designee, shall be authorized to do any and all things and to sign any and all documents, including Acts of Cash Sale, in a form acceptable to the Caddo Parish Attorney necessary to effectuate the purposes set forth herein.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that if any provision or item of this ordinance or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items, or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items, or applications, and to this end, the

provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that this ordinance shall become effective ten days after publication in the official journal.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that all ordinances or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

#### **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.

WHEREAS, the Parish of Caddo has received a request from Mr. Gary Norman, who resides at 4848 Putters Lane, to close and abandon the east 5 feet of the 15-foot wide utility easement in the rear of Lot 30 of the Northwood Trace Subdivision, Unit No. 2. When Mr. Norman acquired the property, there was an existing auxiliary structure that encroached into the utility easement; and

WHEREAS, on November 03, 2003, the Northwood Trace Subdivision, Unit No. 2, was filed and recorded under Instrument No. 1888245, in Book 4000, Page 197, of the Conveyance Records of Caddo Parish, Louisiana. This subdivision established a 15-foot wide utility easement in the rear of Lot 30 of said subdivision; and

WHEREAS, the major utility companies have been polled and none have any facilities located within the east 5 feet of the 15-foot wide utility easement in the rear of Lot 30 or any objections to this closure and abandonment; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened, that the east 5 feet of the 15-foot wide utility easement in the rear of Lot 30 of the Northwood Trace Subdivision, Unit No. 2, as shown on Exhibit A, is hereby closed and abandoned and no longer for public use.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a copy of this ordinance and plat marked Exhibit "A", displaying the east 5 feet of the 15-foot wide utility easement to be closed and abandoned shall be filed in the conveyance records of the Parish of Caddo.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that if any provision or item of this ordinance or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items of applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end, the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that this ordinance shall become effective ten days after publication in the official journal.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that all ordinances or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

#### **ORDINANCE NO. 6553 OF 2025**

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET OF ESTIMATED REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES FOR RIVERBOAT FUND AND THE OIL AND GAS FUND TO PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATION TO NORTHWEST LOUISIANA FOOD BANK AND TO OTHERWISE PROVIDE WITH RESPECT THERETO

and WHEREAS, the Northwest Louisiana Food Bank goal is to end hunger in our area;

and WHEREAS, the cost of food has increased drastically making it difficult for families;

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission would like to have a Caddo Parish Community Food Giveaway Day and distribute food throughout the community; and

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission would like the Food Bank to organize this event; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, legal and regular session convened, that Budget of Estimated Revenues and Expenditures for the Riverboat Fund and the Oil and Gas Fund for the year 2025 is hereby amended as follows:

	<u>Budget Increase (Decrease)</u>
<b><u>Riverboat Fund</u></b>	
Allocation to Other Entities	
NGO Appropriations	
Food Bank	\$144,000
Transfer From Oil and Gas	\$144,000
<b><u>Oil and Gas Fund</u></b>	
Transfer to Riverboat	\$144,000

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that if any provision or item of this ordinance or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that this ordinance shall take effect upon adoption.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that all ordinances or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

It was **moved by Mr. J. Young**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *that 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* be adopted.

Mr. J. Young said that pickleball is a popular and growing sport, and Caddo Parish has underinvested in recreation. He also mentioned that people move away from Shreveport/Caddo Parish due to not having anything fun to do and believes that this is an investment that will make Caddo Parish a more fun place to live, work, and play. He complimented Administration for their work on this project.

Mr. Atkins is supportive of this project. He explained that if the projections fall short, there is still the economic development component associated with the large tournaments that will inject additional revenue into the local economy and could help offset any shortfall that might occur.

Mr. G. Young does not feel that the votes are there to pass the ordinance. He would like this to be remanded back to the Economic Development Committee for further discussion.

**Substitute motion by Mr. Cothran**, seconded by Mr. Thomas, *that 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* be remanded to the Economic Development Committee.

Mr. Cothran said that he is not against pickleball. He would just like all questions to be answered prior to voting on a \$10M facility.

Mr. Thomas said that he's received several questions from his constituents and would like those to be answered prior to voting.

Mr. J. Young would like everyone to write down their questions, so they can be properly addressed and answered in committee.

Mrs. Blake is disappointed that this is going back to committee. We have a great opportunity to make a great economic investment for the future of this community, she said. Mrs. Blake said that no money is coming out of the taxpayers' pockets.

Mr. G. Young agreed and said that everyone on this horseshoe was for this project, with the exception of one Commissioner. He also mentioned that everyone had the opportunity to come to the table with all their questions. Mr. G. Young asked that the Commission come together and move the Parish forward. We win or lose based on the comradery that we have, he said.

Mr. Thomas said that he's always been a yes vote for pickleball, but at this juncture, there are citizens who have questions. Those questions need to be answered before voting, he said.

Mr. Cothran suggested doing a roadshow for the citizen involvement in this decision.

**Call for the Question by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mr. Thomas. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, and G. Young (9). NAYS: Commissioners Kracman and J. Young (2). ABSENT: Commissioner Burrell (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, Mr. Cothran's substitute motion to remand to the Economic Development Committee carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Blake, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Kracman, Thomas, and G. Young (8). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Lazarus, and J. Young (3). ABSENT: Commissioner Burrell (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

There were no Zoning Ordinances for introduction by title nor Ordinances for introduction by title, so the Commission moved onto Work Session Minutes.

### **WORK SESSION MINUTES**

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mr. Thomas, *that the Work Session Minutes from June 16, 2025 and June 30, 2025 be adopted.* Motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Burrell being absent (1).

There were no Resolutions nor Old Business, so the Commission moved onto New Business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- *Confirm Maurice Carson as the Director of Facilities & Maintenance*

It was **moved by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that Mr. Maurice Carson be appointed as the Director of Facilities & Maintenance.* Motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Burrell being absent (1).

- *Authorize the Administrator to pursue the implementation of the West Caddo early voting site through the Secretary of State's office for use during the 2026 election cycle and to proceed with the implementation of the approved North Caddo site as soon as possible*

It was **moved by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *to authorize the Administrator to pursue the implementation of the West Caddo Early Voting Site through the Secretary of State's Office for use during the 2026 election cycle and to proceed with the implementation of the approved North Caddo Site as soon as possible.*

Mr. Atkins mentioned that each Commissioner has a letter from the Secretary of State containing the reasons the North Caddo site was chosen over the West Caddo site. He also said that he is in favor of the West Caddo site, but the Commission should go ahead with the already approved North Caddo site while pursuing the West Caddo site.

Mr. Cothran agreed with Mr. Atkins, but said that he would like Registrar Sibley to come before the Commission prior to voting on this.

**Substitute motion by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that this item be remanded back to the Public Safety Committee.*

**Substitute motion by Mr. Kracman**, seconded by Mrs. Blake, *that this time be remanded to the Long Range Planning Committee.*

Mr. Kracman said that there is information in the Secretary of State's letter that does not match up with what the Commission voted on. He agreed that Registrar Sibley should visit with the Commission. Mr. Kracman said that the Long Range Planning Committee would be more appropriate for this discussion.

**Call for the Question by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts. Motion carried by acclamation.

At this time, Mr. Kracman's motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Lazarus, and Thomas (8). NAYS: Commissioners Gage-Watts and G. Young (2). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell and J. Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

- *Discussion of ratified Special Resolutions*

Mrs. Gage-Watts gave the following statement:

*Special Resolutions are ceremonial greetings, acknowledgments, commemorations or recognitions or people, places, events and observations throughout Caddo Parish. They are only mentioned in the Commission Bylaws to name a section of the agenda that is set aside for their presentation separate from regular Resolutions. There is no formal definition of them or outlining of a process for adopting them. There was a discussion in a Personnel, Policy and Procedure Committee in 2024 about including an amendment to the by-laws clarifying that the Commission Clerk's office is responsible for the drafting of Special Resolutions- and it was suggested to include it during future discussions of by-law edits, but no additional action was recommended at the time. The by-laws were amended in 2016 to say that all ordinances and resolutions must be written by the Parish Attorney, but Special Resolutions had always been and continue to be drafted by the Commission Clerk's office. Special Resolutions are often used to recognize dynamic situations, special events, funerals, victories, etc. To be timely, they have been created for presentation, sometimes being adopted after the fact or ratified, or in many cases not added to the agenda or in the permanent record. This practice of not being included on the agenda was more frequent prior to the current Commission Clerk & staff. In fact, recent years have seen an increase in the number of Special Resolutions being addressed on the agenda, being ratified and being presented during meetings in lieu of the less documented previous practices of simply issuing the Special Resolutions/Proclamations/Special Recognitions and allowing them to be presented without any documentation during meetings. The placement of these items on the agenda evolved under the previous Commission Clerk. Prior to Mr. Hopkins, many of the Special Resolution sections of the agenda were completely empty and it was rare to hear mention of these items. The practice of including them has led to a wider awareness of them, which is appreciated by some, and maligned by others. Regardless, the documentation of these Special Resolutions has increased, though there is still no policy in place setting guidelines other than when during the course of the meeting they should be addressed.*

*Recent speculation has heavily criticized the idea of presenting a Special Resolution before adoption, but here are just a few examples from the recent items (2025) that were presented before adoption.*

*July 2025: Special Resolutions for 190th Anniversary of the Signing of the Caddo Treaty was added to the agenda without opposition and later advanced for approval.*

*June 2025: Previously presented Special Resolutions for Patrina Jenkins Bus stop Dedication, Mariah Carter Underwood, and an Evening with the Authors event, LSUS Pilots Baseball Team, Rev. Cleonis Odom and Dany Williams were adopted by Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (12).*

*May 2025: A previously presented Special Resolution commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the YWCA was adopted by Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (11), with Commissioner Kracman being absent.*

*April: Previously presented Special Resolutions of Remembrance for Jim Smith, J. Bennet Johnston and Frank Taylor were adopted by Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, and G. Young (10) with Commissioners Kracman and J. Young being absent.*

*March: The ratification of a Special Resolution of Remembrance for Mary Walmsley and a Proclamation celebrating centenarian Mrs. Pegues were added to the agenda with an affirmative vote from Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Kracman, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young and Commissioner Cothran being absent. This same vote adopted the ratified Special Resolutions along with previously presented Special Resolutions for Judy Durham and Larry Ferdinand, Sr. Also, in March Previously presented Special Resolutions for the Huntington Girls Basketball team, 318 Day, and Latasha V. Henderson were adopted by Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Kracman, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, Cothran, and J. Young and Commissioner G. Young being absent.*

*February: Previously presented Special Resolution of remembrance for Fred Caldwell II, Joe Shyne, Calvin Austin, and Special Resolutions for Bonnie Moore, Bobby Smith, and a Black History Month program were adopted on February 6 by Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Gage-Watts, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, and J. Young (9).*

*Commissioners Epperson, Jones, and G. Young were absent during the vote. Also adopted in Feb were previously presented Special Resolutions for Sgt. Robert Henry Lewis and Antonio Washington which were adopted by Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Kracman, Jones, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (12).*

*January: Previously Presented Special Resolutions for the MLK Day Resource Fair, Centenary College Bicentennial, Larry and Joyce Coleman's anniversary were adopted by Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Kracman, Lazarus, G. Young, and J. Young (9), with Commissioners Blake, Jones, and Thomas being absent during the vote.*

*Easily illustrating that this practice pre-dates any Commissioners or Commission Staff currently serving (except Commissioner Epperson- the research hasn't gotten that far back yet), examples of Special Resolutions that were ratified, adopted after the date or presented without ever being adopted have been identified in every past year going back through 2010 when Jerry Spears was the Commission Clerk.*

#### **COMMUNIQUE & COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Mr. Epperson requested that the Commission Clerk prepare a Special Resolution of Recognition for the United States Coast Guard's birthday on August 4.
- Mrs. Blake expressed concerns about the lack of clear communication and the need for transparency with regards to Special Resolutions and other processes.
- Mr. Thomas thanked Mrs. Gage-Watts for initiating the conversation regarding Special Resolutions in the Personnel Policies & Procedures Committee. He also expressed the importance of submitting citizens comments cards and signing up for Caddo Ready.
- Mr. Kracman talked about the Special Resolution topic. He asked that the Commissioners follow the rules that are already in place. He suggested that these resolutions be submitted in a timely manner, so other Commissioners could be involved in the Special Resolutions if they would like.
- Mr. Thomas said that there is an absence of the language regarding Special Resolutions, which is the reason for adding it to the By-Laws.

There were no Citizens Comments for late arrivals. There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

  
Michelle Nations  
Assistant Commission Clerk

  
Stormy Gage-Watts  
President