

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 18th DAY OF AUGUST, 2025

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Work Session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mrs. Gage-Watts, President, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (11). ABSENT: Commissioner Jones (1).

The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were given during previous committee meetings, so the Commission moved onto Agenda Additions.

AGENDA ADDITIONS

It was **moved by Mr. J. Young**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that the agenda be expanded and the following items be added under New Business:*

- *Special Resolution of Remembrance for Ramona Baylor*
- *Amend the title of Ordinance No. 6560 from “an ordinance to amend Chapter 26 of the Code of Ordinances of the Parish of Caddo relating to traffic schedules to establish a schedule for speed bump replacement, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto” to “an ordinance to amend Chapter 26 of the Code of Ordinances of the Parish of Caddo relating to traffic schedules to establish a schedule for placement of traffic calming devices to include speed bumps and humps, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto”*
- *Special Resolution of Remembrance for Thelma Jones*
- *Special Resolution for Eden Gardens Class of 1970 Reunion*

Madame President opened the floor for anyone to speak for or against the agenda addition. There being no one else to speak, so President Gage-Watts closed the public hearing.

At this time, Mr. J. Young’s motion carried unanimously with Commissioners Burrell and Jones being absent (2).

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Michael Williams came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Good evening, Madam Chair. Michael Williams, 2101 Carver Place, Shreveport, Louisiana. I rise to say that I’m not totally opposed against the pickleball initiative. It’s a new evolution, a global evolution, and the new culture is pickleball. And the only pickleball that I know that poor black children that live in urban and rural America is a pickle that you eat. And that’s a— I think we’re getting a sour deal, and people on the other side is getting a good deal. So, I’m not totally opposed and I think I want to talk intellectual and philosophical why. And while recreation and leisure projects may have their place, proposed pickleball park is not the right priority for Shreveport and Caddo Parish at this time. The reality is clear, our community continues to struggle with high poverty rates, limited employment opportunity, and a lack of residual income. Families are working hard just to make ends meet, and many do not have the stability or resources to benefit from such a project. Investing in pickleball facility does not address the urgent needs of our residents: jobs, workforce development, affordable housing, crime reduction, and economic mobility. Until we see meaningful investment in job creation and sustainable economic opportunities, spending public funds on projects that cater to a limited portion of the population is not just misguided, it’s an injustice. We call for the redirection of resources toward initiatives that will lift our community out of poverty, create employment, and be a long-term wealth for Shreveport and Caddo Parish. Recreation, and of course, all we get is incarceration. We get no occupation. And that seems to be the mindset of America and the state of Louisiana. So, when I see us continue to find recreational things and opportunities, that is not a solution, though the excuses for not providing what the statistics say is a distraction and not a solution. Let all of us regardless of race or sex and nationality or social, economic background, black, white, yellow, poor, focus on a city and a state and a parish of inclusion by working together for the best for all God’s children. Let us focus on building jobs, income stability. Then we can talk about pickleball. When you do these kinds of things, remember the people in the community do vote. We do have tax renewal and we depend on a lot of the poor people that live in urban America, urban districts, that live in— that population that need these resources. So when you think about these types of initiatives, don’t exclude rural and urban American children because they don’t have a way to even get there. I hope that you reconsider, renegotiate, and think about the contract and the job. Black America needs. Our black contractors need it. I pray that you’ll do something for all of us and not just a select few. God bless you, and I pray that you do that. Thank you.

Kathy Godejohn came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Kathy Godejohn, 9980 Mansfield Road, Keithville, Louisiana. I oppose that idea that you

have to get a permit to put a manufactured home on your own property when we don't live in the city. I oppose the idea of getting a permit or having to pay \$350 to get a permit to put a manufactured home on your land in the country. If you want a mobile home, and if I want to buy a doublewide for my grandchildren and put it in the backyard, I should be able to do so without asking the city's permission. And so, we don't pay, I mean we pay taxes on our property. Y'all don't pay our taxes and we should do with our land what we want to do, to have chickens or horses or pig pens or whatever. I don't see where it affects anybody in the city. And I have another question I need. I'd like some clarification on why my neighbor is allowed to have three full-size mobile homes on his residential property. He is a trailer park owner. I'm not a trailer park owner, but I live next door to them. And these trailers have been there since 2017. And they have people living in them, tenants living in them, families living in them, whatever. But to my understanding, it's against y'all's rules and against the law to have trailers in your residential yard, whether you're in the city or in the country or in the five-mile radius of whatever. So, I know you can't answer my question, but I still have the question. So, short story short, I oppose the idea of having to get a permit to put a mobile home on your land. So that's it.

[Commissioner Gage-Watts later asked Kathy Godejohn to come before the Commission again and she gave the following additional comment.]

My question was in regards to my neighbor's trailer park had an additional three trailers brought in that were not grandfathered in in 2017 and put into his residential yard, which are not 50 feet from my property as the rules go when new trailers are brought in. And yet, two inspectors told me they could not stay there. And I want to know if they're permanent, if they're temporary, if he has open spots in his trailer park, why he hasn't moved them there yet. If they're temporary, why he put concrete slabs and has tenants living in them that are, you know, when I open my front door, here comes his tenant. Anything else you need to ask me? Well, I object to having to pay \$350 for a permit to put a doublewide on my back property, not in my residential yard, which is against the rules. You know, if I've got, you know, a big spot of land and want to buy my grandkid a trailer and say, "Go, you know, you can't afford this city stuff." You know, in the future, I might not want to buy it, but I still should have the right to do so.

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

Jon Glover, 9100 Walker Road, Apartment 217, Shreveport, Louisiana, 71118. All resolutions and ordinances to be presented to the Commission shall be filed with the Commission Clerk by 1 PM on Thursday preceding the Commission's work session meeting. Now, I read that from you all's rules and bylaws for the Commission. And I did that because I went back and I read the minutes that, whereby a discussion was had about a special resolution that had been addressed. And reading the words that describe what a special resolution was and what it actually addressed, it still bothered me because in your bylaws it says all resolutions and ordinances to be presented to the Commission shall be filed with the Commission Clerk. Now, if you had sufficient time as was and was not addressed with the proclamation that has come to be a sore subject here in our parish, why wasn't— why didn't you all adhere to your own process? Even though you may say special resolutions are ceremonial greetings, acknowledgements, commemorations, or recognitions of people, but you also said there is no formal definition of them or outlining of a process for adopting them. Well, that's not true because if it is, and we maintain under Article 3 of your rules and bylaws, Rule number 2 says you do have the ability to do that. And though it was said that the special resolution was mentioned in the bylaws, I didn't find it and I read all 22 pages of the bylaws to make sure I did not overlook it. So, what we have and what we can't afford as citizens is for us trying to revise a process without justification. See, it would be different if you didn't have Rule 2 of Article 3 already on the books and that's what you have been working on or working from all the time. And regardless of the examples in that July 3rd minutes that showed that previously this was done, it is not a justification nonetheless. So, I'm going to ask each of you to make sure that when you bring or propose that you meet your own process, you meet your own rules and you meet your own bylaws. Thank you.

Scott Hughes came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Scott Hughes, I'm the CEO of the Realtor Association here in Northwest Louisiana, 2036 East 70th Street, Shreveport, Louisiana. At this point, I'm really more against the ordinance. We know, I have many questions I would like for y'all to answer. My general understanding is you are hopefully, from a process standpoint, looking to move it forward to Thursday, and it could not be finally adopted until sometime in September. And so, if that is correct we'd like to get a little more information because this is a pretty big change. The Realtor Association has long stood for the right of private property. If you go back in the history of this country, the right to have your acreage and build a home is an American right. And our concern, I hear two different things. I hear a fee and I hear taking away a property right. And to us, those are two different things. We don't come often and talk about fees. We don't like fees, but we've long deferred municipalities and boards to set your own fees. And most housing types have some fee registration. But as we understand the legislation, it would take away the right by use if you are in an RA zone to use a mobile home, a manufactured home. There really aren't many more mobiles homes anymore. They're called manufactured homes. There are designations for mobile and manufactured. I'm sure you're aware of that. And, as you're probably aware, this is really one of the top growing house types in the country. And if you don't know the numbers here in Caddo Parish, in 2019 the average home was somewhere around 180,000, whatever you call the average home, 3-2. Today, that number is 250,000. And so, affordable housing is a huge issue and this is an area where we've been able to actually see affordable housing for many people. So I ask that question, is this more about the fee or is this more about taking

away a right by use? Because, as we've watched this issue for years, what we see is people decide to move outside of a municipality, they move to RA, rural-agricultural land. They build on their property. And then, some of them build very nice houses and good for them. And then they decide that they want to oppose somebody else having that same American right on the land next door. And it seems like this time the issue is manufactured homes. And I only have 3 minutes, so I'm not going to read through your list. But if I remember your list, there are all kinds of other things that already have use by right in a rural agricultural area: a cemetery, a church, an animal shelter, a nursing home, a school. You could have a public outdoor event complex, somebody could put up a cell tower right next to my house. Those are use by rights. But the one use you want to change, as we understand this ordinance, is the use for someone to build a home and to live on their own land. And so, before we get to Thursday and maybe two weeks from now, that's just one of the fundamental questions I'd like to see y'all address, is it about the fee, or is it about taking away a right of a citizen? Now, we've always said inside the municipal lines, if this was an issue on Line Avenue, that's a different issue. That's trying to put a mobile home where we always had zoning. If this was a C or an I in the zoning code, that's different. That's putting commercial or industrial next to R, residential. But when you start out and the zoning is RA, and you want to take away somebody's right for what is unzoned land, I think we're going to have a little concern with that. And so, I want to close quickly and ask some other quick questions. Godfathering, are you going to godfather in? And then what will be your process ultimately? And the big question is, if you don't pass today, what happens to the ordinance?

Steve Duke came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Good morning, Madam Chair, or good afternoon should I say. I left early this morning from Baton Rouge. My name is Steve Duke. I'm executive director and general counsel for the Manufactured Housing Association. Some of the members asked me to actually come up this to kind of help talk a little bit about the product and stuff, and at least try and help you guys. If there's any way we can get to this, we're passing out some pictures and I'd like for everybody if you get a chance, we got about three sets of them floating around. But the thing is what I would ask you is like it's, you know, it's somewhat discriminatory. We feel like if you look at this by right, you can actually take a manufactured home or modular home rather, which is built to the state code, and move it in. And I would suggest something to you. After Hurricane Katrina, we put five houses next to our building in Baton Rouge to help the folks in New Orleans. We did it within a short period of time. And of those houses that you can look at, you know, there was probably approximately a thousand people that were elected officials from all over the place. There was building officials from all over the place. You know what? I've only found one person in my 37 years being around the industry that could identify and tell you what the differences were. And it was a shame that basically we were discriminating against a product that is both affordable and attainable. And it's quality housing. I've got pictures in the back and I know we're limited on time and there's a bunch more people here that need to talk and I don't want to talk too long, but I want to tell you this. There's a shortage, a severe shortage. If you looked at what our Secretary of HUD, the Reverend Scott Turner just got appointed recently, dynamic speaker, he's super smart. But he's talked about the critical, critical shortage of affordable housing in this country. The numbers that I've heard are anywhere from 5 million to 20 million. And the question becomes, you got people, certainly there's a lot sitting in this room, but people in this community, and I'm not here to tell you, you know, how to run things, but you know, I'm from Baton Rouge, and I don't want to come in and, you know, tell you that I've got all the answers, but what I would tell you is this. You know, I would be happy to bring somebody in here that can help explain a lot of the differences. If you can look at those pictures and stuff, the funny thing was I told everybody that came through, all the building code officials and everybody else, that there's three modular homes and two manufactured there. I've given you four, there's four of them that I brought today because I had to get them sent to me this morning. But what I would tell you is that, you know, of those pictures and stuff, two of them are HUD code and two of them are modular built to the state code that's allowed in any residential district in the state. And I would ask you to tell me, can you pick them out? The amazing thing was with a thousand people coming through, only one person could tell me. He was a building engineer that knew and he did something that I didn't even know to do that helped him pick it out. But, you know, I would ask you, the funny thing was all the building code people that came though said, well they could pick out one manufactured home. That's the white one that you see in there. The rest of them, you know, they couldn't pick out. And what we got to at the end was they said, "Well which one's the other manufactured home?" And I said, "Well I tell you what, you go look at all of them and you tell me which one you would like>" And damn near to the person, they came through and the one that everybody wanted, if they could pick one house that they wanted, it was the other manufactured home. And what I would ask you to do is to take into consideration, and I know you do. I know that your heart's in the right place, but we've got people that need affordable housing. And right now in the area up here in Shreveport, Caddo Parish, it's like there's probably, you know, 61%, I think, home ownership. And one of the biggest impediments to people being able to buy a home is the cost. And I know everybody's aware of that. And I know there's so many people in the room right now that are worried about cost. And I think it's difficult when you start reaching in the, you know, the RA district and start saying that people cannot, you know, they're going to have to get their neighbors to sign off on something before they can have a hearing. Can you imagine how many, I know y'all have a lot of hearings and people that come up in front of them, but can you imagine how many you're going to have if you start doing this with every single one of them? We've got to find a way to do it. My time's up? I'm sorry. At any rate, the last thing I would tell you is I'm willing to bring somebody in at our expense to help educate everybody here on the Commission, if you guys are willing to let us come in and do that. And, you know, again, thank you for your time and I'd be happy to answer questions at your convenience. Thank you.

[Commissioner Kracman later asked Steve Duke to come before the Commission again

and he gave the following additional comment.]

Well, I appreciate it again, Madam Chair and members. Thank you for letting me speak real quick. And one thing I would point out is affordable housing is such an important part of what we need for everybody regardless of what community across the state. This is an issue that keeps running into problems everywhere. And like factory-built housing, whether it's manufactured or modular, it's not everybody's answer, but it certainly is an answer that shouldn't be excluded. And one of the things that bothers me about it, it's like one of the people's here, and I know we had a bunch that showed up today that did submit the cards just because they came, you know, to oppose it. It's troubling for me, is whenever you start making people sign a piece of paper to, you know, accept or oppose a neighbor coming into their community. And my question is, what if you come into a situation where, you know, somebody doesn't look like you or me? You know, they might not be the right political persuasion or they might not be the right religion or the right color or whatever. You know, I've seen situations like this that have come up and that's troubling. And the one other thing that I would tell you that I think would be a problem when you start putting things like that and having a hearing for each one of these individuals that wants to come in and actually try and get into your community. If they've got a mortgage that they've applied for, what's going to happen to them if you've got a backlog? Because I know you guys, how hard y'all work. What's going to happen to you if they got a backlog and these people get put off a couple of meetings because it happens? You know, they get put off a couple of meetings and they lose their mortgage, you know, the commitment from the mortgage company, what are they going to do at that point? I think that we're tying people's hands. And what I'm here to tell you something, you don't know me. Representative Burrell gave me probably one of the worst whippings I ever got in my life down at the state legislature. And he's sitting here smiling. No, I mean, he's great. We're still friends, but in 37 years of lobbying and being around state government, that was the worst whipping I ever took. He saw me at the capital this year and started smiling when he saw me. He's still laughing about it. I mean, it still hurts and I'm not in therapy anymore. But, you know, beyond that, seriously, he knows who I am. He knows my word's good. I'll promise you this much. I'll bring a team of people up here that can show you how to address some of these issues because some of the things, the points that the people made for and against. I certainly don't want to put a rusted out, beat out trailer next to somebody's half a million dollar house. I've been with that industry for 37 years. We've never advocated for that. But I can promise you, if you want affordable, attainable housing, we can come in and do something that you can stand next to. I promise you every one of you would want to stand next to it when we're done and cut a ribbon. So, just completely excluding HUD code product is not the way to answer this. And I'm willing and I'm committing to you that we'll bring the people that we need up here to help educate everybody, even the people on Rice Road or wherever, and do what we can to try and do that. So, I see my time's running out, but it's been a pleasure. Thank you for allowing me to speak again and have a few minutes. And it's good to see you, my friend.

Holly Richards came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Holly Richards, 3603 Alma Road, Shreveport, Louisiana. I oppose the government overreach that, plenty of empty of spaces in Shreveport and why y'all going outside the city limits and messing with homeowners? Don't make a lot of sense. All these empty buildings and spaces. You could allow people tiny homes. You could help seniors. There's a shortage, people living in their cars and everything else. I mean, make this make sense. I don't think, if you're a taxpayer and you're a law-abiding citizen, you should be tampered with. Especially, like I said, why don't y'all clean up your city before you start messing with people outside the city? And I give the rest of my time to Jessica. Thank you.

Jill Brown came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I'm going to be real brief on this. I am totally opposed to this. I'm sorry. Jill Brown, 10181 McElroy Drive, Keithville. I live in the last five miles, the last neighborhood of the five mile radius. So I'm like barely inside that five mile radius. I didn't know anything about the UDC code when I bought this property and had I known, I probably would have never bought in Caddo Parish, ever. But I did and I learned real quickly about the UDC code. I learned all about Alan Clarke and the MPC. I learned all about the Caddo Commission. When I learned all this though, I learned a lot of faces on this board. Some are new, some are not. But the one thing that has changed is y'all have become untouchable. I have not found one phone number online for any of y'all. I was prepared this morning to pick up a telephone so you could hear my heart. But guess what? There's no phone number available except for this one right here. And I've got his phone number. He probably wishes he didn't, but you know. But I sent out emails to every one of you this morning. I got one response back, from Chris. Y'all become untouchable. We are the ones that put you in the seats that y'all are in. You need to listen to us. We are here telling you what we want. Can you listen?

Jessica Tullis came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Jessica Tullis, 5474 Primitive Baptist, Shreveport, Louisiana, 71107. Gonna make it super, super quick. I already stated my name, I'm with Caddo Alliance for Freedom. Some of y'all know me, some may not, there's a couple new faces on here. I'm asking that each one of y'all vote no on this mobile home permit. This rule doesn't target the wealthy. It targets working families, seniors, and young people trying to get a start. For many, a mobile home is the only affordable path to owning land and a home. Adding permits, fees, and red tape makes that dream harder, if not impossible. I've sat on porches personally. I've knocked on doors. I've spoken with over a thousand of our neighbors in different parishes, I mean different parts of the parish. Everything is the same. We don't, we move to the country to be left alone. We don't want folks

telling us what to do on our own land. If someone wants HOA style restrictions, that's fine. They can go live in a subdivision, live in the City of Shreveport, or get an HOA started. But it's unfair to force those rules on rural people who came here to be left alone. And let's be clear this hits the middle class and lower income families the hardest. Are we wanting affordable home ownership? That's the way to make Shreveport better because they're going to take pride in their homes and this is not going to get them there. I ask y'all to vote no. Thank you.

Constance Green came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

My name is Constance L. Green. I reside at 4475 Rice Road, Shreveport, Louisiana, 71119. You're welcome. So, 60 seconds. I do understand everything that's been stated thus far, but many of you live here and lived here under the Keith Hightower era and there were beautiful homes built at that time and that's pretty much been the large major affordable living that we've had. So, I'm not against any of that, but many of us did move in the RA zone to have the privacy of whatever we want on our lands. My point today is the rules keep changing. There is no fundamental process of what goes on. It's whoever brings it up today then we're going to take it at hand. So, I do agree with everyone, but I also agree the fact that I live within the five mile radius and about five years ago, seven years ago, something of that nature, we packed this place and this mobile home, manufactured home, or whatever you want to call it, the concept is the same. But we do need some standards. We do need some bylaws and we do need some rules that we can all follow. But to find out at a last meeting that we've got a circumstance going on that we the people know nothing about, but it impacts our living arrangements. Thank you. [A motion was passed to extend the opposition's time by 5 minutes] I travel and I am the big person for the big Shreveport, Louisiana. So, I'm not leaving. But unfortunately, my children that lived here, they don't want to come back. We get off the airport. We want to see some beautiful surrounding. We want to see some beautiful greenery. And we don't want to see a lot of homelessness, but we know that there is some. So, if you're going to make some rules or change the bylaws, but housing, let's make it a systematic process where everybody gets to know. So, those of us that own acreage or those, whether it's a lot or whether whatever it is, well I want to share this with you. When I moved to the Rice Road, it was just the beautiful greenery, the beautiful trees, the beautiful everything. And now everybody wants to move to Rice Road. So, I'm just simply saying I'm not about whatever a person wants to do with their land, but we need to have some kind of systematic process so people can know what they want to do. I built and I bought on Rice Road for exactly what it is, and so, I'm not against manufactured homes. I'm not against any of that, but we've got now three properties up for sale. And so had my neighbor not called on this one, I wouldn't have known anything. So, let's get real about it. We all want nice communities. We all want nice developments. Whatever that is to our niceness, let us make some of those decisions. You don't live there. How you know what's good for us? And so, what we're saying right now is that may be your decision, but until you live there and you bought that property and you buy into it, you can't make those decisions and you can't keep changing rules. So, we're here to say we're not leaving Shreveport. We're not moving out past the five mile radius, or whatever this is that you all are posing. We want our city to have value in it. We want it to have a million dollar homes plus. Thank you.

Hunter Duke came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Hello, Hunter Duke. I work with the Louisiana Manufactured Housing Association. Do I need to say my address? 10211 Westwood Avenue, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. I just want to cover a couple quick statistics in regards to home ownership in Shreveport and then some of the blighted areas around Shreveport and in Caddo. Like Steve Duke said earlier, home ownership rate is around 61-62%. The supply of sub-\$200,000 homes is very low in Shreveport and in Caddo, compared to statewide. Here we go. There are limited land banks as seen in other municipalities, but lots are available. The state has more than 12,000 lots listed on Zillow. Shreveport has right at 717 lots. But if you get into the blighted numbers there is blighted lots in municipalities available for redevelopment. Shreveport has over 7,000 of these. You can check some of these numbers on Zillow and other places like that. Louisiana doesn't seem to have a formal land bank for state or individual municipalities, but these contacts may be of some assistance. And so, in short, manufactured housing is the answer for a lot of inner-city issues across the country. We don't see too much of a difference here than we do, you know, if you go over to Florida or Texas or Michigan. And so, with that, I guess I'll yield the rest of my time unless you have any questions. But thank y'all for listening to us today.

Floyd Jones came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Floyd Jones, work for Brewer Home Center, 3830 Texas Avenue. So, I'm from the salespeople. I deal with people that come in day-to-day, whether it's a family member, whether it's a young person or older person that's looking for a place to stay. They can't afford the rent, they can't afford the housing prices as everything that you guys have heard. And then we go through all the stuff and only to go through something like this that's going to make it more challenging for these people to get affordable homes. So, it makes it hard for me to provide for my family because I sell them these homes. And if we go through this process and create all of this extra stuff, it's just, you know, it's just hurting us all. That's it. Thank you.

Pat Mason came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Good afternoon, Commission. I'm Pat Mason. I'm at 317 Haynes in Shreveport. So I was called on today because I think I offer a unique perspective. I think I offer a perspective both as a military

member and also a Shreveport native. I've lived in Shreveport for 25 years and I was a combat pilot for over 10. I think that this provides an opportunity on both sides of the aisle for shared opportunity and I think those opportunities extend beyond the athlete. I think they provide services and just an opportunity for both sides to work together on how to benefit the local community. I think that from a military side, people that are living here via orders, it gives them some extra zeal in our community and hopefully that is brought back to their state that they're native from and I think as a person growing up in Shreveport, it's just one more additional opportunity for us to kind of have pride in our city. And I just think it's important and I yield the rest of my time.

Isaiah Cates came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

My name is Isaiah Cates, 317 Haynes Avenue, Shreveport. I would like to comment on that first gentleman's— I don't remember what his name was. However, he made a key comment. I think he said there are people and other aspects of this community that are deserving of financial attention. And what I think people forget about pickleball is that this project is not funded by the taxpayers. But it does bring in tax money that can be reused to give attention to those people and aspects of the community who are under-represented. And I am somebody who grew up in this community, born in this community, have lived here my entire life, went to SUSLA, and have created a business here 18 months ago. And I just don't understand why myself or other people in this community would continue to invest if the political leaders are not investing in the community, especially when it's use of bonds and of no harm to taxpayers.

Amy Maranto came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

My name is Amy Maranto. My address is 7538 University Drive, Shreveport, Louisiana, 71105, and I am speaking for pickleball courts. As a mom of four in the community, this is something really important to my whole family. We play pickleball constantly. We love it and not just me and my kids, but their friends, my parents, cousins, uncles, aunts, all the things. And it's just we don't have enough to do for our kids in the area. Like, I mean, it's bad. And so, giving my kids something fun to do. It's easy to learn. You don't have to have professional lessons or camps or anything like all ages can enjoy it. And even the equipment is really cheap to find. I've played it. I have siblings that live in Texas and they have courts everywhere and it's just really fun, it's a good way to meet other people in the community. So, it's the fastest growing sport in America. It would draw visitors to our area. When I have friends and family that come, it'd be something for me to show them to do. It would bring revenue in. And it would promote a healthy lifestyle, exercise, fitness, fun, community. So just in closing, by adding pickleball courts, Shreveport can provide a low cost, high impact amenity that benefits families, seniors, youth, and our local economy. This is an investment in our health and our city's future. I thank you all for your time.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- Food distribution—November 22, 2025

Administrator Bryant announced that the food distribution is scheduled for November 22, 2025.

- Assistant Director of Facilities & Maintenance

Director Maurice Carson announced that Mr. Jacob Sepulvado has accepted the position of Assistant Director of Facilities & Maintenance. The Commissioners congratulated Mr. Sepulvado on his new promotion.

- Juvenile Detention Center census

Administrator Bryant said that there are 18 children in the Detention Center, one of which is OJJ, and one 17 year old. There are 453 children on probation and twenty juveniles are at CCC.

- July Financials

Administrator Bryant mentioned that the July Financials are at each Commissioners' station as well as attached to the agenda.

COMMISSION REMARKS

- Mr. J. Young asked for the population at CCC. Administrator Bryant said that she has not heard that the population has decreased significantly.

- Mr. Burrell said that AT&T put three holes in his yard, but no one is talking to the residents. Administrator Bryant advised that she will research this and provide the information when she receives it.

- Mr. Epperson advised that AT&T has a class action suit that has been settled regarding a breach of data. Customers are receiving spam calls, possibly related to the breach. Senior citizens are advised to be aware of these calls, especially those from the 318 area code. He also mentioned that the Public Safety Committee met and addressed concerns about trash and litter on major roads. Citizens are

also invited to provide revisions and changes to the Disaster Response & Recovery booklet.

- Mr. J. Young talked about pickleball. He said that young people are in the audience today to ask the Commission to invest in the city and provide safe and fun stuff to do for people under the age of 40. He said that Shreveport/Caddo Parish is losing population. People are not going to stay if we continue to pass on every opportunity, he said. Pickleball will bring in tourists, which generates revenue. Mr. J. Young reiterated that the money source is not taxes, but revenue bonds. He encouraged everyone to be bold and support pickleball.
- Mrs. Blake also thanked everyone for coming and speaking in favor of pickleball. She then read aloud the following letter:

Dear Caddo County Commissioners:

On behalf of the State of Louisiana, I am writing to express my full support for the development of the Caddo Parish Pickleball Park in Shreveport. This project represents far more than a recreational amenity—it is a strategic investment in the economic and cultural vitality of Northwest Louisiana. Pickleball is one of the fastest-growing sports in the United States, and the creation of a dedicated facility of this scale presents an outstanding opportunity for Shreveport to emerge as a premier destination for tournaments and regional events. These events are proven to generate meaningful economic activity, driving revenue to local hotels, casinos, restaurants, and retail businesses. Beyond the immediate economic benefits, hosting pickleball tournaments and recreational events will introduce a broad audience to Shreveport’s rich culture, unique attractions, and Southern hospitality—encouraging return visits and positive word-of-mouth tourism. This development also aligns with our long-term goals of enhancing quality of life, promoting active lifestyles, and investing in infrastructure that attracts residents, visitors, and businesses alike. Facilities like the Caddo Parish Pickleball Park play an essential role in positioning Louisiana communities as vibrant, forward-thinking places to live and visit. I am confident that this project will serve as a catalyst for sustained economic development and sports tourism in the region. I strongly encourage your favorable consideration of this proposal and stand ready to support the advancement of this important initiative. If I can be of assistance to you in any way, please don’t hesitate to call.

/s/ Billy Nungesser, Lt. Governor

Mrs. Blake urged everyone to trust the Administration and support this project. She pointed out that this would bring about economic benefits to all of Caddo Parish.

- Mr. Atkins is in support of the pickleball project and believes that it is important to invest back into the community. This is a highly desirable project by the citizens. He further mentioned that the investment will be through revenue bonds and is designed to be paid back the revenue generated by the project. If the revenues do not come about due to the utilization of the courts, then there are other sources of revenues that can handle the gap in payment without damaging the Parish credit bond rating.
- Mr. Cothran said that the Juvenile Justice Committee met today and discussed reducing underage vape sales, domestic violence, protective orders, and the Youth Planning Board. A motion came out of committee to draft a resolution to streamline the protective order process.
- Mr. Thomas said that it is important to listen to the people in their district and amplify their voices. He also said that he is in support of pickleball, but he has to listen to his constituents. Citizens are encouraged to provide feedback through online comment cards.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Madame President said that the Economic Development Committee met today to discuss G-Unit Studios and their plans for Shreveport and Caddo Parish. She also mentioned that the Juvenile Justice Committee met to discuss streamlining the protective orders processes.

Madame President’s report included discussion regarding Ordinance No. 6558 of 2025, regarding PZC Case No. 25-2-CTAP.

A citizen inquired about rules regarding additional trailers on a neighbor’s property.

MPC Director, Mr. Alan Clark, said that an ordinance amendment was requested by the citizens on Rice Road to make manufactured housing a special exception use in R-A zoning. It was also mentioned that the PZC did not approve this ordinance. Concerns were raised about the lack of applicability of the Unified Development Code to rural areas. Suggestions were made to update the Code and the Master Plan to be more relevant to rural areas. Mr. Clark said that the current code is still in effect, which they enforce, until changes are made.

Mr. J. Young wanted to know if this ordinance would apply outside of the 5 mile radius. Mr.

Clark said that it is for the planning zone only.

Mr. Atkins suggested that this be remanded to the Long Range Planning Committee.

There was no Old Business, so the Commission moved onto New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

It was **moved by Mr. Epperson**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that Ordinance No. 6558 of 2025, PZC Case No. 25-2-CTAP, 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 the manufactured homes, with all their provisions included herein, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be remanded to the Long Range Planning Committee.

Mr. Epperson said that there is still more work to be done regarding this change. He would like input from all interested parties.

Substitute motion by Mr. Kracman, seconded by Mr. J. Young, *that Ordinance No. 6558 of 2025, PZC Case No. 25-2-CTAP* be tabled indefinitely.

Mr. Kracman said that this has been through Long Range Planning and the PZC. He said that several citizens spoke against this ordinance.

Attorney Frazier pointed out that if the Commission does not act on the ordinance within 90 days, it will be deemed denied. She also mentioned that it would take 8 votes in order for this ordinance to be adopted due to the PZC not recommending it.

Call for the Question by Mrs. Gage-Watts, seconded by Mr. Thomas. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (10). NAYS: Commissioner Kracman (1). ABSENT: Commissioner Jones (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, Mr. Kracman's substitute motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Kracman, Lazarus, and J. Young (6). NAYS: Commissioners Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Thomas, and G. Young (5). ABSENT: Commissioner Jones (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. J. Young, *that Ordinance No. 6559 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* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction. Motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Jones being absent (1).

It was **moved by Mr. J. Young**, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *that Ordinance No. 6560 of 2025, an ordinance to amend Chapter 26 of the Code of Ordinances of the Parish of Caddo relating to traffic schedules to establish a schedule for placement of traffic calming devices to include speed bumps and humps, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto* be moved to Thursday's agenda for introduction.

Mr. J. Young said that there has been speeding problems in Dixie Garden. This ordinance would help calm the traffic. He asked the Commissioners to support moving it forward.

At this time, Mr. J. Young's motion carried unanimously with Commissioners Jones and Thomas being absent (2).

It was **moved by Mr. G. Young**, seconded by Mr. J. Young, *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 moved to the Economic Development Committee.

It was mentioned that this project is intended to be self-funded through user fees, not taxpayer money. Mr. G. Young said that he would like the Economic Development Committee to discuss this further and educate the community through a roadshow. Mr. J. Young appreciates Mr. G. Young's discussion and volunteers to go on the road to sell this.

Mrs. Blake asked two citizens to come forward.

Trinity Armstrong came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I'm Trinity Armstrong and my address is 602 Summerville Drive. Me and my sister, when we aren't traveling with our sports team, we love to just try different hobbies and we love to play pickleball. Besides Acro and AirU and some other places, there aren't many opportunities to do anything in Shreveport.

My sister's in high school and I'm in middle school, so obviously most of the time we're around friends, and we really struggle to find some things to do other than, outside of party scenes. We love to play pickleball together, but it's really hard to find a place to play. We are members of YMCA, but their playing time is limited and the courts are always full. We've been kicked out of Eastridge multiple times because we aren't members, but we really just want to play a game. We set up a pickleball net in front of our house, but we are always watching for cars and have to move the net. It's not very ideal. When we go to Houston to stay with my grandma, she always asks us if we want to go to an Astros game, main event, Chuck-E-Cheese, any of these cool places, but we tell her we want to go to the pickleball park. Please consider the youth in our city and an opportunity to play pickleball in a fun and safe environment. It's a wonderful social activity that could keep us on the courts and off the streets. Thank you.

Shelley Armstrong came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Okay, I'll be real quick. I have come to speak on behalf of this project before. I've heard a lot of the same rhetoric, but I mean we really need to promote quality of life in this city. The more people that we have leave the city, the less taxes we have to fund the major concerns that the constituent has with roads and water. These are definitely community outcries. I do agree there needs to be more education about the money that's being spent. But the longer down the road we push this off, the more people we continue to lose. This property will be managed by an experienced operator, the YMCA. It can pay for itself many times. The location in South Shreveport is ideal. And I do agree, many people that I have talked to have major tunnel vision. They can't think outside the box about this project. It would be an amazing opportunity for us to be able to host tournaments, bring in people from all over the country, even outside of the country. People think that this city does not have the infrastructure, that we don't have the things to do, that we don't have the hotels to bring people in. But I spend half of my year in small town Ruston, Louisiana, because they are the sport capital of the South. I pay \$400 a night to stay in crappy hotels. Okay, they have I think about 600 hotels in the city of Ruston, but we are pouring in that city to play volleyball and basketball and softball and baseball. We have here, I believe, 10,000 hotel rooms, I mean, maybe they're not the best, but people that want to play their sports don't really care, right? They want to come to town, play their sport, spend the money. So, I do believe this is a project that we have the opportunity to jump on, bring in revenue to our city and keep our citizens here as well. Thank you. Sorry. Shelley Armstrong, 602 Summerville Drive, Shreveport 71115.

Mr. Atkins agreed to send this back to committee to build support and understanding. He also clarified that this is to be paid by revenue bonds, and the user fees should pay for the cost of financing and maintaining the project. If the user fees were not to cover all the expenses, the Parish has another source of revenue to cover that gap. Mrs. Bryant agreed and said that they would look the Parks Fund or other non-dedicated funds. She also pointed out that this is a proposal; it has not been approved yet. She said that they would have to work with the Commission to get the financing and details in place.

Mr. Burrell said that the public can be educated to some extent, but there is always going to be some misinformation. Sometimes you have to make a decision and go forward, he said.

Mr. Cothran is in support of Mr. G. Young's motion.

At this time, Mr. G. Young's motion carried unanimously with Commissioners Jones and Thomas being absent (2).

It was **moved by Mr. Cothran**, seconded Mrs. Gage-Watts, *to englobo and move the following items to Thursday's agenda for consideration:*

- *Special Resolution of Remembrance for the Shreveport Six*

Mrs. Blake said that the Shreveport Six should always be remembered. She als

- *Special Resolution of Recognition for Mr. Lorenzo Davenport*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition for Firefighter of the Year, Aniyah Brown*
- *Appointment of John Dansby to the Lakeview Waterworks District to fill the unexpired term of Lita Smith*
- *Discussion related to 2025 precinct survey exhibits*
- *Special Resolution of Remembrance for Ramona Baylor*
- *Special Resolution of Remembrance for Thelma Jones*
- *Special Resolution for Eden Gardens Class of 1970 Reunion*

At this time, Mr. Cothran's motion to englobo and advance carried unanimously with Commissioners Jones and Thomas being absent (2).

COMMUNIQUE & COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Mr. Atkins asked about the manufactured homes ordinance. Mr. Kracman said that the tabled ordinance was specifically about manufactured homes, not the UDC or Master Plan as a whole.
- Mr. Epperson mentioned that all of the meetings are streamed. He also said that he would like his phone number listed on the website.
- Mr. Cothran received said that he received a phone call that the Commissioners get paid \$54k. The Clerk of the Commissioner, Mr. Jeff Everson, said that clarified that this number came from a labor statistics page. This number is not related to the Commission's actual salaries.
- Mr. G. Young would like it to be put on the record that he would not support this project if he believes at all that this project wouldn't pay for itself. The importance of asking questions about project funding was emphasized.
- Mrs. Gage-Watts noted that African American women did not have the opportunity to vote until the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

There were no Citizens Comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

- *Ordinance No. 6554 of 2025, an ordinance amending and re-enacting Section 35-1 of the Caddo Parish Code of Ordinances pertaining to Schedule of Licenses and Fees, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6555 of 2025, an ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 6541 of 2025, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6556 of 2025, an ordinance to close and abandon or release a portion of the 15-foot wide utility servitude on Lot 22 of the Walden Ferry Subdivision, Unit No. 2, in Section 28, Township 17 North, Range 16 West, in the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6557 of 2025, an ordinance to authorize the lease of the flood acquisition property located at 7533 W. Lakeshore Drive, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 33 of 2025, a resolution urging and requesting that the State of Louisiana allocate appropriate attention and resources to repair and maintain I-49, I-220, I-20, and 3132 within Caddo Parish*

At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the Commission adjourned at 6:06 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk