

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 7th DAY OF AUGUST, 2025

The Caddo Parish Long Range Planning Committee met in legal session on the above date at 2:00 p.m., in the Government Plaza Chambers, with the following members were present constituting a quorum: Commissioners Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Kracman, Lazarus, and Thomas (6). ABSENT: None (0).

Mr. Thomas gave the invocation, and Mr. Kracman led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance. There were no Agenda Additions, so the Committee moved onto Citizens Comments.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Laura Neubert came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Laura Neubert, 7597 Dixie Blanchard Road in Shreveport, 71107. You have to forgive me, I thought this was the meeting that I needed to attend, and I understand Mr. Sibley came and spoke to you in the last meeting, so I apologize. I was out of town, so I was unable to make that meeting. So, I really came today thinking that we were going to be discussing, possibly, the need, continue the discussion for the north Caddo voting location, as well as the proposed west Shreveport. And so, I was just here, basically, in support of Mr. Sibley as a Board of Election Supervisors member, and I chair that board, and to see if there was any questions or anything that has now, since you guys have already met with him, if there was holdover or any questions that you might have that I might be able to answer as someone that participates in the voting process each election cycle. I understand he did a really good job explaining to you guys where we're at. I just had one comment, kind of maybe on the back-end of this, and he may have covered this. One of the concerns that I have, as someone that is involved in this process and it's one of the things that I see regarding the location of the Registrar's office, is that we have a very difficult time with our voters finding adequate parking. And, I was contacted at some point by the Clerk of Court's office one of the recent elections that we had, people were getting parking tickets as they were trying to participate in the process of voting. By statute, the Registrar's office has to be a early voting location, and my personal observation, not sure that Mr. Sibley would, you know, agree with this, it's not really a good location for the voters to come into. We also have a good degree of absentee ballots that come in each cycle that have something on them that is a possible rejection, and then we reach out to the voters and give them the opportunity to come in and cure those problems, whether it's a missing signature, witness signature, the things that have to be filled out on that ballot. And we get responses from people when it's not a popular election, like if it's not a governor's race or presidential race, that they're just not gonna come in and do it, because it's too difficult to come in to downtown Shreveport and, you know, actually find a place to park, and it's also a disadvantage for those that are disabled. I just see that that's an impediment and something that I think we really, if we really, truly want to get to the bottom of things that are stopping people from being able to be involved in this election, these election cycles and truly open the doors to everybody, these are some things we definitely could improve upon. So, I would ask that, as the body here that provides most of the funding for that organization for the Registrar of Voters, that y'all keep that in mind, because I know they're talking about alternate locations and there's a maximum number that we can have, and my understanding is at this point we're approved for three, although we are only operating two. So, I would ask that y'all keep that in mind. I know that that building is shared with the D.A.'s office. So, I would just bring up that it's not the best location in terms of the logistics that we have. By statute, we as a board are responsible to oversee everybody that's working on ballots, and the way that that room is designed that we work in, there is one main door and then behind the main door are individual offices that they use for the jury pools, so we did the best we can with it, but we had to spread the board out and it's really not something, we really should be in a big room, all together, at tables where every board member can see everything that's going on. So, that's been an impediment in the board's position in my opinion. So, if there's anything I can answer for you guys, just let me know. I'm just here to, you know, add some things that maybe Mr. Sibley did not cover. And then, I'll close with this. Mr. Sibley does a terrific job with very few resources, let's say permanent full-time employees. If we're serious about manning these additional locations, he is going to have to have some additional employees full-time in his office. I see the struggle, I'm part of it, I watch what happens. I watch what Dale goes through every cycle to try to get this done, and they handle an enormous amount of paperwork out and paperwork in. We were probably knocking 10,000 absentee ballots during the presidential election that people in his office and whoever we could get from the Clerk of Court to process the day of election, and it's a huge volume. So, that's really all I have to say. Okay, thank you.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Discuss and make recommendations regarding whether 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 while also proceeding with the implementation of the approved North Caddo early voting site as soon as possible (remanded to committee form the July 3, 2025 Regular Session)*

Mr. Epperson said that he understands and is aware of some of the issues Ms. Neubert has brought to the committee. His main focus is to implement early voting sites in all four corners of the Parish. He also mentioned the Parish having an integral part in designing the OMV site in West Caddo as a potential site for an early voting site.

Mr. Thomas was glad that Registrar Sibley came before the Commission and explained a few things that weren't clear. He said that it is also important to recognize the caution that Registrar Sibley presented about staffing issues with the current locations and the need to address this problem. Mr. Thomas said that they need to figure out ways to attract poll workers, as well as, training those individuals to work at election locations.

Mr. Kracman agreed with Mr. Thomas with Registrar Sibley coming before the Commission and providing answers to their questions. We put the cart before the horse, Mr. Kracman said. He suggested letting the resolutions sit with requesting the four early voting locations and letting Registrar Sibley complete his work.

Administrator Bryant clarified that it is the Registrar of Voters responsibility to analyze and make recommendations for the early voting site, but a MOU (memorandum of understanding) has to be signed by the Parish Governing Authority once that process is done.

Mr. Epperson agreed with Mr. Kracman.

Mr. Lazarus pointed out that Registrar Sibley said it was a stretch to add a third site. He also explained that the citizens of West Shreveport can drive to the downtown early voting site in 10-15 minutes; the citizens of North Caddo have to drive at least 40 minutes to get to an early voting site.

Mr. Thomas wanted to know what could be done to attract additional poll workers. Mrs. Bryant said that they can work with the Registrar. She also mentioned that the pay for the poll workers is set by the State, not the Parish.

Attorney Frazier also explained that the Registrar of Voters is strictly a state position, which could prohibit some things that the Parish could do.

Mrs. Gage-Watts said that it has always been her desire to see four early voting locations in Caddo Parish.

Mr. Epperson wanted to know who pays the Registrar's salary. Attorney Frazier said that the Parish supplements his salary, and he can only be removed by the Board of Elections. Mr. Epperson asked for the Registrar's salary.

Mrs. Gage-Watts wanted to know how much the Parish pays for each election. Mrs. Bryant said that it would depend on the election, but special election costs over \$200k.

It was **moved by Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *to table discussion regarding whether 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 while also proceeding with the implementation of the approved North Caddo early voting site as soon as possible until additional information from Registrar Sibley is gathered.* Motion carried unanimously with all members present.

Mr. Thomas suggested providing Registrar Sibley with any other ideas regarding early voting locations.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned
2:32 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk