

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 2nd DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2025

The Caddo Parish Economic Development 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 Atkins, Burrell, Cothran, Lazarus, Thomas, and G. Young (6). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and J. Young (2).

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Jon Glover, 9100 Walker Road, Apartment 217, Shreveport, Louisiana, zip code 71118. To the members of the committee and those members that are present of the Commission, I stand before you to speak about the pickleball project. And, though I can appreciate the investment, the funding resource, I cannot appreciate that little spicket of "lease" and how it is that we can put a ten million dollar project on a piece of land that we don't even own. We have to lease that land from the Y, but more than that, you've added some amenities. The soccer fields, the walking trails, but are they a part of the project itself, or are those just going to be a part of the Y itself? See, where I am indeed appreciative of any effort that we can bring forward for economic growth, I need to make sure that me as a taxpayer isn't gonna be looking at something in the future, when those dollars that you are anticipating, based on this project, does not manifest themselves. Meaning, if there are not enough tournaments to satisfy that monthly payment on those revenue bonds, the taxpayers are gonna have to supplement that. And whether we like it or not, it is just a true fact, regardless of the fund it comes out of, those are taxpayers dollars. So, again, for me to say no, I will not, but I will say this, that because I feel apprehensive about the ownership, about the agreement contract you'll have to enter in with regards to leasing, paying that monthly fee, I'm concerned. I'm concerned because it started out as the pickleball courts, now it has expanded. I have to give my accolades to the Commissioner from District 9 for bringing to the floor his math thing, which showed that twenty pickleball courts may cost us two million dollars, and when we talked about the additional eight million dollars, that's when we heard the soccer fields, the walking trails, and whatever else, I don't recall they said. But at the end of this equation, I need to feel comfortable enough to know I am not going to become a funding source, taxpayer dollars, to take care of this project. Thank you.

Chris Chandler came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Good afternoon, Chris Chandler, you want an address? 10008 Carlsbad Drive, Shreveport, 71115. I've looked at this for a while, since it's been on the docket, and my concern, as one that's focused on community quality of life in my life, in my business, in my non-profit work, I want us to use this as an opportunity to ask the question, what is the role of our local government? I know that's broad, that's big-picture. I don't see that this is the role. Ten million dollars, the funding, the way that it's put forth to be funded, the revenue expectation. A former economic developer myself, I know that pickleball is hot all across the country. I know everybody is saying if we build it first, we can capitalize on that. What I know from history is we build it, all the communities in east Texas are gonna follow suit, they're probably gonna do it bigger and better, because they have funding that's dedicated to economic development projects. We, as a community, are gonna end up on the short end, I'm afraid. This is my hometown, I want us to have pickleball, I want us to have baseball, I want us to have every opportunity for our youth to grow up and have a variety of outdoor activities to choose from. I don't see this as fitting what would benefit our community with the investment of the taxpayer dollar. So, I'm a conservative that wants to look at what is the role of the ten million dollars from the Caddo Commission? What really are we trying to do, are we really trying to build a community that everybody has a niche that's met by the government helping to pay for it? Because in the business community, if there's a potential for profit or success in pickleball, they, the business community, will invest and build it. So, my encouragement is a negative, let's drop this and look for other best uses of the limited funds from the Caddo Parish Commission taxpayer money that would invest in the kids and invest in better opportunities to develop long-term benefits. This is a short-term risk that I think we're gonna fail at.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Discuss and make recommendations regarding Ordinance No. 6548 of 2025, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Capital Outlay Fund and the Debt Service Fund to provide an appropriation of \$10M for the construction of a pickleball park, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

Mr. Cothran held two community meetings in Southern Hills and Cedar Grove community. There were some public concerns regarding the \$10M pickleball project and location. He said that the citizens were receptive to the information they received.

Mr. Lazarus asked about the lease. Mrs. Bryant said that this would be a long-term lease, and the Parish would own the improvements on top of the land.

Mr. Burrell discussed the projects potential benefits and the impact on the community's quality of life. He emphasized the importance of investing in community growth and address the outflow of residents.

Mr. Atkins attended a Committee of 100 luncheon. He said that the meeting was upbeat and positive with respect to this project. He also mentioned that the Charter mandate does include Parks & Recreation. Mr. Atkins said that he is support of this project and feels that the Parish would be able to cover any gap that may exist if the revenues come up short.

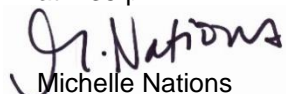
Mr. Thomas also mentioned that he had concerns with location, but his main concern was how his constituents feel about this project. To his surprise, many of his constituents understood the promise and potential of this project.

Mrs. Blake talked about the role of government investing in economic development, aiming to generate revenue and attract people to Caddo Parish.

The Committee expressed hope that the pickleball project will contribute to a broader effort to revitalize the community and improve its economic dynamics.

It was **moved by Mr. Atkins**, seconded by Mr. Burrell, *that Ordinance No. 6548 of 2025, an ordinance amending the Budget of Estimated Revenues & Expenditures for the Capital Outlay Fund and the Debt Service Fund to provide an appropriation of \$10M for the construction of a pickleball park, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto be recommended to the full body. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Burrell, Lazarus, Thomas, and G. Young (5). NAYS: Commissioner Cothran (1). ABSENT: Commissioners Gage-Watts and J. Young (2). ABSTAIN: None (0).

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk