

**MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 20th DAY OF JANUARY, 2026**

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

Mr. Jones gave the invocation, and Mr. Cothran led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance. There were no Agenda Additions.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Heather Boucher came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Heather Boucher, 9008 Vue Fleur Lane, Shreveport, Louisiana. Good afternoon, Commissioners. I wanted to thank you for allowing me to come today to share my interest in the possible opportunity to become the interim constable of Ward 8. I began my law enforcement career in 2009, as a Caddo Reserve Sheriff, and went on to full time employment with Shreveport Police as a patrol officer. Later I became an investigator with Centenary Police Department. I was there for over nine years. While employed at Centenary, I taught self defense, taught safety awareness, and still have the honor and privilege annually teaching at Centenary, at their Athletics department, sexual assault awareness. I worked as a sergeant over the Crimes Against Children Unit at Webster Sheriff's Office. I left in 2021 from Webster to pursue a sales position for one year. I currently hold my private investigator license and work for two national security firms. I continue to keep my Louisiana post active since 2009. Last year alone, I completed over 250 continuing education hours for law enforcement. I serve on several boards for human trafficking, sexual assault awareness, and domestic violence awareness. I would love the opportunity to serve as the interim constable to keep Ward 8 clean of litter and work with the Parish hand-in-hand on property standard issues, and educate our community on safety awareness. I thank you very much for your time. Have a lovely day.

John Lorick came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

My name is John Lorick, 555 Ellerbe Road, Shreveport 71106. I am the justice of the peace for Ward 8, and would just like to express the need to have a constable appointed. Technically, she is sworn in as the deputy constable, so the progression normally would be for her to take that position until the election. But we do need that as quickly as possible, because it handicaps us from being able to serve papers and handle the court in the proper manner. So, I would appreciate your attention to that. There's one thing she didn't mention, I think, unless I may have missed it. She is a post-certified police officer, probably the only one in Caddo Parish, I'm not sure about that, but I think that's probably the case. But I do appreciate your attention to that as expediently as possible, so we can continue holding our court properly. Thank you very much, we appreciate it.

There were no Visitors.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- Juvenile Detention Center census

Assistant Administrator Walker said that there are 19 children in the Detention Center, two 17 year olds, and four of which are OJJ. There are 391 children on probation. Eleven juveniles are at CCC.

Commissioners asked questions regarding the relatively low number of juveniles at Caddo Correctional Center and the disposition of those cases. Administration staff explained the distinction between juveniles initially arrested as adults and those transferred from juvenile detention following determinations by the District Attorney's Office based on the seriousness of the offense. It was clarified that while some individuals housed at Caddo Correctional Center are under 17, they are not classified as juveniles for reporting purposes once their cases fall under adult jurisdiction.

- December 2026 Financials

Assistant Administrator Walker said that the December financials are attached to the agenda, and a hard copy has been placed at each Commissioner's station.

COMMISSION REMARKS

- Mr. Cothran asked for an update on the status of the baseball field project at the YMCA. The administration advised that the project was nearing completion, with field turf installed and work ongoing on concession and restroom facilities, plumbing, and fencing. Mr. Jones noted that while construction activity may not be visible daily, the project was progressing well and is expected to be operational in time for the upcoming season, with tournaments already being planned. It was further noted that the facility is anticipated to generate a positive return on investment for the parish.

- Mr. Jones shared remarks regarding participation in the inaugural Voices of the Dream MLK Regional Choir Competition, noting that choirs from across Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi participated. The event was described as culturally enriching and unifying, highlighting diverse performers and strong community engagement. Mr. Jones expressed pride in the parish's sponsorship and optimism that the event will grow significantly in future years, both in attendance and economic impact, while emphasizing the importance of the event's unifying cultural value. Clarification was requested regarding whether the choir competition was part of a previously established allocation program. It was explained that the event was independently proposed but supported by the parish through sponsorship, aligning with broader goals of enhancing quality of life and cultural opportunities within the parish.
- Mr. Thomas highlighted MLK weekend events, including parades, scholarship breakfasts, educational programs, and community celebrations. He reflected on the renewed sense of purpose inspired by the observances and emphasized the importance of public service, unity, and community representation.

The Commission then heard remarks from the Parish Poet Laureate, who spoke about Dr. King's 1958 visit to Shreveport and the enduring relevance of his words. The Poet Laureate reflected on themes of interconnectedness, faith, courage, and legacy, emphasizing that Dr. King's impact was forged over a relatively short period yet continues to resonate decades later. She also provided an update on her work in partnership with community organizations, including the YWCA and the Walter B. Jacobs Nature Park, noting efforts to empower citizens and promote reflection, unity, and cultural awareness.

Commissioners expressed appreciation for the Poet Laureate's remarks, commending the presentation for its depth, clarity, and inspirational impact. Additional reflections were shared by Commissioners who recalled personal memories of Dr. King's assassination and its profound effect on the nation, drawing parallels to other historic tragedies and emphasizing resilience, unity, and hope in the face of adversity.

- Mr. J. Young recounted volunteering at a community garden project in collaboration with a nonprofit organization funded by the parish, describing hands-on involvement, neighborhood engagement, and the positive impact of the initiative. The President acknowledged the origins of the program, noting that funding was made available through the American Rescue Plan and that the initiative was designed to benefit the entire parish.
- Mrs. Gage-Watts highlighted the ongoing activities of the Dreamkeepers Alliance and reminded the public that MLK-related events would continue throughout the week and weekend, encouraging participation and engagement.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President G. Young concluded the discussion by reflecting on historic national events that shaped his generation and underscoring the importance of unity, perseverance, and forward-thinking leadership. He expressed confidence that, despite current challenges, the parish's best days lie ahead and then proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

There being no Old Business, the Commission moved onto New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

It was moved by Mr. J. Young, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, that Ordinance No. 6606 of 2026, an ordinance providing amendments to correct omissions to the Caddo Parish Fee Schedule, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto be removed from the agenda, and the following items be englobed and moved to Thursday's Regular Session agenda:

- *Ordinance No. 6607 of 2026, an ordinance to accept the streets in Northwood Oaks Unit 3A into the Parish of Caddo Road System, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto be advanced for introduction*
- *Resolution No. 6 of 2026, a resolution amending the Rules & By-Laws of the Caddo Parish Commission regarding Standing Committees and otherwise providing with respect thereto be advanced for introduction*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition Fire Chief Brian Watson's Retirement be advanced for consideration*
- *Appointment of Herb Meadows to the Parish Planning & Zoning Commission to fill the unexpired term of Phyllis Hart be advanced for consideration*
- *Appointment of John Dansby to the Parish Planning & Zoning Commission to replace Damon L. Humphrey, Sr. whose term expired on October 26, 2025 be advanced for consideration*

At this time, Mr. J. Young's motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Epperson being absent.

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that the appointment of Interim Ward 8 Constable vacancy be advanced to Thursday's agenda consideration.*

Friendly Amendment by Mr. G. Young *to have the resumes submitted to Commission Clerk Jeff Everson email no later than January 21, 2026 by 5:00 p.m. with the interested individuals having 5 minutes during Thursday's Regular Session to state their case. Mrs. Gage-Watts agreed.*

The Commission then proceeded to consideration of advancing the appointment of an interim Ward 8 constable to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Constable Patrick Young. Clarification was provided regarding the statutory timeline for filling the vacancy, noting that the Commission has 20 days from the date the office is officially vacated, as determined by the Secretary of State, to make an appointment. Administration confirmed that the vacancy deadline aligns with the Commission's meeting schedule.

During discussion, it was emphasized that the action at this stage was solely to advance the item and not to appoint any specific individual. The President proposed a process to ensure fairness and transparency, including requiring interested candidates to submit letters of interest and resumes to the Clerk's Office by the close of business the following day. It was further proposed that candidates be given an opportunity to address the Commission during the upcoming meeting, with time allotted for questions from Commissioners. Commissioners discussed the importance of clarity, consistency, and transparency in appointment processes, acknowledging both past practices and the need to meet statutory deadlines. It was noted that two resumes had already been received and attached to the electronic agenda.

At this time, Mrs. Gage-Watts' motion, as amended, carried unanimously with Commissioner Epperson being absent.

COMMUNIQUES & COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Assistant Administrator Walker provided an update indicating that the YMCA baseball field project is anticipated to be completed by mid-April.

He also advised that there is high confidence of extremely cold temperatures and significant winter precipitation beginning Friday evening and potentially extending through Sunday or Monday. He reported that parish departments are preparing standard emergency measures, coordinating with DOTD and Public Works, and communicating safety information through social media and CaddoReady. Residents were encouraged to sign up for emergency notifications.

Additional discussion addressed emergency shelter readiness, potential road and bridge safety concerns, and coordination through the Emergency Operations Center. Commissioners reminded the public of designated emergency community lighthouse locations and encouraged residents to prepare for possible power outages and water disruptions.

- Mrs. Blake shared community announcements, including event cancellations due to weather, reminders to bring pets and plants indoors, and notices of upcoming community events.
- Mr. Atkins requested an update regarding animals at the shelter. Mr. Travis Clark, Director of Animal Services, confirmed adequate supplies of blankets, ongoing efforts to place animals safely indoors or with foster families when possible, and coordination with veterinary services to ensure vaccinations and animal safety during extreme weather conditions.
- Mrs. Gage-Watts requested an update on infrastructure preparedness, including brine and road treatment plans, which administration confirmed are in place and will be further detailed following upcoming coordination meetings.

There were no Citizens Comments, nor Consent Agenda. There was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the Commission adjourned at 4:40 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk