

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 17th DAY OF FEBRUARY, 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, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, G. Young, and J. Young (12). ABSENT: None (0).

Mr. Jones gave the invocation, and Mr. Epperson led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ADDITIONS

It was **moved by Mr. J. Young**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that the agenda be expanded and Special Resolution of Remembrance for Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. be added under New Business.*

The President opened the floor for a public hearing. There being no one to speak for or against adding it to the agenda, the President closed the public hearing.

At this time, Mr. Jones' motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Kracman being absent.

There were no Citizens Comments nor Visitors.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- Juvenile Detention Center census

Administrator Bryant said that there are 21 children in the Detention Center, one OJJ, and one 17 year olds. There are 391 children on probation. Eleven juveniles are at CCC.

- Intergovernmental Meeting

Administrator Bryant reminded the Commissioners that the Intergovernmental Meeting will be held this Friday, February 20 at the School Board.

- January, 2026 Financial

Administrator Bryant advised that the January 2026 financials have been placed at each Commissioners' station as well as being attached to the agenda.

- Visit Shreveport-Bossier

Administrator Bryant then introduced Stacy Brown, Executive Director with Visit Shreveport-Bossier, to the Commission for a presentation on "MLK Voices of the Dream" Choir Competition.

Mrs. Brown thanked the Commission for supporting the vision for a new MLK weekend tourism initiative: the inaugural "Voices of the Dream" choir competition. She explained the goal of growing tourism during January and emphasized both economic and community impacts. She reported an estimated \$93,000 economic impact from this year's smaller-scale event and stated the organization plans significant growth moving forward.

Ms. Karen Barnes expressed appreciation for the Commission's support and introduced a video highlighting the event's impact. The Clerk noted the video link was attached to the electronic agenda for viewing. A representative from Woodlawn High School (identified as Zach Burton in the transcript) shared testimony on the program's impact on students, describing how interactions with older college students and exposure to opportunities in music helped build hope, confidence, and college aspirations. He stated that, regardless of competition placement, the students and program experienced a meaningful "win" in life.

Visit Shreveport-Bossier representatives noted that this year's date competed with a statewide educators' clinic in New Orleans, limiting local school participation, and stated the 2027 event is planned with date adjustments and broader outreach.

Mr. Jones thanked presenters and emphasized the community impact of inspiring youth beyond economic metrics. He encouraged Commissioners and the public not to miss the event next year and described the unity and emotional power of the music and community gathering.

Mr. J. Young asked about the event budget and sponsorship. Visit Shreveport-Bossier stated the total budget was approximately \$88,000, with sponsorship support in addition to the Commission's contribution (noted as \$15,000). They stated the City of Bossier did not sponsor this year but may be approached for expansion next year, and Shreveport did not sponsor this year.

Mr. Atkins asked how broadly invitations were distributed. Visit Shreveport-Bossier stated outreach covered roughly a 2–3 hour radius, with participating choirs primarily from Texas, Mississippi, Arkansas, and some from Louisiana.

Mr. Burrell asked whether choirs fundraised for their participation. The presenters stated a small travel stipend was provided, but most expenses were paid by the choirs.

Mr. Cothran asked whether the full competition was recorded and if it could be shared publicly (e.g., YouTube or communications). Visit Shreveport-Bossier stated it could be made available.

The President thanked the presenters and noted the Commission's focus on partnering to strengthen the community and address population loss, stating that between 2020 and 2024 the area lost approximately 20,000 residents. The President emphasized the Commission's willingness to partner and pursue initiatives that encourage residents to remain and invest locally.

COMMISSION REMARKS

- Mr. J. Young gave remarks regarding the Krewe of Highland Parade and discussed concerns about blight enforcement in Shreveport. He referenced a burned historic home and a political campaign sign placed in front of it, calling it offensive and urging stronger enforcement of blight laws. Mr. J. Young also wished everyone a Happy Mardi Gras.
- Mr. Cothran raised constituent concerns about conditions at certain apartment complexes, particularly rodent issues affecting nearby businesses. He also reported attending local events including ribbon cuttings and a meeting with the Northwest Louisiana Food Bank regarding potential new service sites in District 10 and commended public safety partners for enforcement actions related to vape shops.
- Mr. Burrell shared personal reflections on Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr., describing meeting him and noting his historical influence, including references to past civic events and leaders.
- Mr. Lazarus thanked Public Works for addressing a district issue and announced a Rural Development Committee meeting Thursday at 1:30 p.m.
- Mr. Jones also thanked Public Works for assistance with a fire-damaged property near his home and urged continued pressure for better neighborhood conditions. He additionally spoke in support of the remembrance resolution for Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr., describing him as a unifying figure and expressing condolences.
- Mr. Atkins thanked Public Works for responsiveness and noted appreciation for efforts keeping Wallace Lake Road clean during nearby drilling activity.
- Mrs. Gage-Watts requested and received agreement for a moment of silence in honor of Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. She asked Public Works to remove illegally dumped trash at Jefferson Paige Road and LA 220 and requested to be added as a co-sponsor on upcoming agenda items.
- Clerk Everson recapped new committee assignments and meeting times to avoid confusion: Rural Development Committee – Thursday at 1:30 p.m., Juvenile Justice Committee – Thursday at 2:00 p.m., Public Safety Committee (Agenda Meeting) – Thursday at 3:00 p.m., and Appropriations Committee – Date/time to be determined (anticipated next week). The President added that Mr. Cothran also planned a committee meeting Thursday, with time to be established, and encouraged coordination due to the tight schedule.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President G. Young thanked Commissioners and staff for cooperation during recent procedural/operational changes, encouraged committee chairs to think creatively about efficiency and service delivery, and stated openness to improvements that produce better outcomes for constituents.

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 the following items be englob'd and moved to Thursday's Regular Session agenda for consideration:*

- *Ordinance No. 6608 of 2026, an ordinance providing amendments to the Caddo Parish Fee Schedule, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 12 of 2026, a resolution supporting and requesting a U.S. postage stamp be named in honor of the late Col. Steven dePyssler, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 13 of 2026, a resolution approving the holding of an election in*

Caddo Parish Fire District No. 1, State of Louisiana, on Saturday, June 27, 2026, to authorize the renewal of a special tax therein, and otherwise providing with respect thereto

- *Resolution No. 14 of 2026, a resolution approving the holding of an election in Caddo Parish Fire District No. 4, State of Louisiana, on Saturday, June 27, 2026, to authorize the renewal of a service charge and the continuation of a special tax therein*
- *Resolution No. 15 of 2026, a resolution urging the Louisiana Legislature to enact stiffer penalties surrounding the provision and possession of e-cigarettes and vaping products, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition Shreveport Sun*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition 318 Forum*
- *Special Resolution Darryl Roberson*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition Caddo's Bombers Team 8U State Championship*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition Bershan Shaw*
- *Special Resolution of Remembrance Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr.*

At this time, Mr. J. Young's motion carried unanimously with all Commission members present.

COMMUNIQUES & COMMITTEE REPORTS

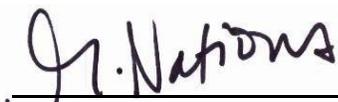
- Mrs. Gage-Watts wished everyone a safe and happy Mardi Gras/Fat Tuesday.
- Mr. Thomas shared Mardi Gras well-wishes, noted that North Louisiana does not always receive equal attention for its Mardi Gras traditions, and encouraged community unity and safety.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

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

Good evening, Commissioners. Jon Glover, 9100 Walker Road, Apartment 217, Shreveport, Louisiana, zip code 71118. I just love the engloboing of legislation, especially legislation that I don't have the insight as to what is going on. Now, I did hear when you all brought the Ordinance 6608 of 2026 to the floor, you said this was done back in 2025, the scheduling of fees or fee scheduling changes. Well, I probably wasn't at that meeting or accessed that meeting. Can someone share with me that specific date that this information was introduced? You also had a piece of legislation that was authored by my commissioner, but it had no information with regards to what is already on the books as it relates to the legislation, because you're asking for stiffer penalties. So, what are those penalties? Because, again, there was nothing attached that I could see to see exactly what you're speaking to. Now, I understand the significance of us trying to help our young folk, even older folk, avoid some of these issues with regards to e-cigarettes and vaping products, but when you bring such a piece of legislation to the floor, please share with me, a citizen, what it is that you're asking for specifically with the stiffer penalties. Again, I want to reiterate, it is so important for me to understand the legislations that you all present to me, as a citizen, and when I sit in the audience and I don't hear anything being shared with me, then it concerns me what it is and why it is that these are not being shared. And I do understand the taxes and things, I looked that up myself, but at the end of the day we just need clearer communication where I can understand what you're presenting. Thank you.

There was no Consent Agenda and no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the Commission adjourned at 5:29 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk