

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S  
JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THE 19<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2026

The Caddo Parish Juvenile Justice Committee met in legal session on the above date at 2:00, p.m., in the Government Plaza Chambers, with the following members present constituting a quorum: Commissioners Cothran, Jones, G. Young, J. Young (4). ABSENT: Commissioner Gage-Watts (1). Commissioners Grace Anne Blake and Ken Epperson were also present.

The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were given during the previous committee meeting. There were no Agenda Additions nor Citizens Comments, so the Committee moved onto New Business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- *Update from Director of Caddo Juvenile Services, Andrew Randall, regarding Juvenile Prevention & Ancillary Services*

Commissioner John Paul Young introduced the committee and explained that he believes the best way to reduce the long-term crime rate is to help by children roughly 4 to 14 years old more safe things to do and more guidance. He asked the three organizations invited to the committee to speak for 10 minutes or less about the services they provide.

The director of Caddo Juvenile Services, Andrew Randall, came before the committee. He explained that, while their primary service occurs once juveniles have already entered the system, Juvenile Services has partnered with various entities to support preventive measures. He said in 2025, the juvenile detention center had 422 total admissions, 132 of which were female and 290 of which were male. The top 5 reasons for admission were simple burglary, illegal possession of a handgun, domestic abuse battery, theft of a motor vehicle, and juvenile runaways. Mr. J. Young for clarification asked if a juvenile who commits an "adult crime", such as murder, goes to the juvenile detention center. Mr. Randall explained that once a juvenile is arrested, the district attorney's office makes the charging decision, and juveniles charged as adults are transferred to Caddo Correctional Center and follow the process of the adult system. Mr. Randall explained that they view juvenile justice as rehabilitative and highlighted some of the various therapeutic programming they offer. He said that this year they are expanding their partnerships, such as their partnership with LSUS to expose the children to STEM projects. They also have developed a residents leadership council to place the children in leadership positions among each other to learn leadership skills. He explained that they are striving to expand the vocational rehabilitative opportunities for children under their care. He extended an invitation to any of the commissioners and opened for questions.

Commissioner Greg Young for clarification asked if juveniles are only charged as adults for capital charges. Mr. Randall explained that the charges are generally along the lines of second-degree murder, or sometimes armed robberies or sexual offenses. Mr. Young asked at what age juveniles may be charged as adults. Mr. Randall said that typically the earliest he has seen is 15 years old.

Commissioner Ron Cothran asked if a parent can seek assistance or guidance from Juvenile Services prior to their child is charged. Mr. Randall explained that their community service program has been useful as a preventative measure. He also mentioned that they can point parents and children to organizations providing mentoring work. Mr. Cothran asked if parents could call Juvenile Services for information about various programs. Mr. Randall explained that their direct programming involves children currently under their care, but Juvenile Services is able to be a resource for parents and children seeking guidance.

Commissioner Grace Anne Blake asked Mr. Randall if there were any programs such as a 12-step program to help juveniles with drug problems. Mr. Randall explained that they have a drug court program. He also said they have a mental health component and family preservation court, which deals

with the adults who may be managing addiction. Mrs. Blake explained that the district attorney's office recently released information that there was an upward trend in crimes by females. She asked Mr. Randall if they observed an uptick in female admissions in the juvenile system. Mr. Randall explained that while total admissions were down, the percentage of admissions who were female had increased.

Mr. J. Young thanked Mr. Randall for his presentation and invited the next speaker to come before the committee.

- *Update on the Children and Youth Planning Board*

Buck Magee, chair of the Joint Council on Children's Health, came before the committee. Mr. Magee said that in Shreveport, four zip codes fall below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile of median household income in Louisiana. He said 38% of children under five years old are living in poverty, which is more than double the national average. He said that fewer than 25% of incoming kindergarten students demonstrate minimum readiness skills, and more than 50% of 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students report serious symptoms of depression. He explained that when the children struggle, the systems feel it and the cost of inaction compounds over time. He explained that LSU Health Shreveport approached leaders in Caddo Parish with a proposal to develop an intergovernmental strategic plan to align agencies and resources to address the causes of these issues. He explained that their organization is in what they call the discovery period, where they are gathering information and researching findings from similar communities. They are gaining perspectives from the youth as well as parents. He said they are designing a community-wide parent survey to assess concerns about health and development, but the surveys alone are not enough. He explained their organization is requesting to host parent and caregiver focus groups in every commission district to ensure equitable representation. He said after their discovery period has concluded, they will develop a strategic plan which will identify primary goals and establish clear objectives, timelines, resources, and measurable outcomes. He explained that the Joint Council on Children's Health is ready to assist and collaborate with the Children Youth Planning Board to build a unified effort.

Mr. J. Young thanked Mr. Magee for his presentation and explained that he sees a lot of overlap in what his organization aims to do and Shreveport Citizens United, so he's glad that they get to hear each other's presentations.

Mr. G. Young said that he appreciates the authoritative nature of Mr. Magee's presentation and encouraged him to continue on his course. Mr. Magee said that this is a shared effort and introduced the members of the Joint Council on Children's Health. He explained that collectively, the Council has probably several hundred years of experience in youth programs. He said they are looking forward to the joint effort of developing a strategic plan.

Commissioner Steffon Jones noted that the Joint Council on Children's Health shares many functions with what the Children and Youth Planning Board should be doing. Mr. J. Young asked Administrator Erica Bryant if there is any funding given to the Children and Youth Planning Board. Mrs. Bryant said there is no funding as of now but that is something the Commission may consider. She also explained that administration would like to see if they can work with the Joint Council to add three members recommended by the Commission so that they can fulfill their statutory requirement to have a 12-member youth planning board. Mr. J. Young asked if the board required people from specific fields to serve. Assistant Administrator Clay Walker answered that there are specific disciplines required, giving early childhood education and prosecution and defense. He said that the required disciplines are represented in the 9 members of the Joint Council on Children's Health, and that administration has 3 names to recommend to fill out the board. Mr. Jones said that collaborating with the Joint Council would be beneficial. Mr. J. Young asked Mr. Magee if the members of the Joint Council would be willing to serve as the Children and Youth Planning Board. Mr. Magee answered that they had been exploring the idea and that this meeting would be a first step in seeing if it would be a good fit. He explained that they do not want to politicize or bureaucratize this process. He said they believe they would be a good fit, but want to maintain their autonomy. Mr. J. Young asked Mrs. Bryant if the Children and Youth Planning Board would have a level of autonomy in line with what Mr. Magee desires. She explained that in the past the board did not meet publicly, but now they would be required to meet in public. Mr. J. Young asked if Mr. Magee would be

opposed to that stipulation. Mr. Magee said that they understand that stipulation and that they need to define the role of board members and know what is require of board members. He said that they have identified one operational Children and Youth Planning Board in Calcasieu Parish and have identified a person who could help them in developing the board.

Mr. Cothran said that he would like to make a motion, but it would not appropriate at this time unless legal and administration have already done the requisite research. Mrs. Bryant answered that she believes it is possible, and if the committee makes a recommendation, then administration will make sure that the current makeup of the Joint Council is supportive of the idea of assuming the role of the Children and Youth Planning Board. She said if they get a recommendation from this committee, then they will determine if this is feasible, and bring it to the Commission in March.

It was **moved by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *recommending that administration move forward with their discussions with the Joint Council on Children's Health and report back to this committee at its next meeting.*

Mr. G. Young said that there seems to be a concern about the synergy between the Commission and the Joint Council on Children's Health, and that they are not certain that there will be a proper fit. He said that they should be sure that there will be proper alignment. Mr. J. Young explained that this vote would be contingent upon the Joint Council's acceptance after further discussions. Mrs. Bryant affirmed that and explained that this recommendation is for administration to proceed with researching this endeavor and bringing their findings to the Commission before any final decisions are made. Mr. Magee said that the Joint Council was formed by joint efforts of the Sheriff's Office, the Commission, the District Attorney, the Mayor's office, and the school board. Mr. J. Young said that they would function independently as far as he knows. Mr. Cothran said that he had an opportunity to sit in on a meeting of the Joint Council, and he thinks they fit into what the Commission has been attempting to do for the last three years.

At this time, Mr. Jones' motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Gage-Watts being absent.

- *Presentation from Shreveport Citizens United*

Dr. Jerome Cox and Michael Riordan came before the committee representing Shreveport Citizens United. Dr. Cox expressed gratitude to the Commission for its support. He highlighted the support of various local entities, such as the chief of police and the city marshal. He explained that their organization works to connect hundreds of families with organizations that provide various resources. He mentioned that they have been in collaboration with the Committee of 100 to bring in resources regarding job fairs and recruitment. He also mentioned that at their last rally they gave out nearly 200 bags of food, and that they have probably helped over 5,000 members of the community.

Mr. Riordan explained that their organization's initial motivation was to find solutions to reduce crime in Caddo Parish. He said that they are made up of five CEOs of diverse backgrounds who are unified in that they believe in good strategy solving problems. He mentioned that they have been working closely with Volunteers for Youth Justice, who are pre-screening students for a no cost to the student vocational training program they are organizing with North Louisiana Technical Community College. He mentioned that in the United States, for every five boomers that retire from trades there are only two people who enter them. He explained that most trades do not require a high school diploma. He said they hope for their program to start by April and that they are starting with 17 to 19 year olds. He explained that the program is a two-year commitment with the first 8 months being in classrooms, with the next 16 months continuing their education while being paid. He said they have acquired some blighted houses which they will use to allow the students to apply the skills they are learning.

Mr. J. Young said that they were out of time for questions and thanked the presenters for their work and for providing information. He said they will have more time dedicated to this organization when they next come before the committee.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned  
at 3:06, p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. McGee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Clayton McGee  
Administrative Specialist