

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 19TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2026

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Regular Session, on the above date, at 3:30 p.m., in the Government Chambers, with Mr. G. Young, 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).

The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were given during previous committee meetings. There were no Agenda Additions, Citizens Comments, nor Visitors.

ADOPT REGULAR SESSION MINUTES

It was **moved by Mr. J. Young**, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *that Regular Session Minutes from February 5, 2026 be adopted.* Motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Jones being absent.

SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. J. Young, *that the following Special Resolutions be englobed and adopted:*

- *Special Resolution of Recognition Shreveport Sun*

The following letter was read aloud:

*My name is Rev. Dr. Arlester Brown. I was born in Homer, Louisiana on April 1, 1924. Today, I am 101 years young! I am writing this letter to share my sadness and concerns of the cancellation of the Shreveport Sun Publication. I am one of founders (legacy) of the Caddo Parish Teachers Credit Union and I was also a proud supporter of the development of the Shreveport Sun. I thank God that I have lived to see the great works that has excelled and has been nourished by both establishments. Over the years, I have been a receiver of the Shreveport Sun. In fact, the Shreveport Sun was my morning, afternoon and evening motivator. The Sun supported the legacy of sound education in the community, family connection, daily black history, public affairs relationships and amongst these great "Unity" in the community. It brought on a balance of economic realms and political reviews. The Shreveport Sun served as the voice of black leaders, managers, black businesses, adults, children, churches, horizons of new jobs and elders (seniors) who were always willing to share advice and wisdom throughout the community. It served as a great resource for the young generations to understand the struggles, motivation and lifestyle of African American in Shreveport. It weighed in as a solid ground to equal opportunity amongst many. It allowed the community to buy clothes, food, cars, homes, businesses (such as barber shops, restaurants, car washes, dry cleaners, etc.) The Sun laid the ground of a solid foundation in keeping Caddo Parish and surrounding parishes alive by nourishing the community with true facts. The Sun supported and rooted proud community advocates like my deceased and beloved brother in-law, Hon. Joe Shyne, Sr. I have read many of the Sun's weekly publications and to this day I have a heavy heart to see and hear of the cancellation of the SUN to the community. I agree with Commissioner Ken Epperson's quote from Dr. Carter G. Woodson (Father in the Flight for Civil Right) – "When you control a man's thinking, you do not have to worry about his action". The SUN brought us all a long way! How can we bond together and bring back what we lost – the legacy of our history? My quote: "I am blessed to be a blessing!"
Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Dr. Arlester Brown*

Mr. Willie Burton, III addressed the Commission and spoke to the historical importance of The Shreveport Sun to African Americans in Shreveport and throughout Northwest Louisiana. He described the era in which the newspaper was founded, stating that Black stories were frequently ignored or misrepresented by mainstream newspapers, and emphasized the need for the Black community to tell its own story. He referenced earlier Black newspapers in Shreveport, the challenges they faced, and the significance of the founding of The Shreveport Sun in 1920. He provided historical context about the founder's education and professional background and stated the paper served as a lifeline, a recordkeeper, and an advocate—often at personal risk. He described the newspaper's role in documenting milestones and inequities, and its resilience following a fire that destroyed the building in 1939, noting it missed only one issue and continued publication. He emphasized that the newspaper preserved people, achievements, and history that might otherwise have been lost and connected the paper's archival value to community memory and legacy. He concluded by underscoring the importance of recorded history and thanked the Commission.

Senator Sam Jenkins thanked the Commission for recognizing the newspaper during Black History Month and thanked Commissioner Epperson for leading the effort and the Commission for unanimous support. The speaker referenced a book brought to the meeting (Black History of Shreveport

as stated) and explained that much of the information in such works relied on sources like The Shreveport Sun. The speaker recognized the importance of long-term publication and multi-generational family stewardship and highlighted contributions such as photography credited to Benny Doty. The speaker stated that publications like The Shreveport Sun serve as public records and emphasized that the entire community benefits when all cultures and histories are embraced.

Mr. Doty thanked the Commission for the recognition and described The Shreveport Sun as more than a newspaper—describing it as a family to those who worked there. He shared personal remarks about encouragement received from leadership during his early life and education, and expressed appreciation for the staff environment and the newspaper’s impact across generations.

Mr. Craig Lee provided his name and address for the record and described the newspaper as a “beacon” for the city and parish, noting its longstanding coverage of civic and political developments and its value as a historical archive. He encouraged continued celebration of the publication’s legacy, expressed hope for its continuation depending on the family’s decision, and emphasized the importance of telling the community’s own story.

Ms. Kay Waller provided remarks on behalf of the Shreveport Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., thanked Commissioner Epperson for placing the recognition on the agenda, and stated that the newspaper consistently supported and publicized community service efforts. She thanked the Commission for honoring the publication in observance of Black History Month.

- *Special Resolution of Recognition 318 Forum*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition Darryl Roberson*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition Caddo Bomber’s Team State Championship*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition Bershan Shaw*
- *Special Resolution of Remembrance Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr.*

SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION SHREVEPORT SUN

WHEREAS, Black History Month provides an opportunity to reflect upon, honor, and celebrate the enduring contributions of African Americans whose leadership, resilience, and vision have helped shape the social, cultural, and civic fabric of our communities; and

WHEREAS, **The Shreveport Sun** has stood for more than a century as a powerful voice for truth, justice, and equity in Northwest Louisiana, documenting the lived experiences, achievements, and challenges of the African-American community; and

WHEREAS, the first edition of The Shreveport Sun was published on **November 6, 1920**, by **Melvin Lee Collins Sr.**, a former educator in Caddo Parish, during a period marked by deep racial inequality and systemic injustice, with the express purpose of giving voice to the voiceless by informing, educating, and motivating readers to rise above those challenges; and

WHEREAS, each weekly edition of The Shreveport Sun was produced with a commitment to factual reporting and thoughtful editorial commentary on governmental actions, socio-economic conditions, and cultural achievements impacting Shreveport and the broader Northwest Louisiana community; and

WHEREAS, The Shreveport Sun operated in accordance with the **Credo of the Black Press**, affirming the belief that America can best lead the world toward justice when full human and legal rights are accorded to every person regardless of race, color, or creed, and striving to uplift all people while hating no one; and

WHEREAS, The Shreveport Sun became an active member of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, as well as the Louisiana Press Association and the Louisiana Black Publishers Association, further solidifying its role as a respected and influential institution within the Black press and the broader journalistic community; and

WHEREAS, over its more than **104 years of publication**, The Shreveport Sun operated under the leadership of **Melvin Lee Collins Jr.** and **Sonya Collins-Landry**, supported by numerous dedicated employees and contributors who worked tirelessly to uphold the newspaper’s journalistic standards and legacy, including longtime staff members whose service and commitment left an indelible mark on the publication; and

WHEREAS, the final print edition of The Shreveport Sun was dated **Thursday, June 27, 2025**, marking the conclusion of an extraordinary chapter in local and national Black journalism; and

WHEREAS, the enduring legacy of The Shreveport Sun would not have been possible without the unwavering support of the community—its subscribers, advertisers, readers, and supporters—

whose trust and engagement sustained the publication for generations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the **Caddo Parish Commission** does hereby recognize and honor the historic legacy and lasting contributions of **The Shreveport Sun**, particularly during **Black History Month**, as a pillar of truth, advocacy, and community empowerment in Caddo Parish and Northwest Louisiana; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission expresses its deepest appreciation to the Collins family, the newspaper's leadership, staff, contributors, and supporters for their more than a century of service to journalism, civil discourse, and the African-American community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission encourages present and future generations to remember, study, and honor the legacy of The Shreveport Sun as a testament to the power of the Black press and the enduring pursuit of justice, dignity, and equality.

SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION 318 FORUM

WHEREAS, for more than forty-three years, **318 Forum** has served as a trusted and influential local weekly news magazine in the Shreveport-Bossier City community, providing thoughtful journalism, community storytelling, and positive inspiration throughout North Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, founded in 1988, 318 Forum grew to become the publication with the largest print circulation in North Louisiana, earning a sterling reputation for excellence, integrity, and a consistent focus on uplifting the people, places, and possibilities of our region; and

WHEREAS, under the visionary leadership of its publisher, **Jay Covington**, 318 Forum chronicled the voices and achievements of countless individuals and organizations, while contributing meaningfully to city and state initiatives, raising funds for area nonprofits, and sponsoring numerous community efforts; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Covington began his career in the newspaper and magazine industry at the age of nineteen in the graphics department of UpState Newsweekly, quickly rising to become the youngest production manager in the United States, before later founding Forum Magazine and dedicating his life's work to local journalism and community engagement; and

WHEREAS, throughout its history, 318 Forum earned numerous honors and awards, reflecting its editorial quality, community impact, and enduring relevance in a rapidly changing media landscape; and

WHEREAS, upon the publication of its final issue, Mr. Covington shared that it has been "one of the greatest privileges of my life to share the voices and inspiration of the people of our community," emphasizing that the conclusion of the magazine represents "a celebration, not an ending," and expressing deep gratitude to the staff, contributors, advertisers, and readers who made its success possible; and

WHEREAS, the conclusion of 318 Forum marks the end of an era in local journalism, leaving behind a legacy defined by positivity, professionalism, and an unwavering commitment to telling the stories that matter most to the people of North Louisiana;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the **Caddo Parish Commission** does hereby honor and recognize the extraordinary legacy of **318 Forum Magazine** for its more than four decades of service to the Shreveport-Bossier City community and the greater Caddo Parish area; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission commends **Jay Covington** for his visionary leadership, dedication to excellence, and lifelong commitment to community-centered journalism; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission extends its sincere appreciation to the staff, contributors, advertisers, and supporters of 318 Forum whose collective efforts shaped a publication that informed, inspired, and uplifted generations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission expresses its best wishes to Mr. Covington as he begins a well-earned new chapter, and encourages the community to remember 318 Forum fondly as a publication that truly celebrated the heart and soul of North Louisiana.

SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION DARRYL ROBERSON

There was no document attached to the agenda nor any document in the meeting file folder regarding this Special Resolution of Recognition.

SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION CADDO BOMBER'S TEAM STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

WHEREAS, youth athletics play a vital role in shaping character, discipline, teamwork, and

leadership among young people, while strengthening families and communities; and

WHEREAS, the **Shreveport Bombers 8U Football Team** has distinguished itself as one of the premier youth football programs in the State of Louisiana through exceptional performance, consistency, and sportsmanship; and

WHEREAS, during the 2023, 2024, and 2025 seasons, the Shreveport Bombers 8U Football Team captured **three consecutive championship titles**, establishing themselves as a dominant force in Louisiana youth football; and

WHEREAS, over this three-year period, the team suffered only **one regular-season loss**, demonstrating remarkable discipline, preparation, and competitive excellence; and

WHEREAS, across **21 games** over the last three seasons, the Bombers averaged **24 points per game**, generated more than **4,600 yards of total offense**, and showcased a powerful rushing attack accounting for nearly **4,000 yards**, reflecting superior coaching, teamwork, and execution; and

WHEREAS, on **December 7, 2025**, the Shreveport Bombers 8U Football Team traveled to St. Francisville, Louisiana, where they earned a **historic victory** by winning the **First Sophomore Youth State Championship**, marking the first such championship ever won by a North Louisiana team; and

WHEREAS, this extraordinary accomplishment reflects not only the athletic talent of the players, but also the unwavering commitment and support of their coaches, families, and volunteers, whose dedication continues to foster excellence, confidence, and growth among these young athletes; and

WHEREAS, the success of the Shreveport Bombers 8U Football Team serves as a source of pride and inspiration for Caddo Parish and exemplifies the positive impact of youth sports programs rooted in mentorship, discipline, and community support;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the **Caddo Parish Commission** does hereby recognize and commend the **Shreveport Bombers 8U Football Team** for their three consecutive championship seasons and their historic State Championship achievement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission applauds the players for their hard work, perseverance, and teamwork, and extends sincere appreciation to the coaches, families, and volunteers whose guidance and support made these accomplishments possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission congratulates the Shreveport Bombers 8U Football Team on their outstanding success and offers best wishes for continued excellence both on and off the field.

SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION BERSHAN SHAW

WHEREAS, the Caddo Parish Commission recognizes the importance of leaders who inspire individuals and organizations to rise above adversity, embrace purpose, and foster resilience, wellness, and excellence; and

WHEREAS, **Bershan Shaw**, widely known as “The Warrior Coach,” is a globally respected motivational speaker, business and executive coach, author, mental health advocate, and CEO and technology founder whose life story and professional work have empowered millions; and

WHEREAS, as a two-time breast cancer survivor who was once given just three months to live, Bershan Shaw defied extraordinary odds, transforming personal adversity into a lifelong mission to uplift, heal, and empower others; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Shaw is the founder of Warrior Training International, through which she has partnered with Fortune 100 and Fortune 500 companies to transform leadership cultures, strengthen communication, and build resilient, high-performing organizations through executive coaching and mindset development; and

WHEREAS, in response to the growing mental health crisis, Ms. Shaw created URAWarrior, a 24/7 AI-powered wellness platform backed by science and licensed therapists, designed to make mental wellness accessible, engaging, and community-driven, ensuring individuals never feel alone in their journey toward emotional growth and self-improvement; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Shaw’s work has been recognized with numerous honors, including the Woman Whole Life Achievement Award, the Business & Leadership of Excellence Award from the Women Economic Forum, and a Lifetime Achievement Award for National and Community Service from the President of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Bershan Shaw has inspired audiences across the globe, including at Chase, Amazon, Merrill Lynch, NYU, Booz Allen, the World Economic Forum, Forbes, the U.S. Senate, and the National Urban League, and has been featured in major media outlets including NBC, ABC, CBS, FOX, HuffPost, and Yahoo Finance; and

WHEREAS, Bershaw Shaw will serve as the featured speaker at the **I AM... Conference: "The Year of Elevation"**, hosted by Dr. Rhonda Marie, on **March 7, 2026**, at the **Hilton Garden Inn**, bringing together leaders, entrepreneurs, and community members for a powerful experience centered on growth, purpose, and elevation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the **Caddo Parish Commission** does hereby recognize and honor **Bershaw Shaw** for her extraordinary courage, visionary leadership, and unwavering commitment to empowering individuals and organizations to rise, lead, and live unstoppable lives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission commends Ms. Shaw for her impactful work in mental health advocacy, leadership development, and holistic wellness, and for using her voice and platform to heal, inspire, and connect people across the world; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission extends its sincere appreciation to Dr. Rhonda Marie and all partners involved in hosting the I AM... Conference, and offers best wishes for a successful and transformative event.

SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF REMEMBRANCE REV. JESSE JACKSON, SR.

WHEREAS, the struggle for civil rights, social justice, and equal access to democracy has been shaped by courageous leaders whose moral clarity and tireless advocacy transformed the course of American history; and

WHEREAS, **Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.** stands among the most influential civil rights leaders of the modern era, dedicating his life to the pursuit of equality, voting rights, economic justice, and human dignity for all people; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Jackson's legacy includes not only national and global leadership, but also meaningful and historic ties to the State of Louisiana and to Caddo Parish through his direct engagement in grassroots civil rights efforts; and

WHEREAS, in **1982**, Reverend Jackson participated in the historic **voter registration march from Shreveport to Baton Rouge**, a powerful demonstration calling attention to voter suppression and the urgent need for expanded access to the democratic process for African Americans and marginalized communities; and

WHEREAS, through his leadership with **Operation PUSH**, Reverend Jackson worked to mobilize voters, empower communities, and hold institutions accountable, reinforcing the principle that civic participation is fundamental to justice and freedom; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Jackson maintained professional relationships with Louisiana media and civic leaders, including a notable friendship with Shreveport Journal editor **Stan Tiner**, reflecting his understanding of the critical role local journalism plays in shaping public awareness and civic engagement; and

WHEREAS, reports by the **Orlando Sentinel** documented Reverend Jackson's continued engagement with Louisiana affairs, including a 1987 outreach to coordinate media coverage surrounding a meeting with then-Governor **Edwin Edwards**, further underscoring his sustained involvement in the state's political and civil rights landscape; and

WHEREAS, the legacy of Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr. is one of moral courage, prophetic leadership, and unwavering commitment to justice—an enduring reminder that progress is achieved through persistence, sacrifice, and collective action;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the **Caddo Parish Commission** does hereby remember, reflect upon, and honor the enduring civil rights legacy of **Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.**, and his meaningful contributions to the advancement of voting rights and social justice in Louisiana and throughout the nation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission recognizes Reverend Jackson's historic participation in the 1982 voter registration march originating in Shreveport as a defining moment in the Parish's civil rights history; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Caddo Parish Commission encourages present and future generations to study, honor, and carry forward the principles embodied in Reverend Jackson's life and work—justice, equality, civic engagement, and respect for human dignity.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

Administrator Bryant stated the administration appreciated The Shreveport Sun as a partner on parish initiatives. She also referenced an email announcement (noting potential delivery issues), reported work underway regarding persistent litter on Jefferson Paige Road, and stated coordination with

a Commissioner regarding additional information.

COMMUNIQUES & COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Mr. Epperson requested Mr. Kevin Samuels come forward to provide information regarding an incident in which a dog was mauled and killed by another dog and stated the purpose was to clarify the public process and correct misunderstandings. Mr. Samuels reported that the investigation remained underway but explained the ordinance requirements regarding animal containment. He stated that tethering without proper containment was not compliant and creates risks (including wildlife and dogs at large). In the reported incident, the dog was tethered without proper containment and was attacked by a dog at large; he described this as involving violations by multiple parties and emphasized education and compliance. Mr. Epperson asked follow-up questions to confirm that tethering must be accompanied by proper containment and that tethering without containment violates the ordinance. Mr. Samuels confirmed the requirement and noted that civil remedies may be available depending on ownership of the attacking animal.

Mr. Epperson raised a concern regarding an elderly constituent (as described: 80 years old, on dialysis, severe respiratory problems, living alone) who received an electric bill totaling \$600.33. He read portions of the bill breakdown into the record and expressed concern over the complexity and affordability. Mr. Epperson requested that the Commission consider inviting utility representatives to explain bill components, available programs, and consumer options—especially for senior citizens and vulnerable residents. Mr. Epperson stated he intended to address the issue through boards/committees related to social services and emergency assistance. He additionally acknowledged SWEPCO for aggressive tree trimming efforts in the district following previous advocacy, reporting that the trimming made a significant difference and that the district did not experience complaints during the ice storm. He described district locations covered during the field review with SWEPCO representatives and stated he had expressed appreciation and encouragement for continued maintenance.

The President stated that public education about utility assistance programs would be helpful, including parameters and levels of assistance available to customers in need. The President also noted prior discussions with utility representatives about outages and stated a recurring challenge involved vegetation on private property affecting power lines. The President discussed the practical difficulty of mandating private tree trimming due to cost and enforcement challenges and noted that burying lines is not economically feasible under current conditions. The President concluded that additional information from utilities regarding programs for vulnerable residents would be beneficial and thanked Mr. Epperson for bringing focus to the issue.

- Mr. Cothran reported attending a meeting regarding Job Corps and stated funding had been secured through 2026 and most of 2027, with written confirmation to follow for public communication. He also referenced a Public Safety/Juvenile Justice-related committee meeting addressing program elements to be discussed further at the next meeting and referenced a ribbon cutting event in the Queensborough area. Mr. Cothran echoed the need to distribute program information in writing for residents without computer access, especially elders.

- Mrs. Gage-Watts announced an Economic Development Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 26, 2026, at 12:00 noon.

- Mrs. Blake thanked Animal Services and staff for their work, including during the storm, and shared a personal adoption experience, noting the importance of proper education about animal behavior. She supported Commissioner Epperson's request for utility bill education and recommended also inviting the water department to provide similar guidance due to prior water bill spike issues and credits issued after investigation.

- Mr. Thomas announced the Film Industry Meetup hosted by the Film and Entertainment Commission scheduled February 21, 2026, 6:00–9:00 p.m. at Robinson Film Center, and referenced parish interest in strengthening the film community. The Commissioner also announced an HBCU College Fair scheduled Thursday, February 26, 2026, 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. at Mount Canaan Baptist Church, 1864 Austin Street, and referenced additional Black History Month events (including State of Black Shreveport activities, with locations to be confirmed).

- Mr. Atkins offered observations about utility bills, stating that bills may be understood in broad categories, including depreciation/return of capital, return on capital set by the Public Service Commission, operations and maintenance, fuel pass-through charges, and storm riders that spread storm recovery and grid-hardening costs over time.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President raised scheduling concerns due to multiple Commissioners attending the Louisiana Police Jury Association annual meeting scheduled March 4–6, 2026 (Wednesday–Friday) and noted the Commission's regularly scheduled meeting day would fall on Thursday, March 5, 2026. The Clerk reported approximately 7–8 Commissioners were registered to attend and that a quorum was unlikely. The Clerk outlined options, including carrying items to a special session or directing items to the next regular meeting. The President discussed possible alternatives, including holding two meetings in the same week if permissible and exploring whether limited items (such as resolutions) could be addressed earlier in the week. Administration noted that resolutions could potentially be taken up on an earlier date, but ordinances

would be subject to layover requirements. The President indicated a decision would be made and communicated to the Commission. Mr. Lazarus noted the Charter requires at least one meeting per month and that a meeting could not be skipped entirely. The President thanked Commissioners for input and stated further communication would follow once a final decision was reached.

There were no Public Hearings on Zoning Ordinances & Cases, Public Hearing on Ordinances, Zoning Ordinances for final passage, Ordinances for final passage, nor any Zoning Ordinances for introduction by title.

ORDINANCES (for introduction by title)

- *Ordinance No. 6608 of 2026, an ordinance providing amendments to the Caddo Parish Fee Schedule, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

**WORK SESSION MINUTES
RESOLUTIONS**

It was **moved by Mr. J. Young**, seconded by Mr. Thomas, *that the following items be englobed and adopted:*

- *Work Session Minutes from February 17, 2026*
- *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*
- *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*

Mr. Epperson offered remarks recognizing Col. Steven Depict (as stated in the transcript) and summarized the individual's service record and community contributions, including extensive volunteer service to veterans, event leadership, advocacy efforts, and personal financial support for veterans-related initiatives.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 12 OF 2026

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING AND REQUESTING A U.S. POSTAGE STAMP BE NAMED IN HONOR OF THE LATE COLONEL STEVEN DEPYSSLER, AND OTHERWISE PROVIDING WITH RESPECT THERETO.

WHEREAS, Colonel Steven dePyssler served in uniform for 38 years and as an unpaid volunteer for another 41 years; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Steven dePyssler is believed to be the only known American to have served in World War II, the Korean War, the French Indo-China War, the Bay of Pigs Invasion and the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Caddo Parish Commission to see that Colonel dePyssler receives proper acknowledgement in American History, for the service he provided to Caddo Parish, the State of Louisiana and the United States of America.

WHEREAS, the U.S. Postal Service has established a Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee to allow submission of persons and subjects to be honored by the U.S. Postal Service; and

WHEREAS, Colonel de Pyssler meets the selection criteria as a subject for postage stamp, particularly as a person that had significant impact on American history, culture or environment, and as someone who made extraordinary and enduring contributions to American society.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Caddo Parish Commission, in due, legal and regular session convened, that the Caddo Parish Commission does hereby submit Colonel Steven dePyssler for consideration as the subject of a U.S. Postal Stamp.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this item shall be sent to both The U.S. Postal Service and the members of the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee (CSAC).

BE IT RUTHER RESOLVED that if any provision or item of this resolution or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items, or applications of this resolution which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications and to this end the provisions of this resolution are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall take effect immediately.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

RESOLUTION NO. 13 OF 2026

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

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.

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Caddo Parish Fire District No. 1, State of Louisiana (the "Governing Authority"), acting as the governing authority of Caddo Parish Fire District No. 1, State of Louisiana (the "District"), adopted a resolution on February 10, 2026, calling a special election in the District on Saturday, June 27, 2026, to authorize the renewal of a special tax therein; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Authority of the District has requested that the Caddo Parish Commission, acting as the governing authority of the Parish of Caddo, State of Louisiana, give its consent and authority for the District to hold the aforesaid election, and in the event that the election carries to continue to levy and collect the special tax provided for therein; and

WHEREAS, as required by Article VI, Section 15 of the Constitution of the State of Louisiana of 1974, it is now the desire of the Caddo Parish Commission to approve the holding of said election and in the event that the election carries, to authorize the District to continue to levy and collect the special tax provided for therein;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Caddo Parish Commission, acting as the governing authority of said Parish, that:

SECTION 1. In compliance with the provisions of Article VI, Section 15 of the Constitution of the State of Louisiana of 1974, and in accordance with the request of the Board of Commissioners of Caddo Parish Fire District No. 1, State of Louisiana, the Caddo Parish Commission hereby approves the holding of an election in the District, on Saturday, June 27, 2026, at which election there will be submitted the following proposition, to-wit:

PROPOSITION (MILLAGE RENEWAL)

Shall Caddo Parish Fire District No. 1, State of Louisiana (the "District"), continue to levy a special tax of 14 mills (the "Tax") on all property subject to taxation in the District (an estimated \$2,370,500 reasonably expected at this time to be collected from the levy of the Tax for an entire year), for a period of 10 years, beginning with the year 2028 and ending with the year 2037, for the purpose of providing funds for purchasing fire trucks and other fire protection equipment, acquiring, constructing, improving, maintaining and operating fire protection facilities and equipment of the District, paying the cost of obtaining water for fire protection purposes, including charges for fire hydrant rentals and services, and for salaries of firemen, provided that a portion of the Tax proceeds is required to be contributed to state and statewide retirement systems as provided in R.S. 11:82?

SECTION 2. In the event the election carries, the Caddo Parish Commission does hereby further consent to and authorize the District to continue to levy and collect the special tax provided for therein.

This resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Jones, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, J. Young, and G. Young (11).

NAYS: None (0).

ABSENT: Gage-Watts (1).

And the resolution was declared adopted on this, the 19th day of February, 2026.

/s/ Jeff Everson
Clerk

/s/ Greg Young
President

RESOLUTION NO. 14 OF 2026

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE HOLDING OF AN ELECTION IN CADDO PARISH FIRE DISTRICT NUMBER FOUR, STATE OF LOUISIANA, ON SATURDAY, JUNE 27, 2026, TO AUTHORIZE THE RENEWAL OF A SERVICE CHARGE AND THE CONTINUATION OF A SPECIAL TAX THEREIN.

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Caddo Parish Fire District Number Four, State of Louisiana (the "Governing Authority"), acting as the governing authority of Caddo Parish Fire District Number Four, State of Louisiana (the "District"), adopted a resolution on February 18, 2026, calling a special election in the District on Saturday, June 27, 2026, to authorize the renewal of a service charge and the continuation of a special tax therein; and

WHEREAS, the governing authority of the District has requested that the Caddo Parish Commission, acting as the governing authority of the Parish of Caddo, State of Louisiana, give its consent and authority for the District to hold the aforesaid election, and in the event that the election carries to continue to levy and collect the service charge and to continue to levy and collect the special tax provided for therein; and

WHEREAS, as required by Article VI, Section 15 of the Constitution of the State of Louisiana of 1974, it is now the desire of the Caddo Parish Commission to approve the holding of said election and in the event that the election carries, to authorize the District to continue to levy and collect the service charge and to continue to levy and collect the special tax provided for therein;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Caddo Parish Commission, acting as the governing authority of said Parish, that:

SECTION 1. In compliance with the provisions of Article VI, Section 15 of the Constitution of the State of Louisiana of 1974, and in accordance with the request of the Board of Commissioners of Caddo Parish Fire District Number Four, State of Louisiana, the Caddo Parish Commission hereby approves the holding of an election in the District, on Saturday, June 27, 2026, at which election there will be submitted the following propositions, to-wit:

**PROPOSITION NO. 1 OF 2
(SERVICE CHARGE RENEWAL)**

Shall Caddo Parish Fire District Number Four, State of Louisiana (the "District"), levy and collect a service charge not to exceed \$150 per year on each residential and commercial structure in the District pursuant to La. R.S. 40:1502.15 (an estimated \$560,000 reasonably expected at this time to be collected from the levy of the tax for an entire year), for a period of 10 years, beginning with the year 2027 and ending with the year 2036, for the purposes of paying the costs either incurred or for contracting of any or all fire protection, emergency medical transportation, and all emergency services incidental thereto, including, acquiring, constructing, maintaining and operating fire protection facilities and equipment, emergency medical and rescue equipment, in and for the District, and paying the cost of fire hydrant rentals for fire protection purposes and salaries of firemen?

**PROPOSITION NO. 2 OF 2
(MILLAGE CONTINUATION)**

Shall Caddo Parish Fire District Number Four, State of Louisiana (the "District"), continue to levy a special tax of 10.07 mills (the "Tax") on all property subject to taxation in the District (an estimated \$975,800 reasonably expected at this time to be collected from the levy of the Tax for an entire year), for a period of 10 years, beginning with the year 2029 and ending with the year 2038, for the purpose of acquiring, constructing, improving, maintaining and/or operating fire protection facilities and equipment for the District and paying the cost of obtaining water for fire protection purposes, including charges for fire hydrant rentals and service, provided that a portion of the Tax proceeds is required to be contributed to state and statewide retirement systems as provided in R.S. 11:82, said millage to

represent a .07 mills increase (due to reappraisal) over the 10 mills tax authorized to be levied through the year 2028 pursuant to an election held on May 4, 2019?

SECTION 2. In the event the election carries, the Caddo Parish Commission does hereby further consent to and authorize the District to continue to levy and collect the service charge and to continue to levy and collect the special tax provided for therein.

This resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Jones, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, J. Young, and G. Young (11).

NAYS: None (0).

ABSENT: Gage-Watts (1).

And the resolution was declared adopted on this, the 19th day of February, 2026.

/s/ Jeff Everson
Clerk

/s/ Greg Young
President

RESOLUTION NO. 15 OF 2026

BY THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION:

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

WHEREAS, according to the American Lung Association, the inhalation of harmful chemicals found in e-cigarettes can cause irreversible lung damage and lung disease; and

WHEREAS, according to the American Lung Association, vaping is dangerous, highly addictive and harmful to a child's health and brain development.; and

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control, in the United States, youth use e-cigarettes, or vapes, more than any other tobacco product; and

WHEREAS, there is currently a lack of oversight regarding the online sales of e-cigarettes and vape products, and in many cases, proof of age/identification is not required; and

WHEREAS, the current fines/penalties surrounding e-cigarettes and vaping products in Louisiana do not appear to be enough of a deterrent to the distribution and use of these products.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Caddo Parish Commission in due, regular and legal session convened, that the Caddo Parish Commission does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Legislature to enact stiffer penalties surrounding the distribution/provision and possession of e-cigarettes and vaping products.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Caddo Parish delegation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Louisiana House of Representatives and Senate

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED if any provision or item of this resolution or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end, the provisions of this resolution are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall take effect immediately.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

There was no Old Business nor New Business.

COMMUNIQUES & REPORTS

- Mr. Jones thanked colleagues for supporting a resolution described as intended to protect children from inappropriate content and stated an interest in pursuing further action with state legislators.

- Mr. Epperson then raised concerns regarding juvenile justice, stating the Commission is addressing a \$4 million annual deficit for the juvenile detention center and urged that advocates also support efforts to reduce or eliminate the deficit, noting many cost drivers are state-mandated.

There were no Citizens Comments late arrivals. There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 5:09 p.m.


Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk


Gregory Young
President