

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 6TH DAY OF APRIL, 2026

The Caddo Parish Public Safety Committee met in legal session on the above date at 1:00 p.m., in the Government Plaza Chambers, with the following members present constituting a quorum: Commissioners Blake, Cothran, Epperson, and G. Young (4). ABSENT: Kracman (1).

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

- *Discuss Caddo Sheriff's Office proposal regarding proposed strategies for reducing costs and improving safety at Caddo Correctional Facility through proposed home incarceration program.*

Commissioner Ron Cothran gave the floor to Caddo Parish Sheriff Henry Whitehorn. Mr. Whitehorn introduced a proposed home incarceration and electronic monitoring pilot program. He explained that it is not simply a cost-saving measure. He said it is a modern program which allows for maintaining accountability, reducing overcrowding, and focusing detention resources on individuals who pose a genuine threat to public safety. The program would provide strict supervision and real-time electronic monitoring for misdemeanor nonviolent offenders. Mr. Whitehorn said the program would use technology and structured supervision to support rehabilitation and reduce taxpayers' financial burden while keeping the community safe. He said the program is not a shortcut or leniency. He explained that the pilot program would allow them to collect real data on cost savings, compliance rates, and public safety outcomes, so that the Parish can make informed decisions about long-term implementation. He said the initiative is not about being soft on crime. He mentioned that they started the year with 1,196 sentenced inmates in a facility designed to hold 1,070. Today's count is now 1,282, denoting a steady increase as law enforcement continues to do their job.

Mr. Cothran asked who makes the decision regarding which inmates are eligible for the home incarceration program. Mr. Whitehorn explained that they have established criteria. He then deferred to Assistant Chief Deputy James Matthews to further explain. Mr. Matthews explained that they examined similar systems belonging to organizations outside of Louisiana. He said they have developed vetting criteria with a point value system and certain eligibility requirements. A deputy is assigned to review the eligibility of inmates. After ensuring an individual is eligible, the deputy does a personal interview with the inmate. Upon completion of the vetting process by the deputy, it is reviewed by the deputy's sergeant, their lieutenant, the captain, and Mr. Matthews before the final determination is made that the inmate should enter the program. Mr. Cothran asked if members of the judicial system such as judges had any influence in the matter. Mr. Whitehorn said that the decision is made by the Sheriff, but they do give information to the judicial system to let them know who is being considered for the program. He explained that it is based on Louisiana Revised Statute 15:811. Chief Civil Deputy Josh Williams explained that the misdemeanor inmates they are talking about are only those who are sentenced and nonviolent offenders. Commissioner Gregory Young asked for clarification that these inmates would only be those who have not demonstrated a propensity for violence. Mr. Whitehorn said there are certain misdemeanor charges that may involve violence, but those would be noted when reviewing the history of each inmate when determining eligibility. Mr. Young noted that the Sheriff's Office is not asking the Commission to become directly involved with law enforcement; they are instead asking for the Commission's support of an initiative to reduce the crowding problem at the Caddo Correctional Center. Mr. Whitehorn said that is correct. Mr. G. Young brought up that inmates at the prison are not Medicaid eligible, so when they become incarcerated their medical expenses are a cost on the public. He said placing them under home incarceration would make them eligible for Medicaid, reducing taxpayer expense. Mr. Whitehorn said that is accurate and that this initiative would allow the Sheriff's Office to focus appropriate resources on inmates who are dangerous to the public.

Commissioner Grace Anne Blake asked if sex offenders would be considered violent offenders for the purposes of this program. Mr. Whitehorn said that they would be considered violent and would not be eligible for the home incarceration program. Mrs. Blake asked where the individuals under home incarceration would be allowed to go. Mr. Matthews said that they would be allowed to go to work, medical facilities, and church, and each individual would be assigned a deputy whom they would be in direct contact with. If the inmate violates any terms of the program, they would be reincarcerated. Mr. Whitehorn explained that many of these inmates may only have a short time left to serve of their sentence. They will get credit for time they have already served and it would be less than a year for a misdemeanor.

Mr. G. Young asked administration for clarification that the Sheriff's Office is not requesting the Commission for permission for this initiative and that this was about funding for the pilot program. If the Commission felt that this was not in the Parish's financial interests then they could opt out. Parish Administrator Erica Bryant said that is correct. She explained that funding the program would save the Parish money by reducing the population at Caddo Correctional Center. Mr. Whitehorn said that this is not a new issue, as Caddo Correctional Center has been overcrowded for over 20 years. They are trying to find solutions. He explained that they do not want to ask for money to expand the prison, as that would be a great expense to taxpayers. Mr. G. Young clarified that this is not a situation where the Commission is granting more power to the Sheriff that he did not already have. This is a mutual benefit to the Commission, the Sheriff's Office, and the public. Mr. Williams explained that the Sheriff's Office has been working with the courts and the District Attorney's office, sending a list of nonviolent offenders each Tuesday starting on January 1st, 2025. To date, they have released 101 people from the prison, and the number of those arrested on new charges is 2.

Mr. Cothran asked how they can go about conveying this to the community. He said they could make a decision quickly, but they want the support of the whole Parish. Mr. Whitehorn said this day is a start, with media present and information going out through their public information network. He said he does not think they should wait for buy-in from the community before a decision is made, because this is a fluid issue. He explained that there are days where they may arrest no people and days where they may arrest 20 or 30 people. He said if they started today, they would not have anyone to release, because no one meets the criteria to be released as of now.

It was **moved by Mr. G. Young**, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *to recommend to the full body to adopt the proposed resolution, a resolution to authorize the Caddo Parish Administrator to execute and intergovernmental agreement with the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office to authorize and establish a pilot home incarceration and electronic monitoring program within the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office for misdemeanor nonviolent offenses and to otherwise provide with respect thereto. Motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Kracman being absent.*

- *Discuss Alcohol Policy document, set date for follow up discussion and alcohol violations hearing.*

Mr. Cothran explained a document prepared by Commission Clerk Jeff Everson outlining the differences in alcoholic beverage policy among the different municipalities in Caddo Parish. He highlighted the differences in how long licenses last.

Mr. Everson said that they reached out to the Sheriff's Office to see if there were any pending alcoholic beverage violations which required hearings. He said there are two violations which could be heard.

- *Discuss future meeting dates for Animal, Disaster Response, and Constables/JPs.*

Mr. Cothran thanked everyone for their support and attendance. He urged members to bring any issues needing discussion before the Committee.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned
at 1:35 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