

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 18th DAY OF MAY, 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. Greg Young, President, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Kracman, Lazarus, Thomas, and G. Young (11). ABSENT: Commissioner J. Young (1).

The Pledge of Allegiance was given during a previous committee meeting. There were no Agenda Additions.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Aaron Brunson came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Good afternoon. Aaron Brunson, current address 629 Spring Street, Shreveport, Louisiana 71101. I just wanted to come here and show, I'm executive vice president with Visit Shreveport Bossier and the Shreveport Bossier Sports Commission. I'm here on behalf of our president and CEO, Miss Stacy Brown. She's out of town traveling for business this week. We just wanted to share our full support of the indoor sports complex that the Parish is considering. We plan on providing our full, an extension of the sales efforts at this facility, similar to how we would do with Caddo Parish Premier Park, as well as the pickleball facility to fill these venues with regional and national tournaments throughout the weekend and the course of the year. So, I thank you guys for your service and your work, and we look forward to partnering with you guys and both cities and parishes on this project. Thank you.

Jeffrey Goodman came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Jeffrey Goodman, 318 Wing Elm Drive, Shreveport 71106. Thanks for the opportunity to address you guys today. I apologize for people who were in the Economic Development Committee meeting this morning. You're going to hear exactly the same thing, but I did want to share it with the full body because I think it's very important. So, as I mentioned in the committee meeting this morning, I think this is a super important discussion. So, I did write down my thoughts because I just wanted to make sure I hit the mark and didn't mess it up. So again, thank you for being here. My name's Jeffrey Goodman. Again, I'm the CEO of the Committee of 100, an organization made up of many of the region's leading business and civic leaders working together to help move northwest Louisiana forward. I'm here today simply to express that Committee of 100 supports continuing to move this indoor sports complex project forward as the administration and Commission work through the remaining details. From our perspective, this is about much more than sports. It's about regional competitiveness. As all of you know, we sit in a unique geographic position between east Texas, south Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi. And right now, many of our families are regularly leaving this region and spending their dollars elsewhere because other communities have invested in amenities and facilities that we still lack. This conversation is also about opportunity. During my years working at the YMCA, I saw firsthand the power of exposure. Sometimes, simply giving a young person the chance to experience volleyball, wrestling, gymnastics, or another activity for the first time can completely change their confidence, perspective, and sense of possibility. And while travel sports can create incredible opportunities, we also all know here they can create barriers for many of our families who cannot always afford to travel long distances for tournaments and events. A facility like this will not solve every challenge, but it can help create more access and more opportunity closer to home. And finally, this is also an economic development conversation. Sports tourism has become roughly a 275 billion, that's "B" as in "boy," billion-dollar annual industry in the United States. Communities across the country are investing in these types of facilities because they understand the long-term impact they can have on tourism, quality of life, and regional momentum. We, the Committee of 100, understand there are still important discussions ahead regarding location, cost, and specifics. But based on what we know today, Committee of 100 supports continuing to move this project forward, and we appreciate the Commission's willingness to continue exploring what could become an important long-term investment in our region. Thank you all very much.

Tim Magner came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Thank you. Tim Magner with the Greater Shreveport Chamber, 400 Edwards Street 71101. Again, I want to thank you for the opportunity to come before you today. The Chamber represents over 1100 businesses throughout our community, almost 75,000 employees, and we are coming here today to also support your moving forward with the conversation around the sports complex. In addition to the sports impact, the economic development impact of a project of this size could be transformational and we commend the Commission for the leadership that you have taken in exploring this opportunity and bringing it to the community. We hope that as the process moves forward, we know that there are a number of undecided areas where it's going to be how it's going to be financed, all of those things. We want to work together with you on the Chamber to help whatever way that we can to get public input or to help evaluate sites as you bring them forward. We believe this is a huge opportunity for public-private partnership to really transform whatever part of our community that you select for this. And we want to make sure that that process is transparent, that that process takes into account all the data so that it has the greatest amount of impact that it can in our community. Once again, I have a letter here that I'm happy to provide for the record. We are supportive of you moving forward with this. We look forward to the opportunity to converse with you between now and November so that we can stand behind you 100% when the details are put

before the community. So, thank you very much for all that you do for our community.

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

Good evening members of the Commission. Jon Glover, 9100 Walker Road, Apartment 217, Shreveport, Louisiana, zip code 71118. I want to make a preference before I start my comment and I recognize my time as well. I am not your enemies. I am not your enemy. When I stand here and I ask for clarification on any piece of legislation, regardless, it is not to be met as me an enemy of the Commission or any entity. And yet, when I make comments, later on I meet ridicule and not so much direct but indirect. I don't think that's what citizens should meet when they come and they bring in their concerns, issues before any body of a governmenting authority. With that said, I spoke this morning in the Economic Development Committee meeting, and because I did not have access to the information that would have given me knowledge of what it was you all were proposing to address, then it left me at a disadvantage. When I stood to bring that to the attention, I definitely was met with, well we have uploaded it now, but now was not 24-hour notification. So therefore, I was not equipped to meet or to ask any pertinent questions. Now, I did see the presentation of the third party manager, his excitement and everything for what he was proposing. I did ask who it was that was spearheading this, and it seemed to be that young man. At the end of the day, whatever decisions we make with how we make those decisions, I hope we do it because we know it's the right thing to do and not just because we can do it. See, we are those persons who elected you all. And we did indeed do that, but you know what we never gave true attention to was our voice after electing you all. Did it stop once we came out of the voting booth? Do we not matter anymore? Because seemingly when I meet comments, conversations, that seems to be it. "We are your representatives. We will act on your behalf and what we say goes." Well, I find that very disheartening and I was saddened this morning when I heard that mentioned, not in those words, but nonetheless. I, as a constituent here in Caddo Parish, when I read your agendas and I don't understand fully what your intent is, I should never feel apprehensive to come before this body or any body to ask for an explanation. So, I hope you consider those words that I've just spoken, because they're near and dear to me, because I want to know that you are indeed about representing me. Thank you.

VISITORS

- Overton Brooks VA Medical Center

Vice President Thomas recognized representatives from the Overton Brooks VA Medical Center, who were invited to address the Commission regarding mental health resources, homelessness services, and crisis intervention programs available to veterans and their families. Mr. Epperson introduced the guests and explained that the presentation was prompted by ongoing concerns surrounding mental health crises, suicide prevention, domestic violence, and homelessness among veterans. He emphasized the importance of ensuring that both the public and local agencies are aware of the services available through the VA system.

David Hodge, Public Affairs Officer for Overton Brooks VA Medical Center, and Jennifer Cursive, Public Affairs Specialist, introduced Tanisha Lyons, who represented the Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program. Ms. Lyons stated that the program's primary mission is to assist homeless veterans and their families by helping them obtain stable housing and supportive services. She noted that many veterans experience mental health and substance abuse challenges, and the program focuses on wrapping supportive services around veterans in need so they may stabilize and improve their quality of life.

Ms. Lyons explained that veterans entering the program undergo a comprehensive assessment addressing physical health, mental health, and social support needs. Once assessed, veterans are connected to available services, including substance abuse treatment groups, peer support specialists, licensed clinical social workers, occupational therapists, and in-home care assistance for aging veterans. She stated that the program operates Monday through Friday and encouraged both community members and local officials to refer veterans in need for assistance.

Representatives also highlighted the Veterans Crisis Hotline, accessible by dialing 988 and pressing 1, emphasizing that veterans, family members, or friends may utilize the service when a veteran is experiencing a mental health crisis. They noted that veterans in crisis may also seek immediate care through the VA emergency room after business hours. Additional services available through the VA include marriage and family counseling, intimate partner violence programs, and various mental health services.

Mr. Epperson further explained that while there are approximately 19 million veterans nationwide, only a portion currently utilize VA services. He encouraged officials and community members to ask homeless individuals whether they are veterans and whether they are connected to VA services so they may be directed to appropriate assistance. He also noted that informational resource sheets and Veterans Crisis Line cards were made available to Commissioners and attendees.

Mr. Jones asked whether additional informational materials could be distributed at neighborhood meetings and community events. Representatives advised that additional materials would be made available through the Veterans Resource Center and replenished as needed.

Mrs. Stormy Gage-Watts thanked the presenters for their patience and presentation and asked for clarification regarding eligibility requirements and available services for veterans who may not qualify for certain VA programs. Representatives explained that eligibility can vary depending on factors

such as income, insurance coverage, discharge status, and time since service. They noted that some recently discharged veterans may still receive mental health services through the VA and that veterans in crisis are generally able to receive emergency assistance regardless of eligibility status.

Mrs. Gage-Watts also inquired about community outreach efforts and whether mobile or community-based mental health response initiatives were being utilized. Representatives described the VA's quarterly "Surge" outreach program, during which staff and community partners actively engage veterans in the community and connect them to available services. They also referenced partnerships with local mental health providers and organizations such as Volunteers of America to assist veterans and their families with supportive housing services.

Mr. Cothran asked questions regarding discharge classifications and eligibility for services. VA representatives explained that eligibility determinations vary and may include veterans with other-than-honorable discharges in certain circumstances. He also raised concerns regarding veteran suicide rates and stressed the importance of seeking professional help immediately when veterans or family members recognize signs of crisis. He encouraged families and friends not to leave individuals alone during moments of mental distress until professional assistance is obtained.

Vice President Thomas, speaking as a veteran, thanked the representatives for the work being done to support veterans and their families. He shared that he had personally benefited from VA services and encouraged veterans to utilize available resources without fear or stigma, emphasizing that support services are available even before situations escalate into crisis.

Mr. Epperson concluded the discussion by providing additional information regarding the local veteran population and the economic impact of veterans' benefits within the region. He clarified that parish veterans service offices are mandated through the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs and are staffed by state employees rather than parish employees. He also noted that veterans with at least a 50 percent service-connected disability are eligible for comprehensive free medical care and pharmacy services through the VA system. Mr. Epperson thanked the Overton Brooks representatives for their continued partnership and service to veterans throughout the region.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- Pickleball Update

Parish Administrator Erica Bryant provided an update regarding the ongoing pickleball complex project. She stated that the Parish remains committed to moving forward with the development and explained that recent delays were primarily related to negotiations and discussions with the YMCA concerning land arrangements necessary for the project to proceed. Ms. Bryant advised that a verbal agreement had now been reached and that legal counsel was currently working to formalize the contract terms. Once finalized, administration plans to proceed with selecting an architectural design team, followed by the issuance of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) contractor. She noted that the contractor selection process would include development of timelines, subcontractor selection, and review of guaranteed maximum pricing before final approval to proceed with construction.

- April 2026, Financial Statements

Administrator Bryant stated that the April 2026 financial statements are attached to the agenda, and a hard copy is placed at each Commissioners' station.

- Juvenile Detention Center census

Administrator Bryant said that there are 17 children in the Detention Center, 403 individuals on probation, and 20 individuals housed at the Caddo Correctional Center, including 16 seventeen-year-olds.

- Great American Defense Communities Programs

Administrator Bryant also announced that the Shreveport-Bossier area had been named a 2026 Great American Defense Community, one of only three communities nationwide to receive the designation. She explained that the national recognition honors communities that demonstrate exceptional support for military personnel, veterans, and their families through community partnerships, quality-of-life initiatives, and long-term investment in military support systems.

- Other Remarks

Administrator Bryant also provided clarification regarding the proposed bond election discussion. She explained that the Economic Development Committee held a meeting on April 9, during which the committee recommended moving forward with an election related to the proposed bond issue. She further noted that the committee's recommendation had been publicly summarized during the April 9 meeting and that notice was subsequently provided during the April 23 meeting indicating the item would be considered for adoption at the May 21 meeting. She stated that the primary modification since that time was an increase in the proposed bond amount from \$42 million to \$60 million, which was made pursuant to committee direction.

Mr. Atkins questioned whether administration had provided Commissioners with detailed written reports regarding the project, including financial projections and economic impact information. Administrator Bryant responded that verbal summaries had previously been presented, including projected project costs, estimated economic impact figures, and anticipated hotel stays associated with the development. Mr. Atkins stated his concern that Commissioners had not yet received detailed written materials to independently evaluate the project.

Administrator Bryant replied that a detailed report had been presented during that day's Economic Development Committee meeting and advised that administration intended to distribute the report to the full Commission body following the meeting.

Mrs. Gage-Watts asked the Clerk to confirm whether the summary provided during the April 9 Economic Development Committee meeting had been attached verbatim to the meeting minutes. The Clerk confirmed that the report summary had been included within the minutes.

COMMISSION REMARKS

- Mr. Cothran reported on the recent Public Safety Committee meeting. He stated that the committee received valuable input from representatives of several smaller municipalities regarding equipment and operational needs faced by their law enforcement departments. Mr. Cothran remarked that he was surprised by the extent of basic resource needs expressed by local agencies and emphasized the importance of improving communication and coordination among departments. He stated that the committee intended to work with parish administration to facilitate collaboration between agencies so departments could potentially share unused equipment and resources. Mr. Cothran further noted that while he did not wish to jeopardize parish reserves or finances, he hoped the Parish could identify ways to assist departments with critical public safety needs.

Mr. Cothran also discussed his attendance at a law enforcement memorial ceremony and reflected on the sacrifices of officers killed in the line of duty. He noted that 31 officers from the region had lost their lives in service since 1872 and expressed appreciation for the dedication and daily sacrifices made by law enforcement personnel throughout the community.

- Vice President Thomas encouraged the public to watch committee meetings on the Caddo Parish Commission YouTube page, noting that both committee meetings held that day included substantial informational presentations and discussion.

There was no President's Report.

OLD BUSINESS

Commission Clerk Everson reminded Commissioners that several previously adopted resolutions and recognitions would take place during the month of May and requested that Commissioners notify the Clerk's Office if presentation materials were needed for any upcoming ceremonies or recognitions.

NEW BUSINESS

It was **moved by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *that the following items be forwarded to Thursday's Regular Session agenda:*

- *Ordinance 6624 of 2026, an ordinance declaring certain adjudicated properties to be surplus and to authorize the Parish Administrator, or a designee, to sell the Parish of Caddo's tax interest in certain surplus adjudicated properties, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6625 of 2026, an ordinance to authorize the Parish Administrator, or a designee, to sell real property located at 108 Finley Drive, Vivian, LA, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Resolution No. 34 of 2026, a resolution to authorize the Caddo Parish Administrator to direct and authorize the Louisiana State Mineral & Energy Board and the Office of Mineral Resources to accept nominations, advertise for, accept and award bids, and execute all oil, gas, and mineral leases on certain mineral interests owned by the Parish of Caddo, and otherwise providing with respect thereto*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition Kids2College Academy, LLC*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition New Testament United Pentecostal Church 70th Anniversary*
- *Special Resolution of Recognition SUSLA Dual Enrollment program*

- *Special Resolution of Remembrance Buddy Flett*
- *Ebony Cooksey, Government Affairs Coordinator for Nextlink Internet as Visitor*

At this time, Mr. Jones' motion carried unanimously with Commissioners Blake, Epperson, Lazarus, G. Young, and J. Young being absent.

It was **moved by Mrs. Gage-Watts**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that Resolution No. 35 of 2026, a resolution ordering and calling a Special Election to authorize the issuance of General Obligation Bonds, making application to the State Bond Commission, and providing for other matters in connection therewith* be amended for up to \$60M and moved to Thursday's agenda for consideration.

Mrs. Gage-Watts requested that the summary from the Economic Development Committee meeting be read into the record before additional discussion occurred. The committee report explained that the proposed sports complex was envisioned as a regional destination for youth sports tournaments and community recreation activities. The presentation highlighted anticipated economic development benefits, including increased tourism, hotel occupancy, restaurant activity, and support for local businesses. The report further noted that the project was expected to improve quality of life, provide expanded recreational opportunities for youth and families, and strengthen the Parish's ability to attract large-scale sporting events.

The committee report also referenced comments of support presented during the meeting by representatives of the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce, Dr. Tim Magner, and Committee of 100 CEO Jeffrey Goodman. The report further noted that the committee considered a request to place a bond proposition on the November 3 ballot authorizing issuance of up to \$60 million in General Obligation Bonds to support construction of the sports complex and related capital improvements. The report emphasized the importance of transparency, public engagement, and providing voters with clear information regarding the project's financial structure and anticipated community benefits.

Parish Administrator Erica Bryant stated that the proposed financing structure anticipated maintaining the Parish's current 1.5 mill General Obligation Bond millage without increasing taxes. She introduced representatives from Foley & Judell and Government Consultants to explain the financial analysis supporting the proposal and the increase from the originally discussed \$42 million to the proposed \$60 million amount.

Mr. Grant Schluter of Foley & Judell explained that the resolution authorized issuance of up to \$60 million in General Obligation Bonds for the sports complex project with no projected increase to the current 1.5 mill bond millage rate. He stated that the Parish had historically issued bond propositions without increasing the existing bond millage and noted that the proposed election would be held on November 3.

Ms. Dede Riggins of Government Consultants further explained the financial projections supporting the proposed bond amount. She stated that updated analysis included assumptions regarding future assessed valuation growth and anticipated taxable property increases associated with developments such as the Amazon data center. Ms. Riggins explained that, based on conservative projections, the Parish could issue up to \$60 million in additional debt while maintaining the existing 1.5 mill General Obligation Bond millage. She further noted that the projections assumed approximately four percent annual growth in assessed valuations, consistent with recent historical trends since 2019.

Ms. Bryant added that the overall sports complex project was estimated at approximately \$70 million and stated that the bond issuance would fund a substantial portion of the development. She emphasized that the proposal would ultimately allow Caddo Parish voters to decide whether they wished to proceed with the project while maintaining the existing bond millage.

President G. Young further noted that the Parish intended to seek community and private-sector partnerships to support the overall development effort. Administrator Bryant explained that the sports complex was envisioned as a catalyst for broader sports tourism development, including restaurants, retail establishments, and hotel development associated with the facility. She described youth sports tourism as a billion-dollar industry and stated that administration hoped the project would stimulate additional economic investment within the community.

Mr. Atkins questioned whether the proposed \$60 million debt issuance would fully utilize the Parish's existing bonding capacity at the current millage rate. Representatives clarified that the proposal would not completely exhaust bonding capacity, but rather reflected what financial advisors considered a conservative amount that could be issued while maintaining the existing 1.5 mill rate. They explained that assessed valuations and future growth remain variable, and that the proposed amount was intended to preserve financial stability while allowing flexibility for future considerations.

Mr. Atkins also questioned language contained within the bond proposition stating that there would be "no estimated increase" in the millage rate "in the first year of issue." Bond counsel clarified that the wording was required by the State Bond Commission and explained that, despite the statutory language referencing the first year, the financial projections were calculated over the full life of the bond

issue using the assumption that the 1.5 mill rate would remain unchanged throughout the repayment period.

He expressed concern that the proposal was moving too quickly and stated that, as Chairman of the Finance Committee, he had not yet received sufficient opportunity to review detailed financial information. He remarked that the proposed debt amount had increased substantially from earlier discussions and stated that he was uncomfortable asking voters to consider the proposal before additional review and discussion had occurred.

President G. Young responded that discussions regarding the sports complex had been ongoing for an extended period and stated that the Commission was presently attempting to secure the ability to move forward should the project ultimately proceed. He described the bond authorization as a precautionary step necessary to preserve the opportunity to place the matter before voters, noting that no final construction commitment had yet been made.

Administrator Bryant added that, due to election deadlines, the Commission would need to call the election during the current month in order for the proposition to appear on the November ballot. She stated that administration still intended to continue public discussions and provide additional project information moving forward.

Mr. Epperson asked questions regarding references to the Amazon development and how anticipated growth associated with the project factored into future assessed valuation projections. Financial representatives explained that projections included anticipated future growth tied to large developments and overall property assessment trends within the Parish.

Mr. Epperson also expressed concern that the Commission may be moving too quickly with the proposal, particularly in light of public safety and law enforcement needs recently discussed during committee meetings. He stated that smaller municipalities had raised concerns regarding equipment and operational deficiencies within their police departments and suggested that additional discussion should occur before asking voters to consider a major sports complex investment.

Mr. Burrell spoke in support of the project and stated that he had observed unusually strong public support during the Economic Development Committee meeting. He argued that the project represented a significant opportunity to stimulate economic development and redevelopment within Shreveport's urban core. Commissioner Burrell emphasized that many parish investments historically occurred outside the urban core and stated that the Parish should also invest in projects capable of generating revitalization within the City of Shreveport itself.

Mr. Burrell further referenced several long-discussed regional infrastructure and economic development initiatives, including the Interstate 49 Inner-City Connector project and proposed passenger rail service through Shreveport. He stated that projects of this nature could work together to increase tourism, economic activity, and redevelopment throughout the community. He concluded by encouraging the Commission and public to support efforts aimed at stimulating long-term growth and investment within the parish.

Mrs. Blake spoke in support of the proposed sports complex project and referenced her recent attendance at the grand opening of the Caddo Parish Premier Park ballpark in partnership with the YMCA. She stated that approximately 20,000 visitors had traveled to Caddo Parish within the previous three weeks to participate in baseball activities and tournaments. Mrs. Blake noted the significant economic activity generated by the events, explaining that local food trucks and businesses experienced increased sales and demand. She cited one locally owned business that reportedly sold over 500 cookies during a single event weekend.

Mrs. Blake stated that the success of the Premier Park project demonstrated the potential impact of the proposed multipurpose sports complex. She emphasized that sports tourism and quality-of-life projects could stimulate economic development, support small businesses, and generate additional tax revenue needed to address infrastructure and public safety concerns throughout the parish. She further remarked that investments in recreational facilities would benefit all areas of the parish, including urban, rural, and suburban communities alike.

Mrs. Blake stated that she believed the Parish had previously conducted research regarding citizen priorities and determined that residents desired investments in projects such as Walter B. Jacobs Nature Park and the Caddo Parish Premier Park. She expressed support for moving the proposal forward so that citizens would have the opportunity to vote on the matter and stated that the project represented an opportunity for long-term growth and regional competitiveness.

Call for the Question by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Jones. Motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Gage-Watts, Jones, Kracman, Thomas, and G. Young (8). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Epperson, and Lazarus (3). ABSENT: Commissioner J. Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

At this time, Mrs. Gage-Watts' motion as amended carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Gage-Watts, Jones, Thomas, and G. Young (7). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Epperson, Kracman, and Lazarus (4). ABSENT: Commissioner J. Young

(1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Thomas**, seconded by Mr. Jones, *that Resolution No. 36 of 2026, a resolution opposing the Louisiana Legislature's redistricting of Louisiana's United States Congressional Districts* be moved to Thursday's Regular Session for consideration.

Mr. Epperson addressed the Commission regarding the historical significance of voting rights and representation. He encouraged the public to study the history of the 1965 march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the civil rights movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Mr. Epperson emphasized the sacrifices made by individuals who fought for equal voting rights and representation and stated that the current redistricting issue reflected broader concerns regarding minority voting rights and political representation.

President G. Young, speaking as the author of the resolution, stated that while some individuals might view the redistricting matter as merely a return to previous district boundaries, he believed the issue reflected a broader national trend toward limiting minority participation and representation. He expressed concern that actions being taken at both the state and national levels were contributing to division and distrust within communities.

He further stated that the Commission's efforts within Caddo Parish focused on collaboration and building a stronger community across racial, economic, and geographic lines. He urged state and federal leaders to pursue policies that unite communities rather than create division. He remarked that the Parish's ability to address critical issues such as public safety, economic development, and community growth depended upon residents' willingness to work together cooperatively.

President G. Young also stated that the resolution was intended not to involve the Commission in national political disputes, but rather to express concern regarding actions that he believed undermined local unity and public trust. He shared personal reflections regarding adversity and community progress and emphasized the importance of collaboration in building a better future for Caddo Parish residents. He further noted that he had initially intended to defer extensive comments due to not feeling well during the meeting, but felt compelled to address the matter because of its importance to the community and apologized to representatives from the veterans' presentation earlier in the meeting for the length and intensity of discussion surrounding subsequent agenda items.

Mr. Burrell continued the discussion by describing conversations and experiences he encountered while attending a national conference of public officials. He stated that public officials from multiple southern states, including Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi, had expressed concerns regarding recent voting and redistricting actions occurring throughout the region. Mr. Burrell warned that such actions could contribute to broader social and political division and stated that he believed the country was entering a difficult and uncertain period regarding voting rights and representation issues.

Mrs. Gage-Watts briefly commented that all residents deserved districts drawn in a manner that ensured stability, equal influence, and election integrity without diluting the voting power of communities after elections occur.

At this time, Mr. Thomas' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Burrell, Cothran, Epperson, Gage-Watts, Jones, Thomas, and G. Young (7). NAYS: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Kracman, and Lazarus (4). ABSENT: Commissioner J. Young (1). ABSTAIN: None (0).

It was **moved by Mr. Jones**, seconded by Mrs. Gage-Watts, *to advance the authorization of Administration to pursue a CEA agreement regarding the SCORE Program*.

Questions were raised regarding the necessity of Commission authorization and whether the organization had already received parish funding. After brief discussion, a motion was made to remove the item from consideration.

Substitute motion by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Cothran, *to pull this authorization from the agenda. Motion carried unanimously with Commissioners Blake, Epperson, Lazarus, G. Young, and J. Young being absent.*

COMMUNIQUES & COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Vice President Atkins announced that an Appropriations Committee meeting would be held on Wednesday, May 20, beginning at 10:00 a.m., with presentations continuing through the afternoon. He also stated that lunch would be provided for Commissioners during the meeting


CONSENT AGENDA

- *Ordinance No. Ordinance 6619 of 2026, an ordinance to authorize the purchase of Lots 10 and 11, Stovall Subdivision, Unit No. 3, Shreveport, Louisiana, and to authorize the purchase of Lots 31, 32 and 33, Stovall Subdivision, Unit No. 3,*

Shreveport, Louisiana otherwise provide with respect thereto.

- *Ordinance No. 6620 of 2026, an ordinance setting the parish millage for the purpose of paying principal and interest, due in 2026 on outstanding Parish Bond Issues and to instruct the Assessor to include said millage on the tax roll of the Parish of Caddo for the year 2026, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6621 of 2026, ordinance to adopt values for assessments for railways and other public service property*
- *Ordinance No. 6622 of 2026, an ordinance to set the General Purpose and Special Purpose Millages providing for millage rate adjustments, as allowed by Article VII, Section 23 of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974 and La R.S. 47:1705 (b), levying and imposing taxes and assessments for 2026 on all the property subject to taxation in the Parish of Caddo, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*
- *Ordinance No. 6623 of 2026, an ordinance setting the assessment of property classified as timberlands and to instruct the assessor to include said assessment on the tax roll of the Parish of Caddo for the year 2026, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto*

There were no Citizens Comments (late arrivals). At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the Commission adjourned at 5:08 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk