

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE CADDO PARISH COMMISSION
HELD ON THE 28th DAY OF AUGUST, 2026

The Caddo Parish Commission met in a Special Session, on the above date, immediately following the Work Session, in the Government Chambers, with Mr. Greg Young, President, presiding, and the following members in attendance constituting a quorum: Commissioners Atkins, Blake, Burrell, Cothran, Gage-Watts, Kracman, Thomas, and G. Young (7). ABSENT: Commissioners Epperson, Jones, Lazarus, and J. Young (4).

Mrs. Gage-Watts gave the invocation, and Mr. Atkins led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Presentation related to a proposed Sports Complex in Caddo Parish*

Administrator Bryant welcomed attendees and explained that Walter B. Jacobs was selected as the first location in a series of community meetings because it represents a successful long-term investment by Caddo Parish citizens. She stated that the meeting was intended to provide residents with accurate information, conceptual renderings, and an opportunity to better understand the proposed facility, its financing, economic impact, and potential benefits. Additional community meetings and presentations before local organizations would be held throughout the Parish. Supporting studies, presentations, renderings, and frequently asked questions were also made available on the Parish's website.

An informational video outlined the proposal, which originated from a recommendation in the 2023 Caddo Parish Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan. The proposed facility would encompass approximately 170,000 square feet on 13 acres along the Interstate 20 corridor. The complex would include approximately 89,000 square feet of indoor court space, 9,000 square feet of public and community meeting space, 15,000 square feet for family entertainment amenities, and 27,000 square feet of flexible-use space. The facility could accommodate up to ten basketball courts or twenty volleyball courts and could be adapted for wrestling, gymnastics, cheerleading, dance, indoor soccer, training activities, graduations, and other community events.

The presentation emphasized the benefits of youth sports, including discipline, accountability, confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of belonging. It also noted that many local athletes and families currently travel outside the Parish for tournaments and competitions. Over a five-year period, the complex was projected to attract approximately 136,500 out-of-town overnight visitors, generate more than 31,700 new hotel room nights, and produce approximately \$20 million in direct economic impact for Caddo Parish and the surrounding region.

The broader vision could eventually encompass up to 200 acres of mixed-use development, including outdoor athletic fields, trails, cross-country courses, hotels, retail establishments, entertainment amenities, an aquatic center, and a splash pad. The facility would also be designed to support inclusive and adaptive recreational programming.

The estimated project cost was approximately \$70 million. Of that amount, \$60 million would be financed through general obligation bonds appearing on the November 3, 2026 ballot. The remaining \$10 million could be funded through available Parish revenues, oil and gas revenue, naming rights, and other outside funding sources. The proposal would not create a new tax or increase the existing tax rate.

Lisa Frontar of Three Architecture presented conceptual renderings illustrating the Parish's vision for the complex and surrounding development. She emphasized that the renderings were intended to demonstrate possibilities rather than represent a final design. The proposed complex would serve as the anchor for future development and could include adjacent hotels, retail establishments, multipurpose outdoor fields, trails, an aquatic center, and other recreational amenities.

The interior concepts depicted gathering areas, food and family spaces, an elevated walking and running area, and a large competition space capable of quickly transitioning between basketball, volleyball, cheerleading, dance, martial arts, wrestling, and other events. Retractable equipment and court dividers would allow the space to accommodate multiple events simultaneously or convert into a championship-style showcase environment. Ms. Frontar stated that the overall vision was to create a recognizable destination serving athletes, families, visitors, and residents of all ages and abilities.

- *Audience Question & Answer Session*

Sam Brock submitted the following question—Once, and if the bond is approved, what is the expected time of ground breaking?

Administrator Bryant stated that the Parish would first need to complete the design process,

conduct community meetings, determine the Commission's overall vision, and select property capable of supporting future expansion. She conservatively estimated that groundbreaking could occur approximately 18 months after the November 3 election, placing it sometime in 2028. President G. Young stated that the project would be fast-tracked in a thoughtful and responsible manner and expressed hope that groundbreaking could occur sooner.

Amanda—Where?

Administrator Bryant explained that a consultant had evaluated viable areas throughout the Parish. The study found that the Interstate 20 corridor west of Interstate 49 offered significant advantages, including approximately 73,000 vehicles traveling the corridor daily, comparatively lower land costs, nearby hotels and restaurants, convenient east-west access, and opportunities for expansion. The Economic Development Committee had recommended consideration of properties along the Interstate 20 corridor, including urban areas; however, the full Commission had not selected a specific site. If voters approved the proposition, the Administration would identify suitable locations throughout the Parish and present them to the Commission for consideration.

Lyndon B. Johnson—Will the sports complex be able to handle football, arena football, indoor soccer, and lacrosse?

Administrator Bryant stated that the final design would be developed with input from residents and the local sports community to determine which activities should be included. Outdoor sports and recreational opportunities could also be considered in future phases based on community needs.

John Settle—Where would the extra \$10M come from?

Administrator Bryant stated that the Parish would consider oil and gas revenue, available funds, a major naming-rights campaign, and other outside funding sources. She expressed confidence that the additional amount could be secured if voters approved the proposition.

Lyndon B. Johnson—Will the sports complex be able to accommodate college conference championships or tournaments?

Administrator Bryant stated that the Parish intended to pursue smaller-scale NCAA conference events. Parks and Recreation Director Patrick Wesley and his staff would continue communicating with sports organizations during the design process to ensure the facility could meet appropriate space and spectator-capacity requirements.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Stacy Brown came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Good afternoon, Commissioners, Administrator Bryant. We appreciate the opportunity to come before you and talk a little bit about this facility. We are very excited at Visit Shreveport-Bossier, at the Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission. Though this was a recent study that you did, we've actually done a number of studies in the past that have shown the need for this type of facility. So, as far back as in, like, 2018, even prior to that. So, this is not a new need, but it's a growing need and important for not only sports tourism, but also for the quality of life of the citizens in Caddo Parish. It also speaks to the ability of our community to attract new businesses because one of the first things new businesses ask for is what are the amenities that will help me bring and retain quality employees into the community. And so, this is one of the things that is very popular now. Most families that have children of the age to play some type of sport, this is something they're interest in and would definitely be an asset to a number of facets of our community. We've provided some information in the past, but one of the things I wanted to mention was very recent. So earlier this week, Sarah Nelms, our director of our sports commission, went to a trade show where she has scheduled appointments to talk with sports rights holders. She had 31 scheduled appointments. Of those, 12 of them were like, "I want this facility. Keep me updated. I can bring a tournament." And it's variety of different types of sports. We actually have one to add to your list. Table tennis. So, we've got tremendous impact possible as far as economic impact for our community. We are really looking forward to working with the staff. I do want to commend the Commission and your staff and your choices because we have seen that partnership. Your head of Parks and Recreation, Patrick Wesley, has been a part of the sports community for many years. He has attended the sports conferences. He has the education and the background to really facilitate a facility that can attract these types of events. So, sometimes people build a facility and then say, "How can you help us sell it?" And a lot of times we have to say we really can't because it's not designed for competition. This is one that they've talked to us ahead of time. They've done the research and they know what is needed to drive those tournaments from out of town and bring in that economic impact and let visitors pay for the facility. Thank you.

Drew Meyers came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

I found out about this project about a week ago. My name is Drew Meyers. I'm the executive vice president of the southern section of the United States Tennis Association. I'm here with Jay Boyd, who is a past president of the Louisiana Tennis Association. And we're here on behalf of the Northwest Louisiana

Community Tennis Association, which is one of the top performing community tennis associations in the South. Tennis's mission is to grow tennis to inspire healthier people and communities everywhere. And I want to compliment everyone here today on the forward thinking in connection with this proposed sports complex. Tennis is booming. There is a tremendous demand for tennis courts, both indoor and outdoor, across the nation and especially in this area which has historically been a superb tennis venue. Studies have proven that tennis is also one of the healthiest sports. I believe there are two major studies out that say if you play a racket sport, primarily tennis, you're going to live 9.7 years longer. Tennis can be played from the age of 5 to 85. My father played 'til he was 80 years old. So, as wonderful as this complex is, especially for what I would call the younger sports, tennis would provide an opportunity for players of all ages 5 to 85 to play. Now, tennis has grown in popularity. 80% of tennis in the country is played on public courts. Tennis participation has increased 90% among Hispanic players, 46% among African-American players, and 37% among Asian players. Tennis is for all ages and for every community. Tennis events like junior tournaments, adult league events that are held in Shreveport will bring in players from all over Louisiana and also Arkansas, Texas, Mississippi. That of course plays into what we've been talking about so far today and bringing the tourism dollars in. If you host a state league championship, you may have three to four hundred players coming in. And these would be players that are adult players of all ages from probably 25 all the way up to 75 or 80. Tennis also provides opportunities for our adaptive athletes. Wheelchair tennis, visually-impaired tennis are also being developed throughout the country. In fact, Baton Rouge holds on of the top wheelchair tennis events in the world. And so, wheelchair tennis had become an important part over the last probably 20 years. There are grants available from the USTA and also from USTA Southern which may be available to assist in the tennis component should this proposed complex proceed and incorporate tennis as one of the sports. Thank you very much.

Victor Morris came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

How you guys doing? Vic Morris, head basketball coach at Calvary Baptist Academy. I'm also the founder and program director of OWE Travel Ball Club. It's an AAU organization. And the last 12 years, you know, we've kind of taken kids from North Louisiana, Shreveport area, all over the country to play basketball in hopes to earn scholarships for college. So, I'm very familiar with, you know, complexes like this, and the impact it can make on the communities. Just this past June, I'm a part of the Louisiana Coaches Association, Basketball Coaches Association. We had JSE Top 100 Camp, boys and girls, two weekends in June. I think the economic impact was \$864,000 with girls and boys showcases that they had there. And this is just talking about high school basketball. So, you can imagine what you could bring when you talk about travel baseball or travel basketball in those areas. The growth and the opportunity honestly is tremendous, you know, and this is one of the nicest facilities I've seen so far, just looking at it. I'd also like to say outside of just the money part, I think bringing something like this to Caddo would give the community a sense of unity. You know, a lot of times these kids, they play sports, but it's for a certain high school or certain middle school. It's a place where I feel like they all can call theirs, you know. And not just basketball. If it's tennis, if it's pickleball or volleyball, which is a very rising sport in this area now. I think it kind of gives us a sense of unity throughout the community and something that not only the adults, but the kids could be proud of, you know, not just now, but 10, 20 years from now. So, I think it's a great idea, and you guys have my support.

Dr. Woody Wilson came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Good afternoon, Commissioners. Commissioner Young, Administrator Bryant, I appreciate the opportunity to be here today. I'm not here to sell the program because I think it sells itself. I'm very excited about this particular project. The last excitement I had was this building, was built with a general obligation bond, no increase in tax. Look at it. We got an opportunity to do it again with this building. It would be great to walk into this building and not be in Dallas or Houston, but be here in the Caddo Parish area. And I think it's a great opportunity. You know, the Parish has wonderful infrastructure, roads and buildings, but we have to start building a cultural infrastructure to give people things to do when they're not at work. And this is a step in the right direction. And I'm here representing the Friends of the Parish of Caddo. We labor to raise funds to get information out to the citizens. We did it for this building and we're going to do it for this building to encourage citizens to vote yes because we have to build a future. The future doesn't exist yet, but it's going to come. So, we may as well go ahead and prepare for it now, so when we get to the future, it will look like something we want to look like instead of something else. So, I commend you all, Commissioners and staff, great job. Lisa and the design crew, great job. Master plan was a great job. Let's make the investment in our future that requires it. And again, Commissioners, thank you for leaving the lights on so I can find my way back. And it's good to see you all. And I'm praying for you all. And I'm still serving. If you need my support, just reach out, let me know. But thank you.

Craig Lee came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Want to thank you guys for today. Awesome. Absolutely awesome presentation, but I want to put some context with this because there were a few things that was mentioned in the video that are kind of misleading. This facility won't stop when it comes to AAU. AAU is a national, international process. And I'll give you some perspective. When I retired from corporate America back in 1995, my first client is a nonprofit by the name of Xpress Sports, LaWarren Brown and Lonnie Bryant. Out of that organization, we have now over 10 players who have played in the NFL. Greedy Williams, Shaq White, Tre'davious White, several others. And we have great nonprofit organizations here, and this is something that we've talked about for the past 30 years, this kind of place where we could bring in AAU tournaments. But it doesn't stop

the travel. It just allows Caddo Parish, Shreveport to generate some funds that typically go all the time to Dallas, Houston, Atlanta. So, we would be a part of this emerging AAU industry. And I'll say this because I'm also affiliated with JL3 in Houston, Texas, which is Hall of Famer Jon Lucas's AAU basketball deal. And I've been exposed to that now for the past five, six years. AAU is a big deal. I mean, it is a huge deal. And for us to be able to participate in this is great. But here's the last thing I want to bring to the Parish. As I'm preparing to run for city council and as I've sat on the tourism board of directors, our hospitality tourism infrastructure is something that needs to be addressed in terms of hotels, because as we bring people in, we got to have hotels to house them. The AKA just came here with 6,000 members and they had to stay outside of Shreveport because we don't have enough hotels. And I'm glad that you've identified an area pretty much west of the 49 where we've lost the Holidome and we need to bring some hoteliers in, and our aging Hilton is almost in a dilapidated standpoint. So, that's something that you all need to look at as it relates to attracting individuals to bring hotels to the area. But I'm 100% behind this project. Thank you.

Administrator Bryant agreed that the facility would not eliminate all travel but stated that it would allow local athletes to compete at home more frequently, invite friends and relatives to attend, and direct spending back into the community. She also discussed the Parish's intention to partner with the Caddo Parish Public School System so students could use the facility. Administrator Bryant stated that the Parish hoped to coordinate with private developers to construct hotels near the complex as the project developed. The conceptual plan included opportunities for multiple hotels and a family entertainment center, which would provide activities for children and family members while athletic competitions were underway. She reiterated that community input would continue to guide the facility's design.

Sam Brock came before the Commission and gave the following comment:

Commission, thank you for putting this together today. This has been a great event. There's been a lot of talk about the travel tourism, and I think we are really missing out on that. I'll give you just some quick examples. There'll be 75 teams, youth sports teams in Alexandria, Pineville, next weekend, which is about 2,500 people coming into that town and eating, renting hotel rooms. The very next weekend in Alexandria, Pineville, there's 107 teams coming in. Now you're talking about three more thousand people the very next weekend. Little towns in Louisiana, like Eunice, population of 9,000, bring in 40 and 50 teams a weekend because of their sports facilities. There was a study just a couple of years ago done for Caddo and Bossier Parish that analyzed our infrastructure for sports tourism and we rated well in that, with our airport, with our interstate system, with our hotels, and I agree with Mr. Lee that obviously any business that comes in, that breeds more business. So we'll have more hotels. Those hotels that are sitting out by the airport that are dilapidated, we'll see those be remodeled or torn down and new hotels built. But I don't want to just talk about the tourism. I think this is an amazing opportunity for us to have family-based tourism as opposed to just casino-based tourism. Family-based tourism brings money in here and keeps money in our city. These casinos aren't owned by anybody here. And that money comes in and then just gets shipped out to wherever it goes. Certainly, we get tax revenue from it. But this is something that'll bring positive, family-based tourism to Caddo Parish. The other thing that I think is so important is that's on weekends, but Monday through Thursday, you know, we talk about crime in our city all the time. You can't go a day without hearing about it. And the best way for us to battle crime long term is to start at 6 years old, 8 years old, 10 years old, so that we don't keep hearing about 14-year-olds pulling a trigger. So, I hope that this all comes about and when it does, I hope that you will push to make sure this facility is available Monday through Thursday for those that can't afford travel ball, because those are the ones that really matter. Thank you.

Administrator Bryant responded that the complex was envisioned as a year-round facility. Although most tournaments would occur on weekends, the Parish had already begun discussions with the Caddo Parish Public School System regarding weekday use by local students and youth. The proposed indoor track, meeting areas, and other athletic amenities were also intended to make the complex available to residents throughout the week.

COMMISSIONER REMARKS AND CLOSING COMMENTS

Mr. Burrell expressed support for the project and stated that Caddo Parish needed a facility of this nature. He emphasized the importance of selecting a location accessible to young people in urban areas while also serving the surrounding region. Mr. Burrell stated that the project was particularly attractive because it would not impose an additional tax burden on residents. He encouraged the Parish to think ambitiously and recognize its potential as a regional asset.

Mr. Atkins requested additional information regarding the millage revenue, anticipated debt service, and the Parish's ability to address any potential funding gap. Administrator Bryant stated that because construction was not expected to begin until approximately 2028, the Parish would evaluate future property assessments and anticipated revenue before the issuing the bonds. She also explained that economic development and newly taxable properties were expected to increase the Parish's assessed value and strengthen the revenue generated by the millage. Administrator Bryant confirmed that the Parish anticipated the millage would cover the debt service. Before issuing bonds, the Administration would provide financial data demonstrating whether sufficient revenue was available. She further stated that undedicated revenue sources could be used if necessary.

President G. Young noted that Administrator Bryant and the Parish's finance leadership were certified public accountants and emphasized the Parish's fiscally conservative approach. He commended the financial staff for maximizing the Parish's comparatively limited resources and assured attendees that the project's finances would be closely monitored.

Mrs. Blake thanked attendees, particularly those who shared questions, concerns, and public comments. She stated that citizens deserved the opportunity to vote on the proposal and that quality-of-life and sports-related opportunities were among the needs residents had expressed to her. Mrs. Blake spoke from her perspectives as a commissioner, mother, resident, and business owner. She recalled traveling throughout Louisiana and to Texas, Arkansas, Florida, and Mississippi for her children's sporting events, which directed local families' spending into other communities. She also observed that some children were unable to participate because their families could not afford extensive travel. Mrs. Blake stated that the proposal represented more than sports tourism because visitors would also experience the area's culture, attractions, and businesses. She said the project could place customers in local restaurants, guests in hotels and short-term rentals, and shoppers in area businesses. Blake expressed support for continuing to provide residents with factual information while maintaining responsible oversight of public funds.

Mr. Thomas stated that, as the youngest member of the Commission, he considered it a privilege to represent his generation and future generations. He noted that Walter B. Jacobs was an appropriate location to begin the public information meetings because the facility demonstrated the Parish's ability to manage public investments for long-term community benefit. Mr. Thomas stated that the Sports Complex could benefit children, strengthen tourism, and help establish Caddo Parish as a significant participant in national sports tourism. He praised Parks and Recreation Director Patrick Wesley for cultivating relationships with numerous professional and amateur sports organizations and stated that the proposed facility could provide a home for those partnerships. Mr. Thomas encouraged citizens to consider the project's potential beyond the initial 13-acre complex. He stated that securing additional acreage could encourage hotels, businesses, and other development around the facility. He urged residents to envision how the project could shape Caddo Parish's identity and economic future.

Mrs. Gage-Watts stated that the presentation reminded her why she had answered the call to public service: to improve the quality of life for all residents. Speaking as a mother, she discussed the importance of providing places where children with different interests, abilities, and needs could belong. She stated that developing a Parish capable of serving every family was both compassionate public policy and sound economic development. Mrs. Gage-Watts characterized the proposed complex as an investment in unity, crime prevention, opportunity, future planning, and Caddo Parish's identity for generations to come.

Mr. Kracman thanked President Young for holding the meeting at Walter B. Jacobs in District 1. He then asked how much the Parish anticipated spending on informational outreach before the November election and how much had already been spent. Administrator Bryant stated that the informational video had been produced under an existing Parish contract. Additional expenses would include printed materials, fact sheets, informational cards, local advertising, and digital media. She emphasized that the Parish's role was to provide factual information about the proposal.

Mr. Kracman asked whether the Commission would wait until after the election before selecting a specific site. Administrator Bryant confirmed that the Administration could not purchase or lease property without approval by the Caddo Parish Commission. She stated that selecting property before voters authorized the project would be premature.

Mr. Kracman also asked whether baseball and softball were included in the current or future plans. Administrator Bryant stated that they were not presently included but could potentially be considered. She explained that the Parish intended to address unmet community needs while complementing existing facilities and programs rather than unnecessarily duplicating them.

President G. Young clarified that Parish expenditures related to the project were intended solely to educate the public and were not being used to persuade residents how to vote. Administrator Bryant agreed, stating that the Parish's goal was to provide sufficient facts and answer questions so voters could make their own informed decisions.

President G. Young then recognized former Parish Administrator, Dr. Woody Wilson, and thanked him for his continued service to the community.

Mr. Cothran thanked attendees, including residents of his district, for participating in the meeting. He expressed support for the proposed complex and stated that hosting NCAA and AAU events would be a significant benefit to Caddo Parish. He emphasized that the proposal would not increase the existing tax rate. He encouraged neighborhood groups, libraries, and other community organizations interested in hosting a presentation to contact the Parish Administration or a Commissioner. He stressed the importance of obtaining accurate information directly from the Parish and thanked Parks and Recreation Director Patrick Wesley for his work on the proposal.

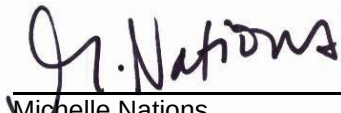
Administrator Bryant thanked the Parish's Communications Department for preparing the informational materials, rack cards, and project website. She stated that upcoming community meetings,

project documents, presentations, and frequently asked questions would be available at caddo.gov/caddosports. Residents were encouraged to submit any additional questions that arose during the public information process. Administrator Bryant also mentioned that the conceptual renderings were available on the Parish's website.

In his closing remarks, President G. Young reflected on the significant technological changes he had witnessed throughout his lifetime, from party-line telephones and telephone booths to early mobile phones, flip phones, and modern smartphones containing cameras, calculators, video recorders, flashlights, and numerous other functions.

President G. Young stated that change was inevitable and that individuals could choose either to be passengers or drivers of that change. He encouraged attendees to invest in Caddo Parish's future, speak with their families and friends about the proposal, and participate in the November 3 election. He thanked everyone for attending and encouraged residents to continue visiting and supporting the Walter B. Jacobs Memorial Nature Park.

At this time, there was no further discussion to come before the Commission, so the Commission adjourned at 2:58 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk