

BOSSIER PARISH POLICE JURY
JUVENILE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
Mr. Jimmy Cochran, Chairman
August 7, 2024

The Juvenile Committee of the Bossier Parish Police Jury met on this 7th day of August, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., in the Police Jury Conference Room, Bossier Parish Courthouse, Benton, Louisiana. Mr. Jimmy Cochran, Chairman, called the meeting to order, with the following members present:

Mr. Jimmy Cochran, Chairman, Ms. Julianna Parks, Co-Chairman, Mr. Glenn Benton, Mr. John Ed Jordan, Mr. Chris Marsiglia, Mr. Doug Rimmer, Mr. Philip Rodgers

Others present for the meeting:

Ms. Ashley Ezell	Mr. Patrick Jackson
Ms. Stacie Fernandez	Ms. Megan Ramos
Mr. Jim Firth	Mr. Tom Salzer
Mr. Butch Ford	Mr. Keith Sutton
Ms. Julie Gill	Dr. Ken Ward
Ms. Monica Grappe	Mr. Rod White

Mr. Jimmy Cochran advised that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the former Johnny Gray Jones Youth Shelter building and property. He stated that Mr. Butch Ford, Parish Administrator, has received calls from several local entities who are interested in leasing the building.

Mr. Ford reminded jurors that due to recent changes to state law, committee meetings are being broadcast live starting today.

Mr. Ford stated that after the closing of the Johnny Gray Jones Youth Shelter last December, the parish has received calls inquiring about the building and potential lease. He provided a list of entities whose representatives have contacted him: Beulah's Safe Haven, Bridge for Recovery Center, Louisiana United Methodist Children and Family Services, and Love Your Favorite Nurse and Dream Hub. He further stated that he, along with Mr. Jim Firth, Facilities Director, and Mr. Health Lyles, Purchasing and IT Manager, met with representatives of each of these parties to tour the facility. Mr. Ford stated that he has also received requests from parties interested in purchasing the property, but he believes the parish is only open to a lease of the property. He stated that the building was constructed during the 1990's, with funding provided by the state. Mr. Ford stated that he has advised the interested parties that the lessee will be responsible for all utilities and all staffing costs, in addition to the cost of the lease itself, and insurance certificates must be provided.

Mr. Ford stated that Love Your Favorite Nurse and Dream Hub provides services to Alzheimer's patients, and they are looking for a facility site. He stated that Beulah's Safe Haven, Bridge for Recovery Center, and Louisiana United Methodist Children and Family Services, all receive Medicaid or other funding from the state to provide services, and are looking at additional sites due to a lack of space at their current location.

Mr. Ford stated that this matter is being presented to the committee for its consideration in establishing a monthly lease amount, advising that the parish pays property insurance monthly. He stated that he will provide additional information regarding these costs to the committee at a later date. Mr. Ford stated that any interested party must provide the parish with a copy of its current professional liability insurance limits, as well as worker's compensation coverage. He stated that the parish also pays for periodic fire system inspections, cleaning, and mowing the grounds. He further stated that repairs are needed in the parking lot at the facility. Mr. Ford stated that he understands that the parish receives approximately \$150,000 per year for this facility, and he will confirm with Ms. Stacie Fernandez, Parish Treasurer, as to the receipt of those funds. He stated that the building is in good shape and renovations have been completed over the last five years. He further stated that additional costs for replacement of air conditioners, water heaters, and other expenses may arise in the future.

Mr. Philip Rodgers asked from whom the parish receives funds for this facility. Mr. Ford stated that when the Horseshoe Bossier Casino and Hotel came into the parish, there were designations made for use of those funds, and the Johnny Gray Jones facility was included in that designation. Mr. Chris Marsiglia asked for clarification on the status of those funds since the facility was closed. Ms. Fernandez stated that she is currently placing the funds in a separate account. She stated that the City of Bossier, who releases the funds, has advised they have no issue with this. Mr. Ford stated that the parish is holding the funds received until another use for the facility is found.

Mr. Ford suggested that the terms of the lease be determined by the committee. He recommended that the committee meet with the interested parties, and then make its decision on who will receive the lease. Mr. Ford stated that he will provide the committee with a total of the police jury's expenses associated with the facility so a decision can be made in establishing the lease amount.

Mr. Ford stated that in the past, highway department crews have made repairs to the parking

lot at the facility, and Mr. Cochran recommended that the needed repairs be completed before a new tenant moves in. Mr. Cochran stated that he is not in favor of selling the property.

Mr. Cochran asked if the Head Start program is still using part of the property. Mr. Ford stated that they have a separate building located at the back of the property. He stated that he will schedule a tour of the property with the committee in the next month, advising that it is in good shape. Mr. Cochran asked if the state has made any further offers to reopen the facility. Mr. Ford stated that Mr. Kenny Loftin, Deputy Secretary for the Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice, has advised that because the building was not built and intended for detention use, his office cannot use the building.

Mr. Ford stated that the Juvenile Justice Conference is scheduled for August 21-23, 2024, and he hopes to have more insight as to plans for this area after the conference concludes.

Mr. Doug Rimmer asked about the interested party, Beulah's Safe Haven. Mr. Ford stated that they are a safe haven for young women and provide a service for the community. He further stated the Bridge for Recovery Center provides services to local parishes, and he will do some additional research of each entity. Mr. Ford stated that each of the interested parties has facilities in Caddo Parish and other parts of the state, but are in need of additional space due to growth.

Mr. Rimmer stated that he believes the Louisiana Methodist Children and Family Services may be the best suited to the original intent of the Johnny Gray Jones mission. Mr. Ford stated that each of these interested parties is a for-profit entity, and they are not 501(c)3 entities. Mr. Cochran stated that he believes a company's for-profit status should have an effect on any decision made for lease terms and the monthly rental cost.

Mr. Glenn Benton asked for an estimate of monthly costs when the building was occupied. Mr. Firth stated that he does not have that information today. Mr. Ford stated that he has an estimate of \$5,000-20,000 per month for utilities when the parish was last operating the facility. He stated that a spreadsheet is forthcoming to the committee detailing the monthly expenses. He further stated that it is his opinion that the committee should meet with each interested party before a decision is made.

Mr. Cochran stated that if a lease is granted, he believes someone from the parish should inspect the building monthly or quarterly and advise the tenant of any repairs they will be responsible for making. Mr. Ford stated that a generic bid package with terms of the lease may be another option to lease the building. Mr. Benton stated he is concerned that the parish may not

receive the best offer, and he believes all expenses should be paid by a for-profit business wishing to lease the building.

Mr. Ford stated that he receives calls monthly concerning the property, and he believes it is time for the parish to make a decision. He stated that he will keep the committee updated, and the committee can meet with the interested parties at the next scheduled committee meeting.

Mr. Keith Sutton suggested that a minimum bid be set if the committee chooses to open the lease up to bidding, to ensure costs are covered.

Mr. Ford stated that Mr. Loftin advised that the Ware Youth Center is receiving a three-year renewal on its contract, and they will continue to provide services to Bossier Parish.

Mr. Rodgers asked if the facility could be converted to a secure site for the purpose of being leased as such. Mr. Ford stated that the building was never designed to be used as such. He stated that the Missouri model is now used. He further stated that around 2010, the cost was estimated at \$15-20 million to build according to those specifications. Mr. Benton stated that there are many requirements for secure facilities included in the design and construction.

Ms. Julianna Parks asked if the Louisiana United Methodist Children and Family Services provided orphan care. Mr. Ford stated that they provide mental health services for children. Ms. Parks suggested that terms of the lease include the tenant providing necessary security, so that the parish is not responsible for that cost, to ensure safety of the area and neighborhood.

Mr. Ford stated that a Juvenile Committee Meeting will be scheduled for August 21, 2024, to discuss this matter further.

This concluded the meeting of the Juvenile Committee Meeting. The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 10:15 a.m.

MEGAN C. RAMOS
INTERIM PARISH SECRETARY

JIMMY COCHRAN, CHAIRMAN
BOSSIER PARISH POLICE JURY