

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS Public Hearing and Meeting Minutes June 21, 2023 – 2:00 p.m. CDT

East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office
8900 Jimmy Wedell Drive, Building B
Baton Rouge, LA 70807

The East Baton Rouge Communications District Board of Commissioners met at the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office on the 17th day of May 2023 for a duly noticed regular public meeting.

The meeting was convened by Chairman Gautreaux.

Commissioner McDavid gave the Invocation.

Commissioner Daniels led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chairman called roll:

Present:¹ Chairman Sid Gautreaux, Commissioner Wade Evans, BPD Chief Murphy (designated by Commissioner Darnell Waites), Commissioner Michael Kimble, EMS Supervisor Jeremy Torres (designated by Commissioner Michael Denicola), Commissioner Myron Daniels, and Commissioner David McDavid

Absent: None

The Chairman found that a quorum existed.

Others Present at Meeting Included The Following:

Director Jim Verlander, Legal Counsel Henry Olinde, Scott Lazarone CPA, Joe Thompson (EBRPCD), Brenda Welch (EBRPCD), Todd Campbell (EBRPCD), Fire Chief Dan Kimble (ZFD), Fire Chief Gerry Tarleton (SGFD), Fire Chief Stephen Branscum (CFD), Eric Romero (CPIS), Tammy Armand (CPIS), Chance Delome (Motorola), Ricky Klug (EBRSO), Chief Randy Pies (Baker FD) and Kenny Loup (BRPD).

¹ All designations made pursuant to Act No. 189 of 2023 (effective June 8, 2023).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Daniels pointed out a typographical error in the proposed minutes of the May 31, 2023 special meeting. Commissioner Evans moved to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2023 regular meeting and the May 31, 2023 special meeting with the correction suggested by Commissioner Daniels. Commissioner Daniels seconded that motion. The motion unanimously passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Financial Status

Scott Lazarone, CPA reported on this item. He presented the Board with the District's Balance Sheet and the District's Statement of Revenues, Expenditure and Changes in Fund Balance as of 4/31/23. Mr. Lazarone reviewed and commented upon those documents.

Mr. Lazarone also reported on his response to the Board's request to provide the cost per employee of employees provided by EMS. He presented his calculations to the Board and reported that per his calculations using numbers: (1) the District is receiving 27.8 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) from EMS; (2) not including central services costs and supplied, the cost per employee is \$109,659; and, (3) including central service costs and supplies, the cost per employee of \$114,700. In 2023 the District is paying the City-Parish approximately \$265,730 per month. There will be a true-up at the end of the year.

Commissioner Evans inquired whether the District ever put out an RFP for the services that EMS employees are performing. Mr. Lazarone responded with Commissioner Evans' questions.

Mr. Lazarone advised the Board that the City-Parish is finalizing the refund due to the District after adjustments for actual 2022 EMS employee costs.

Mr. Lazarone reported that there appear to be no exceptions or findings in the District 2022 audit and that it was "clean." The audit has been submitted to the City-Parish.

Back-Up Unified Communications Center (BUCC)

Director Verlander reported that the BUCC project is progressing and the Landlord's buildout of the premises is in high gear. The District has started ordering equipment (back-up battery system and furniture). Cable/wiring and electricity are being installed. Commissioner Evans inquired as to whether the BUCC was on budget. Director Verlander responded that it is very close to the budget so far.

911 Phone System Upgrade

Joe Thompson reported on this item.

All parties are working hard to finish cloud 911 upgrade. NGA911 was on premises last week. New computers and monitors have arrived and installation has been done at the ATM. Installation is currently underway at Baker and Zachary will be next. Waiting on ATT to finish up bring service to Zachary. Various providers are migrating to the new NGA911 system. Work on call handling software is in progress.

Zachary Tower Project

David Luker reported on this item.

Discussions were had with the Crown Castle attorney regarding the existing tower site. The quoted lease price was \$2,990/month with a 3% annual escalation clause. Under any such lease arrangement the District would be responsible for the maintenance of its building and equipment. The lessor would be responsible for tower maintenance.

Motorola is working on the wi-fi flash service. The state is finishing up its paperwork to allow the wi-fi flash to work. There are 270 radios that should be involved. This will cost \$9.00 per radio per month. The wi-fi flash should take 1-2 months to implement.

Commissioner Kimble asked how long it would take to get the tower up and running after a lease is signed.

In response to the Chairman's question, Mr. Luker advised the Board that he hoped to have all possible tower options (i.e., lease, purchase, build, etc.) by the Board's next regular meeting.

Commissioner Evans inquired about whether the District could just use the wi-fi flash service in lieu of a tower. Commissioner Daniels commented that the 270 radios involved just the north part of the parish. Mr. Luker pointed out that the use of the wi-fi flash may be considered on a wider basis and may not end when the tower is up and functioning. Director Verlander advised the Board that the wi-fi flash service will only work in or near businesses that have agreed to make their wi-fi networks available. Tammy Armand advised that businesses have to provide a wi-fi channel for the flash service, but that businesses usually cooperate when asked for this. Mr. Luker advised that wi-fi flash is being used successfully in Livingston Parish.

NEW BUSINESS:

Other Recent Developments

Joe Thompson reported on the recent Central Square conference in Nashville, TN. The District recently conducted a "hot" upgrade of the CAD system that resulted in

significant problems. District management met with Central Square upper management at the conference regarding these problems. Central Square is taking an “all hands on deck” approach to these problems and was extremely responsive to the District’s concerns.

Commissioner Daniels inquired about problems that the BRPD is having pulling data from CAD. Director Verlander explained that the Application Programming Interface (API) was working properly, but the problem was that the Central Square software stopped transmitting the data. It appears that this problem has been fixed and the data has been transmitted.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Mr. Olinde reported that the Board’s submitted legislation regarding Board designees was enacted. It is Act No 189 of 2023 which was signed by the Governor and became effective on June 8, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Evans moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Kimble seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.