

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS Public Hearing and Meeting Minutes November 19, 2025 – 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 Parish Communications District Board of Commissioners met at the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office on the 19th day of November 2025 for a duly noticed public hearing and regular public meeting.

I. PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED 2026 BUDGET AND 2025 BUDGET AMENDMENTS

The public hearing was opened by Chairman Gautreaux.

Commissioner Waites gave the Invocation.

Commissioner Designate Morse led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chairman called roll:

Present: Chairman Sid Gautreaux, Commissioner Waites, Commissioner Designate Stephen Branscum (designated by Commissioner Wade Evans), Commissioner McDavid, Commissioner Michael Kimble, Commissioner Designate Thomas Morse (Commissioner Myron Daniels), and Commissioner Chris Landry, and Commissioner Chad Roberson.

Absent: Commissioner Clay Rives

The Chairman found that a quorum existed.

Others Present Included The Following:

Director Jim Verlander, Joe Thomson. Brenda Welch, Todd Campbell, Legal Counsel Henry Olinde, and Scott Lazarone CPA.

Presentation and Hearing of Proposed 2026 Budget and 2025 Budget Amendments

Director Verlander provided the Board with proposed 2026 budget with proposed amendments to the 2025 budget and his budget message.

Scott Lazarone, CPA reviewed, explained, and commented upon the proposed 2026 Budget and 2025 Budget Amendments.

The final proposed budget and amendments are the same as the draft presented to the Board at last month's meeting.

Proposed 2025 Budget Amendments: General Fund

Relating to revenues: 911 fees are estimated to come in at about \$250,000 less than the original 2025 budget, primarily related to the prepaid remittances. Because of high interest rates, there was \$150,000 more in interest earnings than originally budgeted. This amounts to a net decrease of \$100,000 in revenues on the general fund's originally projected 2025 revenue amount of 8,250,000.00.

Relating to expenses: There are five main categories of expenses. Collectively, amongst the five main categories, the estimate is that the District will spend about \$165,000 less than originally budgeted. The largest decrease is in contractual services and primarily relates to the 911 system upgrade and the termination of the contract with the previous provider. The original Budget projected approximately \$8,200,000 in expenses, and the emended budget reduces this to \$8.020,000. This will leave a general fund surplus of approximately \$230,000 for 2025.

Proposed 2026 Budget: General Fund

2026 charges for services are based on 2024 actuals. The schedule of proposed salaries and benefits was provided to the board at last month's meeting. There are no changes to supplies. There is a marginal increase in contractual services from \$6.6 million in 2025 to \$6.7 million in 2026. There is an operating surplus in the general fund of about \$17,000 and then a transfer to the capital project fund for \$150,000, leaving a projected decrease in fund balance of \$130,000 for 2026.

Capital Outlay: 2025 and 2026

In 2025, there was just under \$2,500,000 in total projected capital outlay spending. There are funds that were projected to be spent that have not yet been spent. Adjustments were made for this.

For 2026, the only project currently on the books is the GIS system project at \$250,000. However, if any 2025 funds for the 911 backup location, Zachary Tower, or the CAD system projects or not spent in 2025, those funds will be rolled into 2026 through the budget.

With respect to the RMS fund: \$1 million was transferred to that fund in 2023 with the intent of funding RMS for the next three years or as long as the money would last. It is projected that there will be \$180,000 left in that fund at the end of 2025. This balance will be spent down in 2026, and then that fund will be zeroed out.

Chairman Gautreaux reminded all present that this is a public hearing. He invited comments and questions from the Board. There were none. Chairman Gautreaux then invited comments and questions from the public. There were none.

Chairman Gautreaux declared the public hearing closed.

II. REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING

Immediately after the adjournment of the Public Hearing on the proposed 2026 budget and 2025 budget amendments, Chairman Gautreaux called the regular meeting to order.

In light of the preliminaries conducted during the public hearing, Chairman Gautreaux elected to dispense with the agenda preliminaries without objection.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Kimble moved to approve the minutes of the October 15, 2025 meeting. Commissioner Waites seconded that motion. The motion unanimously passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Financial Report

The financial report was presented by Scott Lazarone, CPA.

The presented financials were through September 30, 2025.

Total cash is approximately \$10,600,000. There are about \$1,000,000 in accounts receivable, which are the charges that are owed to the district by carriers at month's end. There is \$570,000 in prepaid expenses. There is \$50,000 in payables, so liabilities are very minimal. This leaves a fund balance of just under 12,100,000.

The watermark for revenues and expenditures is 75%. Total service revenue is, however, at 71%. This shortfall is primarily related to the prepaid wireless revenues. Those revenues are lower than projected and 9/30/25 statement does not include Q3 revenues, which were received in October. Interest earnings are well above budget. With respect to expenditures, salaries are at 69% of budget; benefits are at 63% of budget, but that will catch up as soon as the District get's billed for workers' comp; under supplies, the district still has not spent that large allocation for furniture due to timing previously discussed; and, contractual services are at 63%.

With respect to capital outlay, total spending year to date is just under \$1.8 million on a budget of \$1.935 million.

Commissioner Waites inquired about the methodology used for projecting 911 fee revenue at \$8 million. Mr. Lazarone advised that this projection is based on the district's historical collections (primarily 2024) with the mid-2024 fee increase added to it.

Commissioner Waites expressed concern about the projected drop in 911 fee revenue. Messrs. Lazarone and Verlander advised that this drop is due to the decrease in prepaid wireless revenues that are collected and remitted by the state. Mr. Olinde advised that the state has standing to pursue collection of these fees and it is his understanding that the state is working on increasing these collections.

Commissioner Waites moved to approve the financial report. Commissioner McDavid seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

North Tower Project

Todd Campbell reported on this item.

The Tower is complete and is up and operating. Director Verlander advised that the District is getting the paperwork together to transition the tower to the City of Zachary.

CAD Update

Joe Thompson reported on this item.

The CAD cloud project is continuing. Testing and updating are being conducted. Mobiles have been updated and are running well. EMS is all tracking now. Things are moving along with CAD project.

Commissioner Kimble asked about Mobile X. Director Verlander reported that there were no problems with Mobile X.

Commissioner Kimble asked about a recent problem with CAD. Messrs. Thompson and Verlander reported that this is not a CAD problem, but a local workstation application problem. An update is scheduled that should resolve this problem.

911 Phone System Transition

Mr. Thompson reported on this.

Additional equipment is being put in place. Training started this week. AT&T has confirmed transition dates. Staff plans to do some load testing on the system, like what was done with CAD. That testing will be scheduled shortly.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Proposed 2026 Budget and 2025 Amendments

Director Verlander

Chief Morse asked about the rent on the BUCC. He was concerned that rent could present some unplanned expense increases. Director Verlander advised that the rent is set by a 5-year lease and the only variable could be the CAM fee.

Commissioner Roberson moved to adopt the proposed 2026 Budget and 2025 budget amendments. Commissioner McDavid seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

2026 Meeting Dates

Director Verlander proposed a quarterly meeting schedule for 2026 and advised that special meetings can be called as necessary. Chairman Gautreaux also stated that he will call special meetings if needed.

Commissioner Waites moved to approve the proposed meeting schedule. Commissioner Kimble made a substitute motion that the Director provide monthly emails to the Board updating them on CAD and 911. Commissioner Waites seconded this substitute motion. The motion unanimously passed.

Commissioner Waites moved to approve the proposed 2026 quarterly meeting schedule subject to the monthly reporting that Commissioner Kimble requested. Commissioner Kimble seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

Report on Operations of District

Director Verlander reported that per Commissioner Kimble's suggestion, he has communicated updates and switching changes to the inter-agency IT group. This communication has helped these events run smoothly.

Legal Updates

Mr. Olinde reported there are none.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Landry moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Waites seconded that motion. The motion unanimously passed.