

**EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH COMMUNICATIONS
DISTRICT**

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Minutes

April 3, 2025 – 3:00 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 3rd day of April 2025 for a duly noticed regular and rescheduled public meeting.

The public meeting was called to order by Chairman Gautreaux.

Commissioner Waites gave the Invocation.

Commissioner Designate Branscum led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chairman called roll:

Present: Chairman Sid Gautreaux, Commissioner Darnell Waites, Commissioner Designate Stephen Branscum (Commissioner Wade Evans), Commissioner David McDavid, Commissioner Michael Kimble, Commissioner Myron Daniels, and Commissioner Designate Jeremy Torres (Commissioner Michael Denicola)

The Chairman found that a quorum existed.

Others Present Included The Following:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Waites moved to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2025 meeting. Commissioner Kimble seconded that motion. The motion unanimously passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Financial Report

The financial report was presented by Scott Lazarone, CPA.

The presented financials are through January 31, 2025. These are for only one month into the fiscal year.

Total cash is approximately \$12.5 million. Receivables from carriers that owe remittances for the prior month are a little over \$500,000. Prepaid expenses at \$831,000 are up because many of those prepayments are made at the beginning of the year. Total assets are just under \$13.9 million. Accounts payable are up from normal at just under \$500,000. This is due to the RMS invoice that was received in January and will be paid in February. The accrued expenses represent the second PSAP payments for 2024 that the District will pay out in February. This leaves a fund balance of about \$13.1 million. It should be noted that \$800,000 of this balance is prepaid expenses and therefore not spendable, and \$2.6 million is committed to capital projects. This leaves approximately \$9.6 million in unencumbered funds.

With respect to revenues and expenses, the financials show one month and about 8% would be the watermark. Service revenue is at 6.5% mostly because prepaid wireless fees are remitted on a quarterly basis and January's prepaid fees are not reflected. All of the other items are close to the 8% watermark. Interest earnings were \$36,000 for the month, and rates seem to be holding. Salaries are at \$64,000 for the month, and related benefits are \$14,000. Both of those items are at or below the budgeted watermark. Supplies are at or below the budgeted watermark. Contractual services are not out of line but some line items are still at zero because these items occur later in the year. The only items over that 8% watermark are dues and memberships, and that is really just a function of timing.

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

North Tower Project

Todd Campbell reported on this item.

The Tower project is moving along and is ahead of schedule. The District is still waiting on permitting and paperwork, but there are no delays. The groundbreaking for the tower will take place in approximately 2 weeks on April 16, 2025.

CAD Update

Joe Thompson reported on this item.

CAD is going very well. The District is testing the 25.1 version of the CAD server software.

911 Phone System Transition

Joe Thompson reported on this item.

The cloud 911 project is moving along. All ISP's have been installed. Satellite dishes have been installed. More equipment is coming. There is a meeting with Central Square scheduled to take place tomorrow. The parties have been working on network design.

Commissioner Kimble asked whether the Board knew that an NBC news show in California did a story on the District and Board. The news story contained audio of statements made by Commissioner Kimble and Director Verlander. Mr. Olinde advised the Board that the news station at issue made a public records request and obtained the audio.

Director Verlander advised the Board that the cloud 911 vendor, CentralSquare, needs to know how the District's PSAPs are going to be configured. Commissioner Waites asked for a special meeting or a workshop on the PSAP configuration issue. He asked Mr. Olinde to look into the question of whether the Open Meeting Law would permit a workshop, and what restriction would apply if it did.

NEW BUSINESS

Recent Developments

Jim Verlander reported on this.

The sewage lift station at the ATM building failed and sewage backed up into the server room there. The sewage lift station was repaired and the server room cleaned. Commissioner Waites stated the City-Parish should give the Board assurance that this problem has been properly fixed.

Administrative Matters

Operations of the District

Jim Verlander reported on this item.

Director Verlander reported that a lot of work is being done to fix CAD data. All agencies are working together very well on this. Director Verlander wanted to say a special thanks to the CAD Admin Team for their hard work.

Commissioner Kimble brought up the proposed legislation to expand the Board to 9 members. He believes that the legislation should not specify that one of the Board members come from the City of St. George. Instead, it should be the same as the current provision for appointment of the Board's members. The Metro Council should have discretion to name the Board members without any restrictions except those qualifications contained in current state law.

Chairman Gautreaux stated that he believes that current Board members have successfully been able to work through difficult issues. He does not want to see the Board heavily lean toward either the City-Parish or the other entities.

Commissioner Waites stated that the Board members should put the interests of the District first and should not place their own agendas first. He believes that the current Board members are trying to do this.

Chairman Gautreaux stated that each Board member has to do what is right for the Parish as a whole and not just that member's agency. He is very pleased with the fact that it appears to him that Board members are doing this.

Legal Updates

Discussion of Board Expenditures

Board attorney Henry Olinde indicated he was prepared to address this item.

Commissioner Waites moved that the Board enter into executive session pursuant to La. R.S. 42:17(10) and La. Code of Evid. art. 506 to receive confidential and privileged advice from its attorney. Commissioner Daniels seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

The Board entered into executive session at approximately 2:46 p.m. The Board opened the meeting back up to the public at approximately 4:23 pm and Commissioner Waites moved that the Board end the executive session. Commissioner McDavid seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

The Chairman announced that no votes were taken, or decisions made, in executive session.

Adjournment

Commissioner Daniels moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Designate Branscum seconded that motion. The motion unanimously passed.