

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Minutes

June 18, 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 18th day of June 2025 for a duly noticed regular public meeting.

The public meeting was called to order by Chairman Gautreaux.

Commissioner Evans gave the Invocation.

Commissioner Waites led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chairman called roll:

Present: Chairman Sid Gautreaux, Commissioner Darnell Waites, Commissioner Wade Evans, Commissioner David McDavid, Commissioner Michael Kimble, Commissioner Myron Daniels, and Commissioner Chris Landry

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 April 3, 2025 and April 16, 2025 meetings. 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 a April 30, 2025.

Total cash is approximately \$12.4 million. Receivables from carriers that owe remittances for the prior month are a little over \$500,000. Prepaid expenses at under \$700,000. Total assets are approximately \$13.6 million. Accounts payable are up from normal at just under \$1.4 million due to tower payment. This leaves a fund balance of about \$12.2 million.

With respect to revenues and expenses, the financials show four months and about 33% would be the watermark. Service revenue is at \$2.5 million or 31% of projected mostly because prepaid wireless fees are lower than projected. Interest earnings were \$140,000 on a yearly budget of \$200,000. This gives the District \$2.65 million in revenue. Expenses by category: salaries are at 30%; benefits at 24% due to workers compensation premium lag; supplies under budget; and, contractual services are at 28% YTD.

Total Capital outlay of \$1.1 million for tower is the primary reason for the \$800,000 decrease in fund balance. This Capital Outlay item was separately budgeted. If it were to be added back, the result would show that operations are presently \$300,000 less than budgeted.

All is in line with budget as expected.

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. Concrete poured and the doghouse has been installed. District had been waiting on an FAA permit which came in yesterday. Metal is being delivered for installation and should be installed during the next month.

Commissioner Evans asked whether the tower could be used as a repeater location for HAM radio operators. Mr. Verlander stated that there may be some liability considerations associated with placing HAM equipment on the tower.

Commissioner Waites asked if the tower installation was on budget. Mr. Campbell advised that it would be on budget.

The Chairman asked whether positions on the tower could be leased to cell providers. Mr. Verlander advised that this was planned and that the City of Zachary would lease the tower to help offset the maintenance and operation costs that the City of Zachary would be incurring.

CAD Update

Joe Thompson reported on this item.

The CAD projects are going well. Quite a few CAD projects are in progress.

The District presently has several cloud-based systems already in place. Central Square approached Mr. Thompson about moving the CAD and CAD mobile to the cloud. Mr. Thompson advised that there are multiple benefits that the District could reap by moving CAD to the cloud. Mr. Thompson looked at the 5-year cost for premises-based CAD versus cloud-based CAD. The difference over 5 years would be a little over \$200,000 total without including some premises-based expenses. Mr. Thompson recommended that the District move CAD to the cloud.

Commissioner Evans asked where the data would be located. Mr. Thompson stated that the archive server and its data would still be on premises. This cost was included in Mr. Thompson's cost analysis.

Commissioner Evans asked how long the District keeps data and its document retention policy. Mr. Verlander advised that the District is working on a retention policy now.

Commissioner Evans stated his concern that data in the cloud may create a "monopoly" problem and force us to stay with a vendor.

Mr. Thompson noted that the cloud is monitored 24/7 and District data is safer in the cloud.

The quote from Central Square is \$325,000 for the first year and the cost would increase by 5% each year. Mr. Thompson again recommended the cloud move. He advised that the cloud move was approved by the CAD committee and all the personnel involved with it.

Commissioner Waites asked if there would be a fee attached to keeping information and data in the cloud. Mr. Thompson and Mr. Verlander stated that the District will bear the cost of the keeping the data like it does now.

Commissioner Evans moved that the Board approve the proposed contract for cloud services subject to review and approval of the contract documents by legal and Mr. Verlander. Commissioner Waites seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

911 Phone System Transition

Joe Thompson reported on this.

On the call handling side, Central Square was here last week and started setting up phones. Connections to the cloud were made, The 911 admin team will start setting up rolodexes, ring tones, etc.

On the core services side, INdigital came onsite and installed 2 firewalls and 2 switches. There is connectivity and INdigital is making cloud connections with AWS. This should be done by July 4 and then work to input all information can begin.

On the hardware side, computers have been installed at the BUCC and switches have been installed. Set-up is ongoing and going well.

PSAP Configuration for New Cloud 911 System

Jim Verlander presented this item.

The EBR Mayor-President asked that the Board defer this item to next month's meeting and Mr. Verlander stated that he had no problem honoring that request.

Commissioner Evans moved to defer the item until next month. Commissioner Daniels seconded the motion.

Commissioner Daniels stated that he had some questions that he needed to ask Board counsel in a privileged setting that all Board members should be party to. Mr. Olinde pointed out that this would have to be done in an executive session which was not on the agenda. Mr. Olinde advised that the agenda would have to be amended by a unanimous vote to add an executive session.

Commissioner Evans moved that the agenda be amended to add an executive session at the end of the meeting 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. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Recent Developments

Commissioner McDavid asked, with Hurricane Season approaching, if there would be any training for agencies to use the BUCC. He asked if the BUCC was ready to operate. Mr. Verlander advised that it was not fully operational because the new 911 system needs to be installed and operational for this to happen.

Commissioner McDavid also inquired about equipment at the ATM Building on Harding and wanted to make sure it was ready for Hurricane Season. Commissioner Evans and Chairman Gautreaux concurred.

Commissioner McDavid and Commissioner Waites inquired about the ATM building condition. Mr. Verlander advised that power and networking are issues in addition to the building itself. He had spoken to Clay Reeves about this issue. Commissioner Waites asked that the City-Parish administration be notified of the Board's concerns.

Mr. Verlander advised that the BUCC has to be fully operational so agencies can move agencies there while their areas of the ATM building are being rehabilitated. .

Commissioner Kimble asked whether 911 could be transferred to the BUCC today. Mr. Verlander replied that it could not be. Various members of the Board emphasized that this needed to be priority in light of Hurricane Season.

Commissioner McDavid moved that the Chairmen send a letter regarding the condition of the ATM building to the CP administration. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

Administrative Matters

Operations of the District

Jim Verlander reported on this matter.

The District received the 2025 SMART Safety Award from Central Square. Despite rough start with CentralSquare, the relationship has become exceptional. Mr. Verlander then presented the following members of the CAD Admin Team members with Certificates of Recognition due to their dedicated and hard work that made the SMART Safety award possible: Jennifer Kimble, Chelsea Blunt, Michael Neucere, Travis Snyder, Tammie Rucker, Shawn Billiot, Dina Moreau, R. Scott Anderson, Lisa MacDonald, Kyle Calkins, Jack Farah, Joe Thompson, and Bassam Harb.

Legal Updates

Board attorney Henry Olinde advised that HB 242 was signed and will be effective August 1, 2025. The Board will be expanded to 9 members.

Executive Session To Receive Legal Advice.

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. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion unanimously carried.

The Board entered into executive session at approximately 3:05 p.m. The Board came back into public session at approximately 4:23 p.m.

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

Adjournment

Commissioner McDavid moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Kimble seconded that motion. The motion unanimously passed.