

**EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH COMMUNICATIONS
DISTRICT**

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Minutes

February 18, 2026 – 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 February 2026 for a duly noticed regular public meeting.

The public meeting was called to order by Chairman Gautreaux.

Commissioner Rives gave the Invocation.

Commissioner Landry led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chairman called roll:

Present: Chairman Sid Gautreaux, Commissioner Designate Stephen Branscum (designated by Commissioner Wade Evans), Commissioner McDavid, Commissioner Designate Dottie O'Neal (designated by Commissioner Michael Kimble), Commissioner Designate Jeremy Stanley (designated by Commissioner Myron Daniels), Commissioner Chris Landry, Commissioner Clay Rives and Commissioner Chad Roberson.

The Chairman found that a quorum existed.

Others Present Included The Following:

Director Jim Verlander, Joe Thomsom, Brenda Welch, Todd Campbell, Legal Counsel Henry Olinde.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Rives moved to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2025 meeting. Commissioner Designate McDavid seconded that motion. The motion unanimously passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Financial Report

The financial report was presented by Director Verlander in the absence of Scott Lazarone, CPA.

Director Verlander advised the Board of Mr. Lazarone's absence and presented all Board members with the financials and notes prepared by Mr. Lazarone through December 31, 2025. Mr. Verlander advised the Board that if a member had any questions Mr. Verlander would set up a meeting for that commissioner with Mr. Lazarone.

Mr. Verlander pointed out that revenues have decreased due to lower interest rates. Also, the State prepaid wireless fees have decreased, but LDR is pursuing claims against the wireless companies to have these revenues increased.

Commissioner McDavid moved to approve and accept the financial report. Commissioner Landry seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

North Tower Project

Todd Campbell reported that the Tower has been installed and is up and running. It is running on 9 repeaters instead of 12 repeaters. Motorola is going through the process of re-registering frequencies, and this issue will be shortly resolved.

CAD Update

Mr. Verlander reported on this item.

CAD was moved to the cloud and is functioning very well. There have been some hiccups involving a fire wall that is glitching when the system switches between the two internet providers, Rev and Unity. CentralSquare is working on this issue, which is complex.

Commissioner Rives asked what this problem causes. Each time it happens it takes approximately 7-10 minutes to identify and correct. Mr. Verlander responded that this has occurred 3-4 times in the last few months. When this happens 911 call-taker cannot

build the call in CAD and just has to use a card method. Many times, the call is already transferred to the response agency, and no card use is necessary.

911 Phone System Transition

Mr. Verlander reported on this item.

The district has transitioned Baker, Zachary, EBRSO, BRPD, BRFD and St. George to the new cloud 911 system. The only agency left to transition is EMS, which will be done in the near future. So far, the transition has been successful and gone relatively smoothly with a few small issues as is always expected in these complex undertakings.

When small hiccups occurred, call takers were able to use the back-up MEVO phone system without issue.

There has been an issue with ALI and ANI information: ECT screens on CAD were sometimes not popping up as they should. This issue does not affect the 911 calls themselves and this information is still available through Rapid SOS. Central Square is working to resolve this issue.

Commissioner Landry confirmed with Director Verlander that the District is trying to resolve these issues before transitioning EMS to the new cloud 911 system.

Commissioner Designate Stanley inquired about the continued ability to access 911 recordings from the old NGA 911 system. Director Verlander advised that the District is paying NGA to maintain this access. Some users have been unable to access these recordings since their agency moved to the new cloud 911 system. Mr. Verlander has put in service request tickets with NGA to get these users access to the recorded calls. NGA has advised that it is working on restoring permissions for these users. Also, Director Verlander advised that requests can be directly made to NGA for these recordings if necessary. He pointed out that such direct requests may motivate NGA to speed up the process of restoring user permissions.

Commissioner Designate Stanley also asked about accessing the recordings on the new 911 system. Mr. Verlander advised that these are being kept on the new Higher Ground system and can be accessed there.

Commissioner Landry expressed his concern about having to jump through hoops to get these recordings from NGA, which the District is responsible for. Director Verlander responded that there would be no need to jump through hoops and it is just a matter of NGA turning user permissions back on. Mr. Verlander advised that he will be directly contacting NGA's CEO to address this issue and also to come to an agreement as to how we are going to store these recordings for the next 3 years.

Commissioner Rives and Commissioner Designate Stanley both expressed their belief that if the District is paying NGA, agencies should get what they need and have uninterrupted access.

Director Verlander stated that any lack of access is not acceptable. The District has not asked NGA to remove any user permissions. This appears to be something that NGA has done on its own.

Commissioner Landry asked if this is an issue that is isolated to BRPD. Director Verlander pointed out that it is more than BRPD. He pointed out that the issue does not affect EMS because EMS has not been transitioned to the new cloud 911 system yet.

NEW BUSINESS

Desk Project at Harding

Director Verlander advised that Commissioner McDavid asked that his item be placed on the agenda. Commissioner McDavid then presented it.

Commissioner McDavid stated that he has noticed old and damaged equipment at the Comm Center. The various agencies are putting employees in the Comm Center and at other locations. These employees spend a lot of time there (especially when large events occur). These employees need good equipment and surroundings. He wants to make sure that the District gives equipment upgrades priority.

Director Verlander stated that as soon as the 911 cloud transition is complete the District will begin upgrades.

Commissioner Landry noted that the parties have identified systems that are no longer in use, but still plugged in. Power access is being wasted. He agreed with Commissioner McDavid that this is long overdue.

Director Verlander agreed with Commissioners McDavid and Landy on these points. He pointed out that the building and much of the equipment in it belongs to the City-Parish. The District has no equipment in the server rooms that is not in use.

Director Verlander advised that the District will be replacing network cables and related items. He also advised that some of the desks were originally purchased for other agencies using Comm District funds. He stated that the District needs to identify what equipment the District is responsible for and make sure that it is upgraded. With respect to desks, Mr. Verlander stated that the Comm District can help with the replacement of desks, but that some layouts are not good and need to be changed. He also noted that 311 is in the room, and there is no need for 311 to be there because 311

does not utilize CAD. He believes that the Comm District should help with the vendors and specifications of desks.

Commissioner McDavid asked about the Comm District helping with the purchase of new desks for agencies. Director Verlander noted that many agencies have already purchased their own equipment. He stated that the District should look at helping agencies that cannot do this and are struggling to get new desks.

Commissioner Rives noted that a CEA may solve some of the concerns about other agencies using Comm District funds to buy equipment. He also stated that he believes that the District should be responsible for all equipment relating to the 911 system. He recommends sitting down and discussing what items the Comm District should help with and if there are areas of disagreement then the Board can resolve them.

Chairman Gautreaux agreed that the parties should sit down and discuss the issue and take into account employee input.

Director Verlander stated that the District does not want to hold other agencies back if they want to move forward with upgrades for their employees. He asked that the agencies get input from the District to make sure that these items meet everybody's needs. He also pointed out that the District has an independent budget and cannot rely on the City-Parish or State in the event of a budget shortfall. The desks are not cheap-- \$10,000 to \$25,000 each. The District has a rainy-day fund now, but if it gets spent then the District will have no back-up in the event of unforeseen expenses.

Commissioner Landry suggested that the parties obtain pricing for the desks and related equipment. Then the District can make informed decisions regarding assistance with purchasing.

Commissioner Rives suggested that when the parties obtain prices, the Board can consider budgeted amounts on an annual basis for improvements. He also pointed out that there was already \$250,000 in the budget for this project.

In response to Board questions about the possibility of increasing revenues, Mr. Verlander gave the Board a status report on legislation that is pending to allow for certain revenue increases.

Other Recent Developments

Director Verlander advised that there are no items for discussion under this topic.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Report on Operations of the District

Director Verlander advised that the transition to the new cloud 911 system is going as smoothly as it can. Assuming no unforeseen problems, the District hopes to start migrating EMS onto the new 911 system on or about February 25, 2026.

Commissioner Landry inquired about the timeline for standing up the new PSAPs. Director Verlander responded that after the 911 migration is completed INdigital will start the OSP migration (i.e., transitioning all of the providers onto its system). Once this is complete then the process of standing up the new PSAPs can commence.

Legal Updates

Board attorney Henry Olinde had no legal updates. He further advised that in the event that the Board decides to assist agencies with the purchasing of desks, he recommends that the agencies acquire the desks and title them in the name of the agencies. The District can then provide such reimbursement to the agencies that is legal and appropriate.

Mr. Olinde also advised the Board that Commissioner Landry expressed his concern that Mr. Olinde may have a conflict of interest representing the District in the District's PSAP agreement with the City of St. George because Mr. Olinde also represents St. George Fire District. Mr. Olinde pointed out that he represents the Fire District as opposed to the City of St. George. Mr. Olinde advised the Board that there is a possibility that he might, if called upon to do so, represent the Fire District in its negotiations with the City of St. George relating to the Fire District's provision of PSAP services to the City of St. George. He advised that, even though he believes there would be no conflict of interest in the event that this happens, if the Board is ever uncomfortable with the situation he would welcome the involvement of another lawyer in the matter.

Commissioner Rives thanked Mr. Olinde for his transparency and has confidence that Mr. Olinde will notify the Board if facts develop that create a conflict of interest.

ADJOURNMENT

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