

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS Public Hearing and Meeting Minutes July 19, 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 19th day of July 2023 for a duly noticed regular public meeting.

The meeting was convened by Chairman Gautreaux.

Commissioner Waites gave the Invocation.

Commissioner McDavid led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chairman called roll:

Present:¹ Chairman Sid Gautreaux, Commissioner Wade Evans, Commissioner Darnell Waites, BRFD Chief of Administration Shane Spillman (designee of Commissioner Michael Kimble), 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, 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 Keith Pease (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 Evans moved to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2023 regular meeting. Commissioner Waites seconded that motion. The motion unanimously passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Financial Status

Scott Lazarone, CPA was unable to attend the meeting. Commissioner Daniels moved to table the financial report. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

911 Phone System Upgrade

Joe Thompson reported on this item.

NGA911 was in Baton Rouge last week and this week. Monitors have been installed and switches and gateways are being installed. There was a meeting at the ATM building with NGA911 and the 911 team. There will be another meeting next month as the parties work toward going live. Going live will be a migration process and will not be just flipping a switch.

Commissioner McDavid Stated that there were some 911 problems in Zachary yesterday. Mr. Thompson advised that those problems were not related to NGA911.

Commissioner Daniels inquired about the proximity of NGA911 training to NGA go live. Mr. Thompson advised that go live will be soon after training.

Commissioner Denicola inquired if the go live date would be in September 2023 and Mr. Thompson responded that it presently appears that go live will be in September 2023. Commissioner Denicola inquired about the migration process and Mr. Thompson explained it.

Commissioner Daniels inquired as to how NGA911 and NGA911 migration was working for other agencies. Mr. Thompson advised that it is a complex process and issues do crop up. Livingston Parish was the first to go through the process and many issues are being ironed out during their migration. The EBR Comm District is next.

North Tower Project

David Luker reported on this item and provided the Board with a packet of materials.

There are three options for the tower. Based on the studies and equipment needs, it appears that constructing a new tower at the 6330 Port Hudson-Pride Road location is the best alternative. This is the option that Mr. Luker recommends.

Commissioner Evans inquired about the coverage map in the packet that Mr. Luker provided. Mr. Luker advised that the white areas on the coverage map are covered by other, existing towers.

Mr. Luker also advised that he had the Wi-Fi flash test radio in his office and will proceed with procuring that for others as soon as he is satisfied that the radios work properly.

Commissioner Evans suggested that soil tests be conducted at the proposed tower site before entering into any contract for construction.

Commissioner McDavid reiterated that the tower is necessary for public safety. Director Verlander questioned whether the City-Parish instead of the District should be building this tower. Commissioner McDavid stated that he does not know why the City-parish is not doing this. Chairman Gautreaux pointed out that the District is moving forward with the tower because the Board's interest is furthering public safety.

Tammy Armand stated that the property contract should be in place before the District makes any moves. Todd Campbell advised the Board that the property lease would specify only a nominal rent amount. The property owner is very public safety minded and just wants to see this tower get built.

Commissioner Evans commented that the District needs to make sure that the City-Parish will agree to maintain the tower. A discussion of the Bid/RFP process ensued with Mr. Olinde.

NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner Evans moved to modify the agenda to move the executive session to the end of the agenda for the sake of convenience. Commissioner Waites seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

Other Recent Developments

None.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Director Verlander reported that the BUCC is progressing as planned. There were no other operations matters to report.

Mr. Olinde reported that the Board's designee legislation Act No 189 of 2023, appeared to be working as intended.

Director Verlander reported that there were no recent developments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Waites moved to enter into executive session pursuant to La. R.S. 42:17(10) and La. Code Evid. art. 506 to receive confidential and privileged legal advice from counsel. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed. The Board went into executive session at 3:07 p.m.

The Board came out of executive session at 3:53 p.m. Chairman Gautreaux advised that no actions were taken or decisions made in executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

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