

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2021 – 2:00 p.m. CST

**Americana YMCA
4200 Liberty Way
Zachary, LA 70791**

The East Baton Rouge Communications District Board of Commissioners met at the Americana YMCA on the 15th day of September 2021 for a duly noticed regular meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Sid Gautreaux.

The Invocation was given by Mayor Barrow.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Waites.

Roll was called by the Chairman:

Present: Chairman Sid Gautreaux, Mayor David Barrow, Chief Myron Daniels, Joseph Entremont, Chad Guillot and Mayor Darnell Waites.

Absent: Mayor David Amrhein

The Chairman found that a quorum existed.

Others Present:

Director Jim Verlander, Part-time Assistant Director Todd Campbell, Legal Counsel Henry Olinde, Daryl Gissel, Mohit Vij (365 Labs), Jennifer Kimball (BRFD), Chief Gerard Tarleton (SGFPD), Eric Romero, Tammy Armand, Jamie Watson (Baker PD), ZPD Police Chief David McDavid, ZPD Assistant Police Chief Darryl Lawrence, Ricky Klug (EBRSO), David Luker (EBRSO) Chief Joel Hancock (District 6), Amber Guidry, Denise Boudreaux.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Waites moved to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2021 meeting. Mayor Barrow seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

CAD Project Status, Issues and Development

Director Jim Verlander presented on this issue.

Jennifer Kimble reported on an upcoming CAD meeting.

Commissioner Entremont read an email from BRFD Chief Major: All agencies need live CAD information from other agencies. But, BRFD has no access to SGFD CAD information, but SGFD has access to BRFD CAD information. When CAD goes down, this creates communication problems and some of those problems recently occurred during Hurricane Ida.

Chief Tarleton stated that SGFD left communication building because of SGFD was mistreated and rejected. When SGFD procured its own CAD, Chief Tarleton advised the Board that the District and SGFD should “mirror” one another and this would create a back-up system for everyone’s benefit. That has not happened. SGFD has attempted to cooperate with BRFD, and their attempts have been rejected. SGFD has tried to make the systems communicate, but it has been unsuccessful.

Director Verlander stated that this was not a City-Parish versus SGFD problem. He reported that Central square promised that the District and SGFD CAD systems would seamlessly communicate. Central Square has never been able to make its CAD-to-CAD system work as promised. Central Square has just suggested a new solution to this problem called the “Tellus Hub.” The Tellus Hub will not only allow the District and SGFD CAD systems to connect, but it will also allow 911 systems in neighboring parishes to communicate with all of the CAD systems on the Tellus Hub. Central Square wants to charge extra for Tellus Hub. Director Verlander met with representatives of the Oregon State Police who use a prior version of the Tellus Hub and reported that it worked extremely well. Director Verlander is going to meet with Central Square and remind Central Square of its contractual obligations to make this work and request appropriate financial credits for implementing Tellus Hub.

Eric Romero and Mohit Vij also commented on this this issue.

Board members emphasized that this problem needs to be solved and that Director Verlander should let Central Square know that it is ready to take legal action if this issue is not resolved.

RMS - Status/Issues

Director Verlander introduced Matt Johnson (BRPD), who provided a report from the RMS committee.

The RMS committee requests that 365Labs advise the committee when a Beta version is released so they know what needs testing. The RMS committee also requested that Beta versions not be released on Friday or weekends. If 365Labs receives a request from anyone who is not on the RMS committee, 365Labs should notify the committee. 365Labs should only be dealing with the RMS committee. Mohit Vij addressed these requests.

The RMS committee also wants an update on exactly what the District will be paying for and what each agency must pay for. Director Verlander addressed this issue and advised that nothing has changed from the last communication to the agencies on this issue. However, when the District can get a handle on its budget for next year this may or may not be able to change.

RMS has been running smoothly in general. There have been a couple of crashes, but the system is progressing. The RMS Committee has received a lot of positive feedback on the new RMS system and features.

Financial Transition Status

Faulk & Winkler was absent due to Hurricane Ida electricity outages. Director Verlander reported that F & W is setting up the District's accounting system. They are still gathering data from the City-Parish.

Attorney Henry Olinde has sent out the banking service RFP and it is on the District's website.

Mission Statement

On motion of Chad Guillot, seconded by John Entremont, the Board unanimously adopted the following mission statement for the District:

Our mission is to efficiently facilitate rapid emergency response by providing: a single emergency service access point for the public; geographic location information for emergency responders; and an environment that fosters collaboration and cooperation amongst emergency service agencies.

NEW BUSINESS:

Hurricane Ida Report

Director Verlander reported that there was no loss of AT&T service until 5:00 a.m. Monday morning. At that time some of the location data that is normally supplied by AT&T stopped coming in. Then at approximately 11:00 a.m. AT & T service completely went down until approximately 1:30 p.m. During this time calls were rerouted and answered by administration lines or other agencies. The AT & T service went down again at approximately 5:17 p.m. until 8:24 p.m. The calls were handled the same way. The problem is that when the AT & T lines go down, the District's 911 call takers cannot receive calls. Director Verlander advised that this will change when the District can implement cloud 911.

Director Verlander reported that the District is paying in excess of \$30,000 per month to AT & T for telephone services and he is trying to investigate exactly what the district is paying for. Darryl Gissel and Eric Romero also addressed this issue.

Director Verlander reported that the CAD system itself did not go down during the storm

Other Recent Developments

Director Verlander reported that the District's website now accommodates posting of RFPs.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

2022 Budget Preparations

Director Verlander reported that he drafted a letter to the City-Parish regarding the District's intent as to its 2022 budget. The Mayor-President's office responded to this letter. Director Verlander, Chairman Gautreaux and Henry Olinde met with Mayor-President Broome and Mr. Gissel regarding this letter and the District's budget.

Chief Daniel questioned Director Verlander on the letter and stated that he did not remember the Board voting on some of the matters in Director Verlander's budget. Director Verlander responded that he based the letter on the conversation with the Board during the Board's August meeting.

Chairman Gautreaux stated that there were extensive discussions on this issue at the last Board meeting. He stated that there was no motion made or vote taken. The Chairman advised that, based on those discussion, he instructed Director Verlander to move forward.

Henry Olinde confirmed that the Board made no decisions at the last meeting and stated that his recollection was that Board discussed the issues and there appeared to be a consensus at the last Board meeting on these issues. Also, the purpose of the letter was to move negotiations with the City-Parish forward. No budget decisions can be made until the budget process is followed and a budget is placed before the Board for a vote.

Director Verlander and Mr. Olinde advised the Board that the intent is to provide the Board with a draft of a 2022 budget by the end of October.

Report of Operations

Director Verlander introduced Chance Delome (Motorola) to provide an update on the Zachary tower. Motorola's proposal is approximately \$692,000. The provision of a generator with fuel tanks, etc. will be an additional \$78,000.

Director Verlander stated that he is still trying to get clarity regarding the District's finances. He will report to the Board on whether the funds are available for this tower when the District's financial situation becomes clearer.

Chairman Gautreaux reminded the Board that the District has significant expenses coming up in the relatively near future and the Board will have to factor those in when it makes spending decisions.

Mayor Waites reminded the Board that the City of Baker's call-taker expense is currently exceeding the amount of money that Baker receives from the District for this purpose. He asked the Board to look at this and adjust it.

Director Verlander reported that the Winbourne audit is underway and that may change revenues and allocations, including the funds paid to the City of Baker. He also stated that the District can pay for call-takers, but not dispatchers.

Chief Daniel requested a break-down of how this call taker money is allocated and paid. Director Verlander advised that he has just acquired a spreadsheet that contains this breakdown.

A discussion was also conducted regarding tower maintenance, tower expenses and the ownership of towers. These will be more expenditures coming down the road and it will be important to identify all potential cost savings the District can obtain. Director Verlander reported that he is spread thin and asked the Board for help.

ADJOURNMENT

Chief Daniel moved to adjourn the meeting. Mayor Waites seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.