**ORLEANS PARISH COMMUNICATION DISTRICT**
**BOARD OF COMMISIONERS**
**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**
**September 9, 2025 10:00 a.m.**
**Chief Warren McDaniels Board Room**

# MEETING MEETINGS

## I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Director Colin Arnold called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

## II. ROLL CALL

Executive Director Karl Fasold called the roll.

**PRESENT:** Jeanie Donovan (proxy for Jennifer Avegno), Vice–Chair Colin Arnold, Board Secretary Michelle Woodfork, Rep. Stephanie Hilferty, Capt. Rodney Hyatt (proxy for Col. Robert Hodges), Col. Kenneth Donnelley, Supt. Roman Nelson, Dr. Brobson Lutz. Rep. Jason Hugues arrived at 10:20am.

**ABSENT:** Sen. Joseph Bouie, Supt. Anne Kirkpatrick, Dr. Joseph Dyson, Thomas Patrias, Dr. Megan Marino

There is a quorum.

## III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 8, 2025, REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Dr. Lutz made a motion to accept the minutes, and Secretary Woodfork seconded the motion. The motion passed.

## IV. FINANCIAL REPORT

ED Fasold reported that the Financial Report was emailed to each Board member. He reported OPCD received the 2025 Supplemental Budget Request from the city of New Orleans which allowed OPCD to backfill the call takers positions. The additional staff have brought the call answer times in the range of 85% to 90% of calls being answered within 15 seconds or less; the national goal is to answer 90% of the calls in 15 seconds or less. Seven of the call takers from the latest class are still training. As they graduate and come fully on-line, he expects OPCD to attain the call answer goals. ED Fasold said that half of

the funding was received at the beginning of the third quarter (July), and the other half will be received at the start of the fourth quarter (October).

The funding received was also used to replace twenty (20) of the 24/7/365 chairs on the comm. floor, and the remaining funding was used to cover the increased cost of insurance. Cash and budget flow are going well.

## V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

**2026 OPCD BUDGET**. ED Fasold reported he has proposed a budget of $28.7 million for 2026. $18 million of that is personnel costs. The total budget request is $4M more than in 2025. He described the budget highlights to the Board:

- Revenue. The 9-1-1 carrier fee revenue estimates remain at $6 million, due to uncertainty about a state-wide increase in rates in 2026.
- Personnel. Personnel costs increased for a number of reasons, including having only thirteen vacancies right now in Operations and having more Dispatchers certified to dispatch for multiple disciplines. OPCD is proud that Dispatchers are receiving their multi-discipline dispatch certifications, and that their pay rate increases with each added discipline. ED Fasold noted that OPCD is very close to realizing the goal of 100% of OPCD Supervisors certified to dispatch in all disciplines. This was a goal from the 2016 consolidation plan. Additionally, Facilities staff will now be budgeted to receive on-call pay.
- PSAP Audio Visual Equipment. The AV distribution system for the 911 floor is reaching end of life, and we are resorting to sourcing replacement parts from eBay!. That budgeted amount is approximately $750K.
- NICE Inform System Replacement. $1.5M is budgeted to replace the NICE Inform System which aggregates the many parts of a 9-1-1 call into a package that fulfills the evidence requests from the courts and affiliated public safety partners. If this software is not funded, requests will be filled manually from four separate systems, with separate reports / media from each system. This will significantly affect our ability to meet requests in a timely manner.
- Carbyne 3-1-1 Call-taking Transition. 3-1-1 will transition to using the Carbyne telephony system as the Cisco system currently in use has reached end of life and requires significant upgrades. The additional concurrent use licenses on the Carbyne system are $120K, but the advantages of using Carbyne for 3-1-1 are the same that led us to move to that system for 9-1-1 – namely, eliminating the need for on-premise equipment (requiring periodic upgrades and hardware upgrades / replacement) and allowing the same flexibility to add or move physical locations (including off-site locations) as required; precise caller location; sharing of photographs or video; automatic translation and transcription; and staff familiarity

with the software. In addition, we are working with Carbyne on AI call-assistant functionality that should allow us to continue the same level of service without the need to add additional personnel.

- Motorola CAD. The 2026 CAD expenses are rising due to feature functionality added in 2024 & 2025.

The 2026 OPCD budget has been submitted to the CAO's office. ED Fasold has not yet received any feedback/recommendations from them. The budget hearing is scheduled for the first Wednesday of the hearing cycle (October 15) at 9:00 am.

**CEA**. ED Fasold reported the five-year Cooperative Endeavor Agreement document has been drafted and is acceptable to both OPCD and the CAO's Office. The CEA is currently in the Intergovernmental Affairs office for review. ED Fasold asked for assistance from Board members to speak with their contacts on the City Council to help facilitate sponsorship and support for the CEA. Board Chair Avegno will draft a letter asking for Board support and share it will Board members.

The Board members discussed the 2026 Budget and CEA report. Vice-Chair Arnold asked about how OPCD Operations would run without the additional $4 million for personnel and equipment. ED Fasold replied that no extra funding would result in the manual handling of all the public records requests, less floor visibility of call holding queues, staff attrition would occur (up to 8 positions) which would mean allowing ECSs to leave without replacement, and call answer times will go up. Overtime for special events would be curtailed, and fewer supplemental ECC's would be scheduled for the multitude of upcoming annual events in the city.

Ms. Donavan asked if the five-year CEA includes the increased budget amount? ED Fasold and Vice-Chair Arnold explained that the CEA is a $0 agreement that provides for OPCD to participate in the City's annual budget process to determine allocations, and authorizes billing infrastructure for OPCD to submit payment requisitions to the City via BRASS.

UPDATE: OPCD has been advised the 5-year CEA will be sponsored by CM Thomas and presented to the Criminal Justice Committee on September 30th.

## VI. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

**Board Committees.** Rep. Hughes asked if the Board Committee meetings were advertised to the public as prescribed by law. ED Fasold confirmed that the public meeting notification process is followed for all the Board Committee meetings. Additionally, there were no reports from the Personnel Committee, and ED Fasold said that the 2026 budget was reviewed by the Finance Committee Chair prior to submission to the City.

**Board Call Answer Stats Dashboard.** ED Fasold introduced Mr. Edwin Berrios, OPCD Tech member, who is the OPCD QuickBase SME and designer of the Board Call Answer Stats Dashboard. Using a projected version of the dashboard, Mr. Barrios and ED Fasold went through the various real-time statistics displayed, what each category means, and the call answer time standards used by OPCD (NENA, and to a lesser extent, the NFPA standards).

Mr. Berrios described the process of sending the initial invitation to the Board members (time sensitive) and encouraged members to please check their SPAM folders and the e-mail address provided to OPCD if they have never received the emailed Dashboard link. He will resend the link to anyone who still needs it. Mr. Berrios also described how the call answer data was broken down along different durations (annually, monthly, daily, etc.). For stats from the previous 24-hour period, the Dashboard breaks down the data further into different incidents and times. The Dashboard tracks all emergency calls received, both 9-1-1 and 10-digit emergency calls, and text to 9-1-1. ED Fasold noted that calling 9-1-1 is still preferable to texting to 9-1-1 for the general population since texting is not completely NG9-1-1 compatible.

Further discussion of additional statistical measures ensued, however, the ultimate decision was to continue with the current content, as they provide visibility of OPCD-controlled portion of the incident lifecycles.

Dispatcher staffing and FTE assignment is based upon what is necessary to ensure the safety of field first responder personnel. Director Fasold pledged to never be understaffed on dispatchers.

## VII. OLD BUSINESS

No old business was presented for discussion.

## VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Vice-Chair Arnold asked for any new business, and Rep. Hughes said he wanted to have a public discussion about the Brian Vasquez incident. The incident occurred in his district, and he had many questions about the OPCD response in that incident. Rep. Hughes acknowledged that the Executive Session portion of the Board meeting was where the incident was scheduled to be discussed, but due to the private nature of the Executive Session, he wanted to ask his questions in the public portion of the meeting.

His questions concerned wanting to know, from a 9-1-1 perspective, what happened during the Brian Vasquez incident. He requested that ED Fasold walk him through the process for the public record.

ED Fasold provided the following timeline based upon the OPCD Compliance Division audit: At 10:11 am on the 14th of August, OPCD received a 911 call from a Spanish-speaking female caller reporting that her special-needs son had escaped the house and was missing. Our call taker got an interpreter on the line, was asking the questions, asked a particular question of the caller, who then gave an approximate minute and a half response in Spanish to the interpreter. At that point, our calltaker discovered the interpreter had dropped from the call at some point during the caller's statement. The call taker got another interpreter on board, re-asked the question, and got the information. The call was processed through Priority Dispatch and resulted in an NOPD 21M (missing person) incident. Calls are classified based on time since occurrence: in progress, happening now/just occurred, or happened in the past. Because the caller reported that the child was last seen at 3 am, it was processed as a past call. Priority Dispatch does not differentiate between a missing adult or a missing child, all are missing persons. NOPD differentiates with a separate incident type, 21J, for a missing juvenile. OPCD Personnel are responsible for changing the 21M to a 21J for a juvenile, however, that change not being made immediately is irrelevant as in either case the resulting incident is a priority of 1C. That incident was created at 10:20 am. At 11:01am, the caller called back and after a translator was engaged, provided additional information that resulted in the call being upgraded to a Code 2. That updated information and upgraded priority were received by dispatch at 11:07 AM. No NOPD units were available for dispatch, so at 11:09 am the call was broadcast as a missing juvenile holding Code 2. The specifics were broadcast as well, including that the 21J was an autistic child needing medication last seen at 3 am. The dispatcher was advised by the Seventh District rank via radio to make it a Code 1 call. The dispatcher changed it to a Code 1 call in CAD. Units were dispatched at 3 p.m.

Discussion followed about the emergency dispatch protocol used by OPCD, ProQA, and how calls for service are prioritized based on a number of factors pre-determined by agency personnel. ED Fasold described the working group consisting of OPCD personnel and NOPD personnel that went through every determinant code from Priority Dispatch and determined what incident that should map to which code, and what the priority should be.

Rep. Hughes asked ED Fasold about ED Fasold's confidence in the training and professional development of the dispatchers and staff at OPCD. ED Fasold replied, "I can assure you that they receive the training that is required far in excess of that which might be required. They're all trained in all of the Priority Dispatch protocols, which is an international organization certified by the Academies of International Dispatch on taking the calls, with continuing education requirements that we provide continually in-service." He continued speaking about the on-going quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) performed by the Compliance staff on the calls. He pointed to call monitoring for both

randomly selected calls and major incident calls where the compliance team listens to the call, goes through the protocol, determines if things were done properly or not. If they were not, then the call taker is counseled, and is retrained as necessary. If the same problem occurs again for the person, it turns into a disciplinary action. ED Fasold continued by saying that he cannot, tell you everybody did everything 100% right on any particular call, but he assured the Board that OPCD provides the best environment possible to ensure the staff know what to do, they're trained on what to do, and verify that they're doing the right things.

Further discussion took place around the temporal aspect of prioritizing calls for dispatch. Specifically, many Board members observed that the 30-minute time limit on classifying an incident as being in the "past," thus automatically lowering its priority response, was too short when dealing with missing juveniles. ED Fasold explained that the time limit was determined by the working group that assigned priority to the NOPD determinant codes.

Chief Woodfork offered context to the NOPD response, saying that each missing person case is handled differently and often depends on the information that is gathered by NOPD. "If you get the information that it's a missing juvenile, this child has some type of disability or delays or something like that… last time they saw him was 3 am, you know, all those things, then it's incumbent upon the police to ask some more questions." Chief Woodfork also pointed out that NOPD has some protocols guided by Amber Alerts that are not created by NOPD but created by the law itself. She believes that if NOPD had clearer guidelines on what how NOPD should respond to missing juveniles then the response in this incident might have been quicker.

Rep. Hughes and Rep. Hilferty suggested that the working group that established the priority response definitions for incidents revisit the topic. ED Fasold agreed that, in the case of missing juveniles, the mapping of the priorities to the NOPD determinant codes should be revisited.

## IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Vice-Chair Arnold called for a motion to go into Executive Session. The motion was made by Rep. Hughes and seconded by Chief Woodfork. The motion passed.

Upon completion of the Executive Session business, Rep. Hughes motioned to exit the session and Chief Nelson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

## X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

## XI. ADJOURN

At 11:55 am, Ms. Donavan motioned to adjourn the meeting and Chief Nelson seconded it. The motion passed.

Submitted by,

Karl Fasold

Executive Director