

NORTHEAST DELTA HUMAN SERVICES AUTHORITY (NEDHSA)

Board Meeting MINUTES

March 10, 2026

NEDHSA Administrative Office – Video Conference Room

2513 Ferrand Street: Monroe, LA 71201

5:30PM

Call to Order Meeting called to order by Yvonne Lewis and prayer was led by Thelma Merrells and a quorum was met.

Adopt Agenda: A Motion was made by Randy Williams and seconded by Thelma Merrells to approve /accept the Agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Adopt Minutes of February 10, 2026: A Motion was made by Thelma Merrells and seconded by Tasha Washington to approve / accept the Minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Members Present:

Thelma Merrells, Yvonne Lewis, Randy Williams and Tasha Washington

Board Members Absent: Christina Johnson and Dr. Tiffany Bates

Northeast Delta HSA staff present: Dr. Monteic A. Sizer, Janice Rogers and Delores R. Harris

Ownership Linkage-Recognition of Guests: None

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – No requests for comment.

BOARD EDUCATION/ ENDS Items for DISCUSSION

Upcoming Events/Community Action

NEDHSA recently had clinical audits and a full civil service HR audit. LDH OBH found no issues and gave clinics 100% ratings. State Civil Service found no deficiencies and gave NEDHSA HR a 100% rating.

NEDHSA is planning its RISE ribbon cutting event for some time in April 2026. Construction related issues caused the delay. NEDHSA has done everything it can do in preparation for the event. More information will be provided once building

construction has been completed.

NEDHSA will be sponsoring a statewide virtual webinar series with LDH and the Wellness Foundation titled Substance Use Disorder and Its Impact on Maternal Outcomes. The first one will be March 18, 2026 from 12 noon to 1 pm. This is all part of NEDHSA's RISE and maternal health objectives.

Many NEDHSA staff earned exceptional job performance ratings. This is a testament to staff's commitment to NEDHSA's vision and mission. As was the case last year, and as part of our rewards, recognition, and retention policies and procedures, I will approve a one-time bonus for staff who earned an exceptional job rating. Bonuses are determined by a standard calculation done by HR and fiscal. Louisiana Civil Service is aware and approved our rewards, recognition, and retention policies and procedures for exceptional employees. NEDHSA has sufficient budget for this one-time, earned benefit.

NEDHSA is currently planning its Art is Therapy Festival. The event will take place in downtown Monroe on April 11, 2026. Mayors of Monroe and West Monroe are helping to support this event. We anticipate this being the most attended yet.

NEDHSA is updating its website to be more interactive, user friendly to those with disabilities, and reflective of its transformative LATAN and related special initiatives.

NEDHSA, along with other LGEs, are collaborating to get insurance companies to pay higher rates for services provided on their behalf. Services LGEs provide save the state and insurance companies hundreds of millions each year. LDH believes insurance companies should work more collaboratively with LGEs. LGEs will also seek to get hospital systems to pay higher rates for community-based services.

NEDHSA is in the final phase of its Monroe Integrated Care Clinic conference room

renovations. This state of the art conference room will be used for trainings, press conferences, and community meetings. This is part of NEDHSA's regional efforts to upgrade facilities and operational infrastructure.

NEDHSA signed an MOU with LATAN, the state's assistive technology organization. The MOU will allow a first of its kind regional implementation of assistive technology solutions for those with various disabilities. NEDHSA and LATAN will be hosting regional meetings and assisting senior citizens with home repairs in East Carroll Parish. Additionally, NEDHSA will be housing various pieces of assistive technology equipment at its DD facility for community demonstrations and to help advance tools that will enhance quality of life. This is part of NEDHSA's efforts to transform the region with innovation, technology, improved population health, and economic development.

NEDHSA continues to look for ways to be more efficient and effective with its resources. We are installing a new phone system in NEDHSA facilities. NEDHSA will also be installing a new generator to act as a regional backup in case of power outages.

NEDHSA is streamlining its billing processes and has selected MyEvolve as its new electronic health record system. Also, all internal NEDHSA departments are looking for ways to be even more intentional and collaborative. NEDHSA's outcomes focus remains with various analytics reports highlighting NEDHSA's continued programmatic and operational impacts. NEDHSA is also currently developing a real-time agency analytics dashboard.

As part of NEDHSA's opioid harm reduction strategy, Healthy Blue awarded NEDHSA a \$75,000 grant to help purchase four additional harm reduction machines. 12 specific NARCAN boxes have been strategically placed regionally. In addition to the 12 NARCAN boxes, two harm reduction machines have been placed. One is located within Monroe Behavioral and the other one is located in NEDHSA's Peer Support Center. The four sponsored by Health Blue will be placed inside NEDHSA's outpatient clinic locations. Additionally, NEDHSA will be shooting

various videos to highlight the work being done regionally.

Construction was completed on the inside NEDHSA's RISE facility. There are a few things to complete on the outside of the building. All furnishings have been purchased. Additionally, food service and security contracts are being finalized. RISE will be one of the largest inpatient hospitals in Louisiana for pregnant women who are mentally ill and addicted to substances (60 beds). Women who are admitted will be able to bring up to two dependent children under the age of 12. Ochsner LSU Monroe is our primary care partner. NEDHSA is looking to cut the ribbon sometime early March 2026.

NEDHSA is about ready to implement its contingency management program for integrated care patients in the coming days. This project is designed to incentivize patients for receiving treatment. The incentives include gift cards, clothing, onetime emergency utility payments, etc. NEDHSA received funding from LDH to pilot this effort.

NEDHSA is still in the process of establishing an MOU with the Louisiana Chamber of Commerce Foundation to build a workforce development center, construct affordable housing associated with RISE, and examine ways to establish a regional fresh food ecosystem. These projects are to be located near RISE, and on the property NEDHSA received from the state during a transfer in 2013. Dr. Sizer is seeking to make the area a Healthcare District or Zone for further development and tax related purposes.

NEDHSA Talk conducted its first session at the Monroe Civic Center. The second session took place in Madison Parish on Thursday, January 22, 2026 at the Tallulah Community Center. The third session will be in Baskin, Louisiana. These sessions are designed to gather information from regional citizens about various societal issues. Once done, NEDHSA intends to work with community groups to help resolve them. Parishes targeted are Madison, East Carroll, Ouachita, Franklin, and Lincoln.

NEDHSA hosted several early childhood events to promote healthy decision making and resiliency. A comprehensive newsletter was recently released detailing all the innovative work done.

GOVERNANCE PROCESS/EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS for DECISIONS

Executive Director – Monthly Activity and Fiscal Reports

After the ED's report was presented, along with monthly Fiscal data, a Motion made by Randy Williams and seconded by Tasha Washington to approve / accept the ED report and Fiscal reports as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Planning & Budgeting/Financial Condition and Activities – *With respect to the actual, ongoing financial condition and activities, the ED shall not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures from board priorities established in Ends policies.*

NEDHSA's FY 26 appropriated budget is \$18,210,481. Our SGF = \$17,031,087. Our IAT = \$4,483,420. Self-generated = \$1,080,444

Board –

- Comments will be collected on ED Performance – Board Chair
Set a Due by 04/14/2026 NEDHSA next board meeting

BOARD MANAGEMENT – Ongoing

- Board Development/ Parish Outreach
- Travel Forms due MONTHLY
- Public official Ethics Training - due by May 15 (page 32)
- Personal financial disclosure – due by May 15 (page 32)

ADJOURN

Next Meeting – **April 14, 2026 - 5:30 pm**

NEDHSA Administrative Office

2513 Ferrand Street: Monroe, LA 71201