

NORTHEAST DELTA HUMAN SERVICES AUTHORITY (NEDHSA)

Board Meeting MINUTES

February 10, 2026

Northeast Delta Human Services Authority, 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 Yvonne Lewis and a quorum was met.

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

Adopt Minutes of December 9, 2026: A Motion was made by Dr. Tiffany Bates and seconded by Thelma Merrells to approve / accept the Minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Members Present:

Thelma Merrells, Christina Johnson, Dr. Tiffany Bates and Yvonne Lewis

Board Members Absent: Randy Williams and Tasha Washington

Northeast Delta HSA staff present: Dr. Monteic A. Sizer 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/ ENDS/Items for DISCUSSION

NEDHSA, along with the City of Tallulah, hosted nearly 400 plus students, faculty, and community leaders during its anti-vaping and drugs event. It was an overwhelming success.

Northeast Louisiana had major power outages due to Ice Storm Fern. While state agencies were closed for a week, Dr. Sizer met daily with his executive team to address the mental health, addiction, disability, and related issues associated with the storm. Additionally, Dr. Sizer released several social media posts that outlined how to stay calm and resilient during disasters. Also, NEDHSA staff made wellness

checks and scheduled appointments with patients throughout the duration of the ice storm. NEDHSA's 1 800 number remained operational the entire time.

NEDHSA is currently planning its Art is Therapy Festival. The event will take place in downtown Monroe on April 11, 2026. It will be 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 work.

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.

NEDHSA is nearing completion 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 will soon sign 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. Currently, NEDHSA is testing a new phone system that will save thousands of dollars. The regional pilot testing was successful. We are installing the phone system in other NEDHSA locations.

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.

NEDHSA launched its Phoenix Clinic. The Phoenix Clinic is designed to provide specific mental health and addiction services to those who have developmental disabilities. Those with developmental disabilities typically do not receive psychiatric treatment or addiction related care. The Phoenix Clinic is housed in NEDHSA's Monroe Integrated Care Clinic.

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 launched its intergenerational work between senior citizens and youth. NEDHSA partnered with school systems and veteran related seniors. This initiative is designed to bridge the gap between generations, and to reduce negative outcomes associated with both demographic groups. NEDHSA will also be partnering with several other regional organizations. Specifically, NEDHSA recently submitted a proposal with Friendship Bench International to obtain funding from Humana to pilot connecting senior citizens with RISE participants.

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 will take place in Madison Parish on Thursday, January 22, 2026 at the Tallulah Community Center. 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 streamed its Youth Summit on Facebook and YouTube December 19th. This event had nearly 1200 students in attendance. We believe the showing on NEDHSA's social media platforms were successful. Youth Summit 2026 will include an intergenerational component and will include the participation of two sitting NEDHSA Board members.

NEDHSA hosted several early childhood events to promote healthy decision making and resiliency. These events were hosted in conjunction with the African American Museum and related groups.

GOVERNANCE PROCESS/EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS for DECISIONS

Executive Director – Monthly Fiscal Reports

After the ED's report was presented, along with monthly Fiscal data, a Motion made by Thelma Merrells and seconded by Christina Johnson to approve / accept the ED report and Fiscal reports as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

- Financial Planning/Budgeting - DOA website completed by Delores R. Harris
- Prioritized Strategic Initiatives for coming year/Updates (Policy Manual p 11)

A Motion made by Thelma Merrells and seconded by Christina Johnson to approve / accept the Prioritized Initiatives presented. 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 = \$12,646,617.
Our IAT = \$4,483,420. Self-generated = \$1,080,444

Board –

- Select nominating committee for 2025 – 2026

A Motion made by Thelma Merrells and seconded by Christina Johnson to approve / accept the officers elected 2024 -25 to remain the same people as stated below:

Nominations for Board Executive Committee 2025- 2026

Chairperson – Yvonne Lewis

Vice Chair – Tasha Washington

Secretary – Dr. Tiffany Bates

Treasurer – Thelma Merrells

- Board member status
- Dr. Tiffany Bates term expires January 12, 2028 approval via email received on February 3, 2026 from Courtney Hall representing the Lincoln Parish Police Jury confirming a Resolution No.2026-03.
The Lincoln Parish Police Jury approved 3 years but term is 2 years for Lincoln Parish in the Board Governance Policy Manual

ADJOURN

Next Meeting – March 10, 2026 - 5:30 pm

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