

NORTHEAST DELTA HUMAN SERVICES AUTHORITY (NEDHSA)

Board Meeting MINUTES

October 14, 2025

**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 Tasha Washington to approve /accept the Agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Adopt Minutes of July 08, 2025: A Motion was made by Thelma Merrells and seconded by Dr. Tiffany Bates to approve / accept the Minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Members Present:

Thelma Merrells, Dr. Tiffany Bates, Randy Williams, Yvonne Lewis and Tasha Washington

Board Members Absent: Christina Johnson and Tasha Washington

Northeast Delta HSA staff present: Dr. Monteic A. Sizer, Victoria Wayne 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

September is Recovery Month and NEDHSA has various activities planned. All planned activities are promoted on all NEDHSA social media platforms. They are also shared via email and Constant Contact. Graphics have been included in each Board packet.

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. Additionally, NEDHSA is streamlining its billing processes and

vetting a 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.

Recently, the Governor's Louisiana DOGE team asked LDH and LGEs to identify efficiencies and report them. The assignment did not involve program cuts. NEDHSA identified its phone system improvements and a few other things and sent them to LDH. Note, that all state agencies are having to report operational efficiencies per the request of Louisiana DOGE.

NEDHSA will be launching its Phoenix Clinic soon. 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 will be housed in NEDHSA's Monroe Integrated Care Clinic.

NEDHSA was the title sponsor of the NELA Music Awards regional awards celebration. It's the largest performing arts ceremony in Region 8. There was a mental health theme due to NEDHSA's sponsorship, and allowed NEDHSA to continue promoting its Arts is Medicine, Art is Therapy, and related agency services to this unique demographic group of creatives.

NEDHSA hosted its annual Opioid Summit. It was entitled From Services to Support: Healing Veterans and communities from the Opioid Crisis. Over 300 people registered online and others appeared onsite. There were lots of vendors present as well. It was held on the campus of ULM.

Dr. Sizer recently signed a collaborative agreement with Madison High School that directs NEDHSA staff to provide critical resources and treatment when needed by school officials. A similar agreement exists with East Carroll Parish schools. NEDHSA currently works with the majority of regional schools systems providing evidence-based prevention services. NEDHSA also supports each Head Start program in the region as part of its ongoing prevention and wellness prevention efforts.

NEDHSA will be signing an MOU with the Monroe City Schools to provide vaping, intergenerational strategies, and related services to students and families. NEDHSA already provides gambling, drug and alcohol, mental health, parent training, etc., to Monroe City Schools. NEDHSA provides similar services in many regional school districts.

As part of NEDHSA's opioid harm reduction strategy, there will be 12 NARCAN boxes strategically placed regionally. NEDHSA staff placed one at its Tallulah Integrated Care Clinic and its Winnsboro location. The others are being placed as of this writing. Additionally, NEDHSA has contracted with two regional groups to help provide narcotics anonymous, outreach, and transportation services for those addicted to opioids and related substances. This is a first of its kind model in Louisiana.

Construction has begun on NEDHSA's RISE facility. 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 between December 2025 and January 2026.

NEDHSA is gearing up to launch its intergenerational work between senior citizens and youth. This initiative is designed to bridge the gap between generations, and to reduce negative outcomes associated with both demographic groups.

NEDHSA will be implementing a contingency management program for its 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 in communications with the Elevance Foundation about supporting RISE and related regional priorities. They heard about our innovative work and are wanting to provide financial support. The Elevance Foundation is part of Elevance Health, a national insurance provider.

NEDHSA will be partnering with Carrellon to support regional crisis initiatives regionally. Carrellon is part of a national insurance company currently operating in Louisiana on behalf of LDH.

Dr. Sizer meet with LSU Shreveport faculty about RISE and related regional needs. Both entities are working to collaborate around academic research, disability services, training, regional family medicine opportunities, and OBGYN care.

NEDHSA is 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 participated in a host of prevention related activities the last couple of weeks. For example, NEDHSA hosted its 5k/1k Walk Run event in Tallulah, poetry night as part of Art as Medicine, and several recovery related events.

NEDHSA relaunched its Phoenix Clinic, one of the only outpatient treatment facilities geared to providing behavioral health treatment to those with intellectual and developmental disability.

NEDHSA and Monroe City Schools are nearing the signing of an MOU to provide anti-vaping and intergenerational services inside various schools.

NEDHSA Talks will begin soon. It's 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.

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 seconded by Thelma Merrells to approve / accept the ED report and Fiscal reports as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

Treatment of Consumers Quarterly – Satisfaction, Grievance, Complaints, Grants and Contracts and Financial Conditions & Activities June 2025 was presented by Victoria Wayne. A Motion was made by Randy Williams and seconded by Thelma Merrells to approve/ accept the reports as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

A Motion was made by Randy Williams and seconded by Dr. Tiffany Bates to add Victoria Wayne as a signee on the Ruston Area Guidance Center account located @ First Horizon Bank. 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, 111,531. Our SGF = \$12,547,667. Our IAT = \$4,483,420. Self-generated = \$1,080,444

Board

A Motion was made by Randy Williams and seconded by Thelma Merrells to approve /accept the Board Policy Manual Reviews below with no changes to the Governance Manual. Motion passed unanimously.

- Global Ends Statement (page 3), Global Governance Commitment (page 3),
- Governance Style (page 3-4)
- Board Job Description (Page 4)
- Global Linkage (Policy Manual Page 10)
- Unity of Control (Policy Manual Page 10)
- Delegation to the Executive Director (Policy Manual Page 10)
- Accountability of the Executive Director (Policy Manual Page 10-11)

- Select nominating committee for 2025- 2026 Officers

A Motion was made by Randy Williams and seconded by Dr. Tiffany Bates to approve /accept that all board members will be on the nominating committee for 2025-26 Officers. Motion passed unanimously.

MANAGEMENT - Ongoing

- Board Members Terms/Renewal of Appointments
- Travel Expense Forms due monthly

ADJOURN

Next Meeting – November 18, 2025

Northeast Delta Human Services Authority, Video Conference Room
2513 Ferrand Street, Monroe, LA 71201