

NEWS RELEASE

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Board of Commissioners receives updates on two major projects...

Project Locate and NATCOM moving forward....

During the Tuesday, October 16th meeting of the Natchitoches Parish Communications District, board of Commissioners were provided with a presentation recapping the latest progress in addressing the many issues associated with 9-1-1 addressing throughout the parish. Natchitoches Parish 9-1-1 is currently among only a few parishes in the state who do not utilize the location technology which is currently available via cellular phone services to assist public safety agencies with the location of 9-1-1 wireless callers. In an effort to take advantage of this valuable tool, the District is working to adopt a more accurate and efficient addressing process, which will assist public safety agencies in the deployment of emergency response vehicles and personnel.

On February 28, 2012, the Natchitoches Parish Communications District approved the first phase of what has been identified as "Project Locate" and with this accepted Geographic Technologies Group proposal to perform the primary tasks required to develop a digitized mapping system.

During Tuesday's meeting, Mr. David Holdstock, CEO of Geographic Technologies Group provided an update on the development of accurate street centerline data, the creation of individual address points for every address in the parish, the development of a replacement database for the one currently used by the District, and training for District personnel on how to utilize the system. 9-1-1 Director Willis Carter said *"Location, location, location!!.. having the best law enforcement, fire, and EMS personnel in the world does no one any good, if our 9-1-1 call takers and dispatchers can't quickly identify a caller's location, and quickly and accurately relay that information to the responding agencies. These tools which we now have available to us, plus some other process modifications will be of tremendous help to our public safety agencies and or citizens"*.

In other business, the Commission was briefed on the progress of the NATCOM Project (Natchitoches Parish Emergency Communications Facility) slated for construction in the Natchitoches Business Park. Earlier this year it was reported that despite drastic cuts to the State budget, Sen. Gerald Long said he was able to secure just more than \$5 million for capital outlay projects in Natchitoches Parish during the recent Legislative session. He termed the action a "home run" that came about because of cooperation from his constituents. Part of this funding, \$2.9 million, was earmarked for in the 2012 capital outlay bill

for the Natchitoches Parish Emergency Communications Center. \$1 million was in Priority 2 funding that will be used for planning, and the remaining \$1.9 million will follow in 2014 next year to be used for construction. Carter told the commission that he had been notified by the State Office of Facility and Planning that as of September 15, 2012 the NATCOM project had not received a line of credit by the Louisiana State Bond Commission. This does not necessarily imply that the project will not receive the funding that was initially anticipated. However, Carter said that as a precautionary measure staff has updated the District's Capital Outlay request application to be submitted by the November 1, 2012 deadline for consideration in the 2013 legislative session. When asked, Carter says "*we are hopeful and still very optimistic that this much needed funding will come this year because NATCOM is the future of public safety communications for Natchitoches Parish*"

In other business, and in response to safety concerns, the District voted to authorize an expenditure (not to exceed \$5,000) for fuel source conversion on two of its emergency power supply generators located at the court house facility. Although contingent upon the availability of parts for the existing generators, and an adequate operating pressure for existing natural gas supply lines, this conversion will take place immediately.

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About the Natchitoches Parish Communications District (Natchitoches 9-1-1)

Natchitoches Parish 9-1-1 is committed to providing fast, efficient and effective access to emergency public safety services for all the citizens and visitors to Natchitoches Parish. Since 1988 the "District" has served in a pivotal role ensuring the safety of residents and visitors to Natchitoches Parish by providing the support services, which connects the citizens experiencing emergencies with emergency services via the use of one, easy to remember and simple to use 3-digit number, 9-1-1. The Natchitoches Parish 9-1-1 District provides the equipment and systems necessary to receive 9-1-1 calls from the nearly 40,000 residents of the parish, as well as the ever-increasing numbers of visitors to the area. We are proud to serve as "Natchitoches Parish's Gateway to Public Safety Services".

Find out more at www.natchitoches911.org.