NLCOG
Northwest Louisiana Council of Governments
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Board of Directors Meeting

MINUTES
Friday, August 21, 2026 (9:30 AM)
Government Chambers at Government Plaza
505 Travis St., Shreveport, LA 71101

Members' Present
Dr. Ken Ward – Bossier Parish - Chair
Mrs. Erica Bryant – Caddo Parish – Vice-Chair
Mayor Tom Arceneaux, City of Shreveport
Mr. Bruce Blanton – Webster Parish
Mayor Tom Arceneaux, City of Shreveport
Mr. Eric England - Port of Caddo-Bossier
Dr. Ken Ward – Bossier Parish

Members Absent
Mayor Tommy Chandler – City of Bossier City
Mr. Michael Norton, Chair – DeSoto Parish

Others Present
Mr. Kent Rogers – NLCOG
Mr. Chris Petro – NLCOG
Ms. Heidi Stewart – NLCOG
Ms. Savannah Williams – NLCOG
Mrs. Rita Arnold – NLCOG
Mr. Josh Chevallier – NLCOG Legal Council

Call to Order

Dr. Ward called the meeting to order. He stated that since the invocation and pledge had just been done in the previous meeting, they would just continue on to the meeting.

Dr. Ward asked Mr. Rogers to begin roll call. Mr. Rogers called roll. A quorum was present.

Public Comments

Dr. Ward asked if there were any public comments. Mr. Rogers stated they hadn't received any comments.

Financial

Fiscal Year 2026 End of Year – Pre Audit

Mr. Rogers stated they had received a copy of the financial statements the day before. These are the end of Fiscal Year 2026 Audit numbers. There was nothing that really stood out. Mr. Rogers said that the only thing in terms of expenditure, the overage was for Telephone/DSL/Cell. That had to do when they stopped working with Comcast and transitioned to another provider. There was an overlap in the two different services. Other than that, there is a new line they're showing on the Balance Sheet that has to do with the Right to Use-Accum Amortization, which has to do with the lease for the office space.

Dr. Ward asked if there were any questions or comments. Dr. Ward called for a motion to Approve the Fiscal Year 2026 End of Year Pre-Audit Financial Statements. Mr. England motioned, and Mayor Arceneaux seconded. All approved and motion was passed.

Legal Report

Mr. Chevallier stated that he had no legal report but did want to make an announcement with Mr. Rogers' blessing. He was recently appointed to the Louisiana State Law Institute Local Government Committee which has been re-constituted after being dormant for a while. The citizens asked the committee to look at amendments or changes, such as Streamlining Title 33, anything that needs to be changed on public records or open meetings law. Mr. Chevallier stated that if you were in your council's office, have things they would like to talk about, from what he can tell about the roster, he thinks he's it for Louisiana. He said to please reach out if there's anything they can do to help resolve their particular issue.

Dr. Ward said that they actually went to Baton Rouge to testify on a couple of things about that and about how successful it would be. It's great to have a local voice supporting all of them.

Mr. England said this poses somewhat of a question but it's just an item he knows, is the increasing use of AI Chatbots, AI generated emails for commercial functions. He knows that'll be a topic in one regard to public record requests. Mr. England said he knows that's separate from the meeting, but asked if there's any discussion of that as well? Is that under Title 33 as well?

Mr. Chevallier stated he thinks that would be covered under the open records law. Obviously, we're all experiencing increased use of it. To craft public records requests specifically, it'd be wrong or more detailed a lot more and that's where he's seeing the sensory use of it. He knows there's a major concern and one he's dealing with, and all their local governments are finding and that the use AI generative emails from local government sites and how that affects disclosure, especially if you're using anything that was privileged or confidential. He is sure that will be something that they tackle, but he's not sure what's on the agenda right now.

Mrs. Bryant just wanted to say that in his time there, understanding just the shear amount of time that it's causing their employees to respond to some of the requests. Especially since they've gone to a lot of electronic records and the trend seems to be not to recognize them and it's costing them time to respond to these requests.

Mr. Chevallier said he thinks the laws are very limited right now and it's still working from a paper printed copy calculation of the cost and that's not the administrative cost, that's the IT cost and the time it takes to run the searches.

Dr. Ward asked Mr. Rogers how many public requests they get a month?

Mr. Rogers said maybe one or two. The bigger ones come from the usual suspects. Some of those have been fairly large. Honestly, they haven't dealt with too many.

Other Business

Approval of Minutes

- **Approval of Minutes of Friday, July 24, 2026**

The next item on the agenda was for approval of the minutes of the July 24, 2026, meeting.
Dr. Ward called for a motion to Approve the Minutes as provided. Mayor Arceneaux motioned, and Mr. England seconded. All approved and motion was passed.

Neel-Schaffer MTP Contract Extension

- **Request for No Cost Time Extension**

Mr. Rogers said the next item on the agenda was a request from Neel-Schaffer for a No-Cost Time Extension for the plan update through December of this year. They are still on track to adopt the plan. There were some initial delays in getting some things approved through DOTD for contracting, but they're keeping on track and keeping things going.

Dr. Ward asked when the original plan expires.

Mr. Rogers stated it was through October 31, 2026.

Dr. Ward asked if there were any further questions. Having none, Dr. Ward entertained a motion to Approve the No Cost Time Extension for Neel-Shaffer. Mr. Blanton motioned, and Mayor Arceneaux seconded. Dr. Ward called for questions or comments. Having none, the chair called for a vote and the motion passed.

Announcements

Mr. Rogers stated that the next regularly scheduled meeting for the Board of Directors will be on Friday, September 18, 2026, at Government Plaza in the Government Chambers.

Adjourn

With no remaining agenda items, Dr. Ward entertained a motion to adjourn. Mayor Arceneaux motioned, and Mr. Blanton seconded. The meeting was adjourned.



J. Kent Rogers, Secretary