

Minutes
Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network
Board of Managers
May 24, 2023

The May 24, 2023, meeting of the Board of Managers of the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network (GHC 9-1-1) convened at 1:01 p.m. in the Board Room of the GHC 9-1-1 at 10220 Fairbanks N. Houston Rd., Houston, Texas 77064.

Board Members Bill Anders, Russell Rau, Vergil Ratliff, Mark Denman, Shawn Thompson, and legal counsel Nick Santulli, Harris County Assistant Attorney, were present. There were 31 people in attendance.

Agenda Item 1—"Call to Order" The U.S. and Texas pledges of allegiance were recited.

Agenda Item 2—"Approval of Minutes". The minutes of the Board meeting on April 26, 2023, were approved with a motion by Board Member Denman, and second by Board Secretary Anders. Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 3—"Citizens Appearances." There were no citizens wishing to appear before the Board.

Taken out of order: Agenda Item 8—"Resolution: Recognition of Retirement—Dr. Valgene Holmes, Practicum Coordinator, High School for Law and Justice, Houston Independent School District. Public Information Officer Sonya Clauson introduced Dr. Valgene Holmes. Dr. Holmes spoke briefly about his vision and his proposal to GHC 9-1-1, 28 years ago, to develop a program to teach high school students about 9-1-1 communications and guide them on a career path in emergency services. He thanked GHC 9-1-1's Board of Managers and staff for believing in his vision, helping to make it a reality and for the ongoing support to make the program the success it is today. The resolution was read, then approved with a motion by Board Secretary Anders; second by Board Member Denman. Motion passed unanimously. Dr. Holmes was surprised with heartfelt testimonials by former students, who were present, and are now employed as call-takers, trainers, and managers at the Houston Emergency Center and other call centers throughout the GHC 9-1-1 area.

Agenda Item 4—"Financial Report." Fiscal Officer Richard Corbitt presented the monthly financial update for the period ending May 31, 2023. He reviewed the monthly overtime expenses for Houston Emergency Center (HEC) and Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO). The monthly financial totals ending March 31, 2023, were as follows:

- Cash and cash equivalents \$15.4 million
- Invested funds for Operations \$14.0 million
- Liabilities \$11.1 million
- Receipts \$15.7 million
- Disbursements \$15.8 million

Mr. Corbitt highlighted in the monthly receipts, the interest budget line item, noting the significant return was received due to the current higher interest rates through the Network’s financial institution. He advised that GHC 9-1-1 had executed the final Texas ARPA grant contract and it has been accepted by the Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC). Claims for reimbursement will be submitted starting June 2023 continuing through year-end 2024 and could be extended into the beginning of 2025. Mr. Corbitt concluded with a review of the remaining budget balance, receipts and disbursements, 9-1-1 service fee revenue, cash expenditures trend-line charts and investment detail, and the quarterly PSAP training and travel expenses update. There was a brief discussion about the financial institution used by the Network and possible their exposure to failure. Mr. Corbitt said he has been researching other options to secure funds in case there is a need. Mr. Heffernan stated that they were verifying with legal if the Network’s financial accounts are covered beyond the standard FDIC insured amount.

Agenda Item 5—“Executive Director Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Legislative/Regulatory and Administrative Matters.” Executive Director Stan Heffernan stated that the grant process was lengthy and noted that 9-1-1 Services Officer Roger Hauck and IT Officer Mike Hayes worked with Mr. Corbitt to complete the details, as majority of the expenses were for systems that their divisions are responsible for. He provided a brief update and photos of the staff appreciation event. Board Member Ratliff mentioned seeing staff members that she did not recognize. Mr. Heffernan stated there were new staff and contractors, and the staff roster with photos would be updated and provided to the Board.

Agenda Item 6—“Operations Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Operational Matters.” Mr. Heffernan reported there were no internal/external P1 service issues during the month of April 2023. The network utilize activity was normal; the Enterprise PSAP 9-1-1 Sessions graph shows wireless 9-1-1 calls continue to be over 91%. Call volume statistics provided by the Houston Emergency Center (HEC), Harris County Sheriff’s Office (HCSO), Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office (FBCSO) were provided, and the GHC 9-1-1 SLA report, training updates, and the GIS monthly service/tasks report were provided. Board Member Denman stated that call volume at the major centers has been significantly higher for the past few months and might continue to increase, which will affect service

levels at the call center. Mr. Heffernan said staff are aware of the call volume increase and have discussed it internally, and with staff at the HEC. The increase could be due to businesses ending remote work, so more people are out, and it is getting into the Summer months.

Board Member Denman commended Mr. Heffernan on the annual report that he provided to the Board and requested a quarterly update, beginning with the July 2023 meeting, on the progress of the goals and objectives. Mr. Heffernan acknowledged. Chairman Rau mentioned a recent news story regarding staffing at the HEC. He reiterated GHC 9-1-1's commitment to assist the City of Houston/HEC, and suggested having a study done, as an option to identify ways to retain staff.

Action: Agenda Item 7—"Public Information/Education Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Public Education Outreach Efforts." Public Information Officer Sonya Clauson talked about the new process for ordering education materials, and noted the community events where education materials were distributed during the month of April. She highlighted municipalities that presented proclamations recognizing April 9-15, 2023 as Public Safety Telecommunication Week during their Council meeting. Ms. Clauson shared the campaign that was developed and implemented by the Public Educations of Texas (PETs) for 9-1-1 Education Month (April), which ran on social media platforms along with GHC 9-1-1's education campaign highlighted the 9-1-1 first responders. She gave an update on the GHC 9-1-1's ongoing campaign promoting telecommunicator recruitment campaign, and GHC 9-1-1's social media activity.

Board Member Denman requested legal counsel Nick Santulli, who was standing in for Ms. Haley New, Assistant County Attorney, legal counsel to the Board, to ask her to look into and advise what freedom does the Board have to reward local telecommunicators, who win State awards, with tokens of appreciation—if GHC 9-1-1 funds cannot be use, can the Network host a charitable event to raise funds for the tokens of appreciation. Mr. Santulli said they would research the request.

Board Secretary Anders mentioned that it was National Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Week, and the 48th year of emergency services. He gave a brief history of EMS and how it came to be what it is now in Texas.

Action: Item 9 "Executive Session—Personnel: Evaluation of Executive Director (ED) and Consideration of Compensation Increase." The Board went into executive session at 2:02 p.m., room 123B, pursuant to Section 551.074(A)(1) of the Texas Government Code for the purpose of discussing specific personnel matters.

The Board returned from executive session at 3:13 p.m. Chairman Rau called for any motions. Board Secretary Anders made a motion to approve a 4% salary increase for the Executive Director, effective June 1, 2023. Board Member Ratliff second the motion. There was a quorum present, but Board Member Denman was not present when the motion was made. Upon his return to the room, Board Secretary Anders repeated the motion; Board Member Ratliff seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 10—"Announcements—Next Board Meeting, Save-the-Dates." Chairman Rau announced 1) there would not be a meeting June 2023, and the next meeting is scheduled for July 26, 2023; 2) 2023 NENA Conference & Expo, June 18 – 22, 2023, Grapevine, TX.

There being no further action, the meeting was adjourned at 3:16 p.m.



Russell S. Rau, Chairman



William B. Anders, Secretary