

II. Approval of Minutes—Board Meeting on May 22, 2024

Minutes

Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network

Board of Managers Meeting

DATE	May 22, 2024
TIME	1:04 PM
LOCATION	Board Room of the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network (GHC 9-1-1) at 10220 Fairbanks N. Houston Rd., Houston, Texas 77064.

IN ATTENDANCE

Board Members Russell Rau, Bill Anders, Mark Denman, Vergil Ratliff, Shawn Thompson, and legal counsel Nicholas Santulli were present. There were 25 people in attendance.

- I. Call to Order—The U.S. and Texas pledges of allegiance were recited.
- II. Approval of Minutes—The minutes from the Board meeting of April 17, 2024, were approved with a motion by Board Member Denman, and second by Board Member Ratliff. The vote passed unanimously.
- III. Citizens Comments—There were no citizens wishing to appear before the Board.
- IV. Executive Director Report— Executive Director Stan Heffernan provided a high-level update on state and federal legislative developments and briefed the Board on organizational activities, as noted in the Board Report. He mentioned that more detailed discussions on funding and Proposition 8 will occur in next month's meeting. Heffernan also discussed the impact of the unnamed storm on May 16, 2024, which caused a significant increase in call volume within four hours. Further analysis of the storm's effects on their systems will be presented in the next Board Meeting. AT&T Representative Thompson responded to Chairman Rau's inquiry about power loss at cell towers, explaining that each tower has backup batteries lasting up to eight hours, after which generators are deployed. She noted that 803 cell towers went down during the storm, 716 were restored, but 87 remained down due to transmission tower failures. Board Member Denman asked about the fate of 9-1-1 calls during the storm. Heffernan explained that they are investigating what happened to those calls and emphasized the advancements in 9-1-1 technology, assuring the Board that the public is well-served. The

discussion concluded with a note that data on the storm's impact on 9-1-1 calls is being collected and analyzed.

- V. Financial Report— Fiscal Officer Richard Corbitt presented the monthly financial reports for the period ending April 30, 2024, highlighting changes in asset titles to "Invested Funds for Operations/Infrastructure," which now includes commercial paper, treasury bills, and the initial installment of Proposition 8 funds. He addressed PSAP overtime expenses, noting Houston Emergency Center (HEC) and Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) overtime expenditures are approximately \$100,000 per payroll, underspending their budget by \$50,000 per payroll. Mr. Corbitt emphasized specific financial lines and graphs, including concerns raised by Chairman Rau regarding the source of funds primarily from Grant/Proposition 8, attributed to a substantial \$14 million inflow this year. Updates to the Board included a forthcoming bank transition to Chase, 2025 budget preparations, and plans for a 10-year budget, with Proposition 8 funds earmarked for GHC 9-1-1 pending fee increases. Additionally, Mr. Corbitt informed the Board of an auditing firm change from Belt Harris Pechacek LLLP (BHP) to Crowe LLP, clarifying it as a name change with operational continuity. Chairman Rau proposed scheduling the first budget workshop earlier in the year to allow the Board additional review time where Mr. Heffernan confirmed that the 2025 Budget is already being prepared and that a workshop will be an action item in the upcoming Board of Managers Meeting. Mr. Corbitt confirmed with Chairman Rau that a new engagement letter has been created with the new auditors. Mr. Santulli agreed it is prudent to have a signing agreement with Crowe LLP, acknowledging they are the same auditing company performing the same tasks, which Mr. Corbitt confirmed was completed.
- VI. 9-1-1 Division Report—9-1-1 Services Division Officer Roger Hauck provided an overview of the 911 services divisional activity for April, noting that everything was within normal parameters. He then shifted to discussing call volume, highlighting that wireless calls continued to account for over 90% of total calls. Mr. Hauck proceeded to review the call volume charts for HEC, HCSO, and FBCSO, acknowledging a decrease in SLA performance due to recent storms, with expectations for improvement in the coming months. During the meeting, Chairman Russell Rau inquired about storm preparedness at call centers. Executive Director Stan Heffernan responded affirmatively, noting that while preparations are routine, the severity of the recent storm exceeded expectations. He emphasized the importance of readiness when anticipating adverse weather conditions. Additionally, Mr. Hauck mentioned an upcoming interoperability meeting among major centers to refine protocols based on lessons learned from this storm. He then presented the Call Center SLA Statistics, highlighting strong performance with an overall network average exceeding 98% in SLAs. Board Member Denman pointed out that the Fort Bend report needs to undergo a formula check due to an error with the chart, Mr. Hauck confirmed he will address the issue with the agency. Board Member Denman also commended Fort Bend and Harris County for their robust SLA performance, noting their impressive numbers ranging from 98% to 99%. Furthermore, Board Member Denman requested adding a footnote in next month's SLA report, anticipating potential skewing due to the recent storm.

PSAP Training Manager Mindi Bartee provided updates on PSAP training, noting that GHC 9-1-1 did not host an equipment course but instead offered a professional growth course titled "Communicating Discipline." The course was attended by 38 students, and an additional 42 students participated in online training. When Board Member Denman inquired about attendance levels,

Mrs. Bartee confirmed that these numbers represented a slight increase compared to the previous year. Chairman Rau reflected on the recent PSAP OPS Meeting, praising the strong camaraderie observed among participants as impressive.

Public Information Officer Sonya Clauson provided an update on community outreach events, noting the current busy season for their activities. She highlighted her participation in an event at Old Town Spring, featuring a 9-1-1 booth staffed by volunteers from HSCO and TECC. Ms. Clauson also showcased new Public Education materials developed by community outreach specialist Justena Kelly. In April, during 9-1-1 Education Month and Telecommunicator week, GHC 9-1-1 launched a campaign celebrating telecommunicators and their essential role. This campaign was promoted across various digital platforms including search engines, YouTube, and social media. Looking ahead, Ms. Clauson announced plans for a new campaign starting in early June and running through September, which will reinforce the message that 9-1-1 is solely for emergencies. Additionally, there will be a campaign focusing on "knowing your phone," educating the public about different phone features. Another campaign will spotlight the responder map on 911.org, Ms. Clauson plans on collaborating with the GIS division to enhance it with additional contact information and online portals for jurisdictions. Ms. Clauson also shared news of another award for GHC 9-1-1's "Don't Call Us for That" campaign, receiving recognition from The Tully Awards. Board Member Anders commended the recent updates on Facebook and praised Justena Kelly for her impactful posts.

- VII. Operations Division (Ops) Report— Operations Division Officer Sam Mitchell presented the ticket breakdown chart, indicating that all activities appeared normal. He noted that in April, strong storms affected the Memorial Village PSAP, there were multiple utility power outages and the site's backup power was not sufficient. Facilities monitored the UPS runtime closely and as a precaution, they deployed a mobile generator to ensure operational readiness of the 9-1-1 equipment. The generator ran for 2 hours at Memorial Village until stability returned, remaining available for 24 hours thereafter. Mr. Mitchell also informed the board that in April, the Network Operations Center (NOC) team conducted an evacuation drill to test redundancies and activation processes. Equipment at the northern Data Center was tested to determine its capability to support NOC operations, which proved successful. Mr. Mitchell mentioned that these experiences provided valuable learning opportunities for improving future responses.
- VIII. Information Technology (IT) Division Report— IT Officer Mike Hayes provided an update on the IT and GIS division activities. He specifically highlighted progress on the wireless dispatchable location discussed in the previous board meeting, noting a new class of service identified in the ALI records. Mr. Hayes further explained that Verizon Wireless is commencing deployment of a wireless enhanced radio access network in high-rises and multi-story buildings. He mentioned that his team has contacted wireless providers to request updates to ensure call takers are prepared. During discussions, Chairman Rau queried the timing of the information from service providers. Mr. Hayes responded that there might already be regulations in place that he was not yet aware of. Board Member Denman raised the importance of incorporating this information into training sessions, to which Mindi Bartee assured the board that recent training newsletters had covered this topic and emphasized her collaboration with Brenda Pope with the GIS division to gather information from carriers effectively.

- IX. Announcements: The next Board of Managers Meeting is scheduled for July 24, 2024, with business casual attire welcomed. The NENA conference will take place from June 28 to July 3, 2024, in Orlando, Florida. Additionally, mark your calendars for the Golf Tournament on Thursday, September 12, 2024, starting at 9:11 AM.

There being no further action, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 P.M.



Russell S. Rau, Chairman



William B. Anders, Secretary