

Minutes
Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network
Board of Managers
December 14, 2022

The December 14, 2022 meeting of the Board of Managers of the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network (GHC 9-1-1) convened at 1:14 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, Dennis Storemski, Mark Denman, Russell Rau, Vergil Ratliff, and legal counsel Philip Berzins, Harris County Assistant Attorney, were present for the meeting. Board Member Shawn Thompson did not attend the meeting. 26 people were 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 October 26, 2022 were approved with a motion by Board Member Denman and seconded by Board Member Storemski. Motion passed unanimously.

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

Agenda Item 4—“Financial Report.” Fiscal Officer Richard Corbitt provided an overview of the monthly financial report totals ending November 30, 2022 as follows:

- Cash and cash equivalents \$ 18.8 million
- Invested funds for Operations \$ 13.7 million
- Liabilities \$ 12.8 million
- Receipts \$ 43.7 million
- Disbursements \$ 34.6 million

He continued with the overtime expenses for the Houston Emergency Center (HEC) and Harris County Sheriff’s Office (HCSO) for January 1, 2022 through November 30, 2022, the remaining budget balance, receipts and disbursements, 9-1-1 service fee revenue, and cash expenditures trend-line charts. Mr. Corbitt gave an update on the NG9-1-1 federal funding. He mentioned that GHC 9-1-1 is currently working with Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC) to provide additional information on the sub-projects submitted for reimbursements (November 2021 through December 2024).

Agenda Item 5—“Executive Director Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Legislative/Regulatory and Administrative Matters.” Executive Director, Stan Heffernan reported that there were no Federal updates to report. Mr. Heffernan referred to agenda item 8, for an update on the 9-1-1 wireless fee legislation efforts.

Agenda Item 6—“Operations Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Operational Matters.” Mr. Heffernan reported that there were no internal/external P1 service issue tickets during the month of October and November, 2022. Mr. Heffernan provided an overview of the network utilization charts, the PSAP 9-1-1 call sessions report, the PSAP 9-1-1 trending charts, and the call volume statistics provided by Houston Emergency Center (HEC), Harris County Sheriff’s Office (HCSO), and Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office (FBCSO). Mr. Heffernan provided an overview of the 9-1-1 calls Service Level Agreement (SLA), and training reports. Chairman Rau asked about what platform GHC 9-1-1 uses for the online trainings. GHC 9-1-1 Service Officer, Roger Hauck stated the Learning Management System (LMS). Next, Information Technology Officer, Mike Hayes gave an update on types of annexations and the effect on emergency service response areas. He advised that the GHC 9-1-1 GIS group is working with jurisdictions to improve the annexation reporting process and ensure that the GHC 9-1-1 map response boundaries are correct and maintained. Board Member Denman asked if annexations could cause difference in 9-1-1 call volume reported by HEC, HCSO, and FBCSO. Mr. Hayes stated no. Board Member Denman mentioned the 9-1-1 call/text volume statistics reported by the three major centers. There was some discussion on the statistics and the reasons the volume might be decreasing/increasing. Board Member Denman said if the 9-1-1 public education messages are effective in decreasing call volume, that effort should be continued. Mr. Heffernan concluded the Operations report with an update on the monthly GIS service requests/tasks.

Chairman Rau expressed the idea of having an agenda item for PSAPs (HEC, HCSO, and FBCSO) to have the opportunity to share information related to their center’s operations with the Board. Mr. Berzins, legal counsel, said he would look into whether this was permissible and report back to the Board. Chairman Rau offered Mr. George Buenik, Director of Public Safety and Homeland Security, City of Houston (City) the opportunity to share updates on HEC’s call volume, Police 10-digit calls vs 9-1-1 calls, HEC staffing and recruitment. Mr. Buenik mentioned that the Mayor wanted to know what was happening nationally with staffing and call volume, so a survey was distributed by the emergency management division to gather information. He added that many places across the country hire call-takers, who are also dispatchers, therefore paid a higher salary. Chairman Rau asked who answers the non-emergency calls. Mr. Buenik stated a group of assigned call-takers and the high school students handle that line. HEC Director Robert Mock added that HEC is making progress with the hiring process, currently training 16 call-takers and more onboarding in mid-January. Mr. Mock stated that retention was an issue due to the nature of the job. He added there are

a great deal of job opportunities out there that are less stressful, off on weekends and holidays that pay the same as a call-taker.

Agenda Item 7—“Public Information/Education Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Public Education Outreach Efforts.” Public Information Officer Sonya Clauson provided a summary of the distribution of 9-1-1 education materials during the months of October and November 2022. Next, Ms. Clauson reviewed the analytics of the telecommunicator recruitment efforts (videos and job postings) shared through GHC 9-1-1’s social media pages; Facebook, You-Tube, Google, and GHC 9-1-1’s website. Ms. Clauson stated that the telecommunicator ads would run through the end of December 2022. She advised that GHC 9-1-1 is collaborating with community colleges to help share telecommunicator recruitment messages for their job fair events. Lastly, Ms. Clauson gave an update on GHC 9-1-1’s social media sites.

Action: Action Item 8—“9-1-1 Wireless Fee Legislation—Transmittal and Consideration for Approval to Support a Statewide 9-1-1 Wireless Fee Legislation Effort.” Anya McInnis, Government and Public Affairs Liaison gave an update on the 88th Texas Legislative Session 2023. Ms. McInnis reported that the draft bill for the 9-1-1 wireless fee legislation has been drafted by her team and is currently at Legislative Council. She said the recommendation is for a one fee cap option currently set at \$0.85 (legislature will determine that fee cap option), the percentage and the allocation of funds to 9-1-1 entities in the state. Ms. McInnis explained that once the Bill gets a number and an author, GHC 9-1-1 may distribute resolutions to member entities and PSAPs, seeking support of the wireless fee increase. There was a short discussion about the advantages of conducting a statewide public opinion poll in support for the 9-1-1 wireless fee increase. After answering some questions from the Board, Ms. McInnis ended her report. Chairman Rau advised that as soon as the Bill has a number, to place the resolution on the agenda for Board approval. Ms. McInnis announced that Shayne Woodward, former liaison for the Alliance, is now the Governor’s Legislative Director. Board Member Denman made the motion to amend, take no action. Board Secretary Anders seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 9— “Announcements—Next Board Meeting, Save-the-Dates.” Chairman Rau advised of the following: 1) The next Board of Managers’ meeting is Scheduled on Wednesday, January 25, 2023; 2) 9-1-1 Goes to Washington, February 26 – March 1, 2023, Arlington, VA.

There being no further action, the meeting adjourned at 2:31 p.m.

Russell S. Rau, Chairman

William B. Anders, Secretary