

Minutes  
Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network  
Board of Managers  
August 24, 2022

The August 24, 2022 meeting of the Board of Managers of the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network (GHC 9-1-1) convened at 1:04 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, Vergil Ratliff, Chairman Russell Rau, Dennis Storemski, Shawn Thompson, and legal counsel Philip Berzins, Harris County Assistant Attorney, were present for the meeting. 23 people were in attendance.

Agenda Item 1—"Pledges of Allegiance" The U.S. and Texas pledges of allegiance were recited.

Agenda Item 2—"Approval of Minutes": The minutes of the Board meeting on July 27, 2022 were approved with a motion by Board Secretary Anders and seconded by Board Member Ratliff. Motion passed unanimously.

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

Agenda Item 4—"Financial Report." New Fiscal Officer, Richard 'Rick' Corbitt was present for the meeting and observed the financial report presented by Chief Financial Officer Tino Fonseca. Mr. Fonseca provided an overview of the overtime expenses and the monthly financial report totals ending July 31, 2022 as follows:

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|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| • Cash and cash equivalents     | \$ 19.9 million |
| • Invested funds for Operations | \$ 12.0 million |
| • Liabilities                   | \$ 12.6 million |
| • Receipts                      | \$ 26.8 million |
| • Disbursements                 | \$ 18.3 million |

Mr. Fonseca proceeded to report on the remaining budget balance report, the receipts and disbursements report, the 9-1-1 service fee revenue, and cash expenditures trend-line charts.

Agenda Item 5—"Executive Director Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Legislative/Regulatory and Administrative Matters." Executive Director, Stan Heffernan stated there are no Federal and State updates to report. Mr. Heffernan announced that

GHC 9-1-1 employee, Michelle Manuel, GIS Analyst is retiring effective August 26, 2022 after 30 years of service in the emergency communications and 9-1-1 industry. Mr. Heffernan said she will be greatly missed and wished her the best in her future endeavors. Next, Mr. Heffernan stated that GHC 9-1-1's salary study is complete and will share it with the Board.

Agenda Item 6—"Operations Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Operational Matters." Mr. Heffernan reported there were no internal/external P1 service issue tickets during the month of July, 2022. He 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 continued to report on the 9-1-1 call Service Level Agreement (SLA) report for the month of July, 2022. Next, he briefly reported on the PSAP training and attendance report for the month of July, 2022. Mr. Heffernan concluded his report with an overview of the GIS/database monthly service requests/tasks. Chairman Rau asked for an update regarding GHC 9-1-1's staff COVID-19. Mr. Heffernan stated that GHC 9-1-1 continues to follow COVID-19 health protocols to keep staff safe and keeping an eye on COVID-19 data/cases. Board Member Storemski inquired about GHC 9-1-1's vacant positions. Mr. Heffernan said there are 45 staff positions, included are 11 vacancies that are current contract for hire. Mr. Fonseca explained that when contracts transition to staff, there are no changes to the budget, salary and contract budgets are funded for the year. Chairman Rau asked if GHC 9-1-1 is experiencing staffing difficulties. Mr. Heffernan stated there are some hiring challenges in the technology department since most applicants are wanting to work remote.

Agenda Item 7—"Public Information/Education Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Public Education Outreach Efforts." Public Information Officer Sonya Clauson reported on the 9-1-1 education outreach efforts, she stated that GHC 9-1-1 provided information to school districts about 9-1-1 literature available for all students. Ms. Clauson mentioned that GHC 9-1-1 is preparing for fall events and presented the list of the agencies that hosted 9-1-1 community events in the month of July, 2022. She added that PSAP coordinators were provided with information about how to request 9-1-1 education materials. Next, Ms. Clauson provided an update on the summer media campaign, she highlighted that the TV and Over the Top (OTT) campaigns end in July, 2022 and radio/streaming end in August, 2022. Ms. Clauson provided a summary of collected data for digital marketing, social media, and streaming radio for the month of July. Ms. Clauson stated that GHC 9-1-1 is working with 9-1-1 call centers on an awareness plan that will focus on the message "only contact 9-1-1 for emergencies—police, fire, or medical." There will be outreach efforts to jurisdictions, elected officials, and public safety agency leaders to help spread the message. Lastly, Ms. Clauson provided an

overview on the GHC 9-1-1 social media sites. Ms. Clauson highlighted that the LinkedIn was added to GHC 9-1-1's social media pages to help with the telecommunicator recruitment efforts.

Board Member Storemski questioned the effectiveness of the 9-1-1 public education messages and the dollar amount spent on the advertisements, since two-thirds of 9-1-1 calls are non-emergency calls. Mr. Heffernan stated that GHC 9-1-1 is working on new methods and strategies to improve 9-1-1 public messages to help reduce non-emergency calls to 9-1-1. Chairman Rau asked if there are procedures for handling non-emergency calls. Mr. Heffernan said each call center has their own protocols and handle non-emergency calls differently, but tools are available for call centers to utilize; such as the announcement button which provides the recording. HEC Director, Robert Mock stated that telecommunicators are trained to make the decision to utilize the announcement button recording based on HEC's protocols and that all 9-1-1 calls requesting police, EMS, or fire are serviced. There was a short discussion about what can be done to help define and educate the public on true emergencies, to stop overloading the 911 system with non-emergency calls. Ms. Clauson mentioned that the City of Houston is putting out a brochure and other PSA's to help educate the public on how to appropriately use non-emergency numbers such as 3-1-1, 9-8-8, ect. Chairman Rau thanked Mr. Storemski's input/concerns regarding the 9-1-1 public education messages and funding.

Action Item 8—"Texas SmartBuy Program—Transmittal and Consideration for Approval of a Resolution Authorizing GHC 9-1-1 to participate in the Texas SmartBuy Program and Pay an Annual Fee to Maintain Membership." Board Secretary Anders motioned to approve the request. Board Member Storemski seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Member Ratliff took a moment to welcome back Board Member Thompson. Ms. Ratliff informed everyone that Ms. Thompson had been severely ill at the hospital whom also recently lost a family member. She added that Board Members and GHC 9-1-1 staff did not know about Ms. Thompson health condition and expressed her heartfelt sympathy to Ms. Thompson.

Action Item 9—"GHC 9-1-1 Budget—Transmittal and Discussion of Proposed Budget for Year 2023." Mr. Fonseca stated that no official Board action is necessary, the purpose of the draft budget presentation is to gather the Board's input, before the final approval is requested at the September, 2022 Board meeting. He added that the salary merit increase amount will require the Board's action at this meeting, and will be presented for approval at the September, 2022 Board meeting. Mr. Fonseca proceeded to review the details outlined in the proposed budget: I. Five year projection 2023-2027; II. Summary

Projected Receipts and Operational/Capital Budget 2023; III. Operational and Capital budget 2023; IV Graph for 2023 Budget; V. Exhibits. In summary, Mr. Fonseca answered some questions from the Board regarding the grant proceeds in the budget. Next, Mr. Fonseca highlighted the “Salaries and Benefits” line item. He stated that there was a 10 thousand dollar increase for health benefits and noted the merit increase cost options. Mr. Storemski inquired about the funding for salaries and vacancies. Mr. Fonseca explained that the proposed 6.1 million for salaries (a 10k increase) is to fund GHC 9-1-1’s 45 positions including vacancies and must be funded all year long, in case contracts are hired to fill those positions. Mr. Fonseca continued to present the public education budget noting a 20% increase. Chairman Rau emphasized the importance of tracking the data for non-emergency calls, and what can be done to reduce those numbers. Mr. Heffernan stated that GHC 9-1-1 will try to come up with new ways to advertise 9-1-1 messages. Ms. Clauson noted that GHC 9-1-1 website is receiving more attention from social media applications, as well printing of literature has increased. Ms. Clauson added that the emergency profile sign-up messages were replaced by the telecommunicator recruitment messages. Chairman Rau stated that public education budget adjustments can be made at the September, 2022 Board meeting.

Next, HEC Director Robert Mock presented HEC’s 2023 proposed budget. Mr. Mock explained HEC’s budget for 9-1-1 operations requests in detail, he then answered a few questions regarding HEC’s staffing and the High School for Law and Justice Student program; training and Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) certification requirements. Without any further questions, Mr. Mock closed his presentation.

HCSO 9-1-1 Coordinator, Tim Staten presented HCSO’s 2023 proposed budget. Mr. Staten thanked GHC 9-1-1 for all the support. He provided a summary of HCSO 9-1-1 call volume from 2017-2022. Next, Mr. Staten discussed HCSO’s staffing, and 9-1-1 telecommunicator training and salaries. Chairman Rau asked about HCSO’s handling of non-emergency calls. Mr. Staten explained that telecommunicators are trained to ask questions and determine the type of service needed, to immediately contact the appropriate agency to dispatch. Mr. Staten concluded his presentation.

FBCSO Public Safety Communications Manager, Meghan Rivas presented FBCSO 2023 proposed budget. She discussed 9-1-1 call volume statistics, staffing, and recruitment. Ms. Rivas stated that the total cost for 15 positions is \$1.2 million, which includes; 11 Telecommunications officer positions and 4 Communications Coordinator positions, personnel benefits and the 10% salary increase for fiscal year 2023 which is contingent upon FBC Commissioner’s Court approval. Without any further questions Ms. Rivas concluded her presentation. Board Secretary Anders asked about the job reclassification for 9-1-1 telecommunicators as “first responders” and what can be done to push that

effort, so that they may get paid more. Mr. Mock added that even though the telecommunicators have been reclassified as “first responders” by the State of Texas, they are still being paid as clerical level. Chairman Rau thanked HEC, HCSO, and FBCSO for presenting their budget requests. Mr. Fonseca proceeded to present the proposed budget. Chairman Rau noted that \$6,000 was budgeted for Zoom and suggested Microsoft Teams. Mr. Fonseca stated that GHC 9-1-1 budgeted that amount for the entire year for 45 accounts and thanked Mr. Rau for his suggestion. Lastly, Mr. Fonseca concluded the proposed budget presentation for fiscal year 2023. There were no further questions.

Action Item 10—“Employee Merit Increase Rate—Consideration of the Employee Merit Increase Rate to be Included in the Budget for Year 2023.” Board Secretary Anders motioned to increase the GHC 9-1-1 employee salary by 4%. The motion was seconded by Board Member Storemski. Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 11—“Announcements—Next Board Meeting, Save-the-Dates.” Chairman Rau advised of the following: 1) the next meeting of the Board of Managers of GHC 9-1-1 is scheduled for Wednesday, September 28, 2022. Mr. Rau mentioned that request for approval of the 2023 budget will be on the agenda. 2) NG9-1-1 Standards & Best Practices Conference, January 17 – 20, 2023 and Critical Issues Forum, January 20 – 21, 2023 in San Diego, CA; 3). 9-1-1 Goes to Washington, February 26 – March 1, 2023, Arlington, VA. Please let Daveda know if Board Members are interested in attending.

There being no further action, the meeting adjourned at 3:23 p.m.



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Russell S. Rau, Chairman



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William B. Anders, Secretary