

Minutes
Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network
Board of Managers
March 27, 2019

The March 27, 2019 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 headquarters at 10220 Fairbanks N. Houston Rd., Houston, Texas 77064.

Board Members Bill Anders, Dennis Storemski, Gary Johnson, Russell Rau, Shawn Thompson, and Vergil Ratliff, were present for the meeting. Approximately 25 people were in attendance.

The minutes of the Board meeting of February 27, 2019 were approved with a motion by Board Secretary Anders and seconded by Board Member Ratliff. Motion unanimously passed.

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

Agenda Item 4—“Financial Report.” Chief Financial Officer Tino Fonseca reported the monthly financial totals ending February 28, 2019 as follows:

- Cash and cash equivalents \$ 5.5 million
- Invested funds for Operations \$ 11.9 million
- Liabilities \$ 5.6 million
- Receipts \$ 7.5 million
- Disbursements \$ 5.4 million

Mr. Fonseca provided a brief overview of the remaining budget balance report, Receipts and Disbursements, 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 Lavergne Schwender provided a brief report on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)—Phase II Location Requirement. Next, Ms. Schwender reported that the US Congress and TX Legislature are both trying to reclassify the job classification for 9-1-1 dispatchers, as described in HB1090—relating to the definition of first responder.

Government Liaison, Anya McInnis stated that 9-1-1 dispatchers were not included in a study provided in the last legislature session, because they were not defined as first responders in the Homeland Security Act. She added that if HB1090 passes 9-1-1 dispatchers will be defined as first responders.

Ms. Schwender proceeded with an update on the decisions of the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals (CCA) relative to the Open Records Act. She stated that on February 27, 2019, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals struck down a quorum provision of the Texas Open Meetings Act declaring section 551.143(a) of the Texas Government Code as “unconstitutionally vague”. Assistant County Attorney Nick Lykos explained that as written, the act makes it a crime for members of a government body, governed by the act, to “knowingly conspire to circumvent the chapter by meeting in numbers less than a quorum for the purpose of secret deliberations.” This practice is described as a “walking quorum.” Mr. Lykos mentioned that the CCA’s decision originated from a case in Montgomery County involving an elected official who met privately with another elected official and a political consultant to discuss business—since the “walking quorum provision was deemed “vague,” the criminal charge against the Montgomery County elected official was thrown out. Mr. Lykos stated that with the Legislature in session, identical bills had been filed to clarify the provision of a “walking quorum—SB 1640 filed by State Senator Kirk Watson and HB 3402 filed by State Representative Dade Phelan.

Next, Ms. Schwender reported that the Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office changed its dispatch policy—all calls for service are now dispatched to sheriff deputies, instead of to constables in supplemental patrol areas. She mentioned that Deputy Constable Wayne Thompson disagrees with the statement that the Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office is the primary law-enforcement agency for the county. There was a short discussion regarding the changed dispatch policy and Mr. Lykos advised that no action need to be taken by GHC 9-1-1. Board member Storemski inquired about how the Harris County Sheriff’s Office (HCSO) handles calls for service. HCSO Communications Director Kathi Yost advised that HCSO has a joint law enforcement tech committee consisting of the Sheriff’s office, eight constables, and the Fire Marshal’s and they all have the same CAD system. She stated that service calls get dispatched based on GIS data, contracts, and geo-routing, in which the closest unit will respond.

GHC 9-1-1 Government Liaison, Anya McInnis, gave an update on the 86th Texas Legislative Session. Mrs. McInnis highlighted that 7,281 bills were filled by the deadline, and Lt. Governor Patrick announced the 30 bills he selected as his top priorities for the 2019 session. Next, Mrs. McInnis provided an update on the Wireless 9-1-1 Reliability and Sustainability Legislation. She mentioned that bill

drafted by council was not filed. Discussions by legal counsel, legislators and legislative staff, determined that the bill was convoluted and it was not sponsored by a legislator. She advised that the House rules require that if a bill increases a fee, the fee increase has to be stipulated in the caption of the bill. And, due to today's political climate for fee increases, the success of filing a bill to increase fees would not be successful. It was recommended that other courses of action be taken in order to file the bill. Other proposed actions include providing information and communication regarding and during a disaster, and focusing on removing exceptions for wired and wireless broadband connections to our current fee base, along with a focused interim study on NG 9-1-1 funding. Lastly, Mrs. McInnis added that a concurrent resolution for a joint study between Senate Business and Commerce and the House State Affairs Committees will come together to discuss implementation of NG 9-1-1. After a short discussion regarding the course of actions that need to be considered. Chairman Rau advised that the Executive staff should start looking into reducing expenditures. Ms. Schwender stated that the team has been monitoring the budget and has been preparing. Mr. Fonseca mentioned that there's time to look into some options during the annual budget cycles over the next five to seven years.

Ms. Schwender then reported that approximately 16 GHC 9-1-1 staff and Board members attended the funeral for Tom Bass. She included pictures from Harris County Commissioners Court presenting a resolution to the Bass family, on Tuesday, March 26, 2019 recognizing Tom Bass for his public service. She also included several memorable pictures and an article about Mr. Tom Bass were printed in the Houston Chronicle.

Agenda Item 6—"Operations Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Operational Matters." At the request of Board Member Ratliff, Chief Operations Officer Stan Heffernan presented the call count totals for the areas of Baytown, Deer Park, Galena Park, Jacinto City, La Porte, and Pasadena for the period March 2018 versus March 2019 during the fire event at the ITC plant fire in Deer Park. Mr. Heffernan noted there was a 20% to 35% increase in call volume during this period. He mentioned that the Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC) had reached out to GHC 9-1-1 for call data in regards to the ITC plant fire. Chairman Rau inquired about how the public would have been notified of an emergency, such as one relating to ITC fire. Mr. Heffernan stated that the jurisdictions/PSAPs would be responsible for notifying the public at their discretion.

Mr. Heffernan continued his report, noting there were no internal or external P1 service issue tickets for the month of February, 2019. Mr. Heffernan provided an overview of the network utilization graphs. He stated that with the new NG 9-1-1 upgrade at the HEC, there would be a noticeable spike in volume on future reports.

He presented call stats for the major centers and the 2019 service-level report for the other PSAPs/SSAPs in the GHC 9-1-1 territory. Chairman Rau inquired about the reporting of data for cities/PSAPs that sit on the county line. Mr. Heffernan stated all calls that are routed to PSAPs in the GHC 9-1-1 territory are included in the report.

Chairman Rau inquired about the status of hiring a new training administrator. Mr. Heffernan stated that GHC 9-1-1 continues to provide training courses with the help of contract trainers, and progress is being made in the efforts of filling in the Training Administrator position. Next, Mr. Heffernan provided a brief update on the HEC Emergency Services Routing Proxy (ESRP) transition. He announced that all 9-1-1 calls for the HEC now ingress into the data centers and leverage the IP infrastructure for delivery to the PSAPs. He mentioned that an additional row of six consoles would be replaced, which will bring the total of NG 9-1-1 workstations to 24. He stated that the Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) new building remains on schedule for the April 30, 2019 go live date. Mr. Heffernan concluded his report with photos of the microwave network connectivity tower, mentioning that installation of equipment is making excellent progress. He added that Pleasant Valley tower is still a work in progress due to rainy weather, he anticipates the tower to be operational in a few months.

Agenda Item 7—"Public Information/Education Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Public Education Outreach Efforts." Public Information Officer, Sonya Clauson reported that the public education materials were distributed for several events throughout the GHC 9-1-1 territory. Ms. Clauson stated that she met with the Houston Deaf Club, where she presented text-to-9-1-1 videos produced by NENA. She added that other presentations to the Deaf community are being scheduled. Ms. Clauson highlighted that April is 9-1-1 Education Month and recognition of Telecommunicator Week. Also, the 2019 media campaigns are in development, which will include the annual cinema campaign. Ms. Clauson mentioned that Galveston and Montgomery Counties may be joining in the effort to do more text-to-9-1-1 education to our communities.

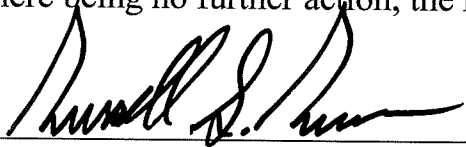
Next, Ms. Clauson reported that public messages regarding service outages are being created, as well as communicating with PSAPs and service providers to ensure that consistent and appropriate messages are released to the public. She mentioned that this topic was discussed at the TX 9-1-1 Alliance Ops group meeting held at GHC 9-1-1 in March 12, 2019. Ms. Clauson highlighted GHC 9-1-1's social media pages, Facebook and Twitter. She provided examples of the most popular posts with the highest engagements. She added that she and Dan Darnell attended the Bellaire Police Department Building ribbon cutting and had a tour of the building. Ms. Clauson closed her report with the story of Ben Davis, a 14 year old Boy Scout, who

was honored as a 9-1-1 kid hero by the City of Sugar Land and GHC 9-1-1 on Tuesday, March 19 for his exemplary actions and lifesaving efforts to help an elderly neighbor.


Agenda Item 10 “Announcements—Next Board Meeting, Upcoming Events.” Chairman Rau advised of the following: 1) Next meeting of the Board of Managers of GHC 9-1-1 is April 24, 2019; 2) Texas Public Safety Conference— March 31 – April 3, 2019, Galveston, TX; 3) National Emergency Number Association (NENA) Conference— June 16 – 19, 2019, Orlando, FL.

Board Secretary Anders inquired about the status of verifying if services providers have diverse routing capabilities. Mr. Heffernan stated that wireline providers have been contacted and a letter has been drafted to send to wireless carriers. Staff will update the Board on the results.

There being no further action, the meeting was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.



Russell S. Rau, Chairman



William B. Anders, Secretary/Treasurer