

Minutes
Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network
Board of Managers
May 26, 2021

The May 26, 2021 meeting of the Board of Managers of the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network (GHC 9-1-1) convened at 11:07 a.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, Mark Denman, Russell Rau, Dennis Storemski, Vergil Ratliff, and legal counsel Tommy Ramsey, Harris County Assistant Attorney, were present for the Board meeting; Board Member Shawn Thompson did not attend the meeting; 32 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 April 28, 2021 were approved with a motion by Board Member Storemski and seconded 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—“Emergency Services District No. 100 (ESD 100) Presentation and Discussion of Plans to Establish a New Call Center in the GHC 9-1-1 Territory and to Request the Installation of GHC 9-1-1 Call-taking Equipment and Related Systems to Operate as Secondary Safety Answering Point (SSAP).” Operations Officer, Stan Heffernan presented the geographical map for the two agenda items 8 and 9. ESD 100 President, Mr. Dale Terry stated that the ESD 100 Board approved the construction of a new ESD 100 dispatch communication center. He said once the new facility is complete, their current location will serve as a permanent back-up communications center. Mr. Terry mentioned that other ESD entities that currently contract with Cypress Creek EMS (CCEMS) have expressed their interest in moving their dispatch operations to the new ESD 100 communications center. Mr. Terry stated that the contract with CCEMS will terminate September, 2021. ESD 100’s goal is to have the new facility operational prior to that date. Mr. Terry, on behalf of ESD 100, requested that the GHC 9-1-1 Board approve the creation of a new SSAP and authorize

the installation of GHC 9-1-1 call-taking equipment at the new ESD 100 facility, so they can provide dispatch service for fire and EMS in the GHC 9-1-1 territory.

Chairman Rau asked what impact it would have on GHC 9-1-1's financial budget when other ESD entities decide to move their operations into ESD 100. Mr. Heffernan said it depends on the call volume, GHC 9-1-1 would have to add more call-taking positions, but at the moment two call-taking positions are sufficient for their dispatch center. Next, Chairman Rau expressed his concern about the geographic map with the areas designated as "moving to unknown." Mr. Rau explained that historically Harris County does not have Fire/EMS emergency plan countywide and he wanted to be sure that there are no gaps in providing emergency services. Mr. Heffernan said that GHC 9-1-1 staff will work with all parties to make sure there are no gaps in 9-1-1 emergency services. Mr. Heffernan noted that GHC 9-1-1 anticipated a capital upfront cost of \$85,000, and an annual recurring cost of approximately \$25,000 for the two call-taking positions at ESD 100.

Taken Out of Order: Agenda Item 9—"Texas Emergency Communications Center, Inc. (TECC) Presentation and Discussion of Plans to Establish a New Call Center in the GHC 9-1-1 Territory and to Request the Installation of GHC 9-1-1 Call-taking Equipment and Related Systems to Operate as Secondary Safety Answering Point (SSAP)." TECC Director, Lori Broadrick provided a brief history of events that led to the creation of TECC. She stated that TECC was created to provide 9-1-1 emergency dispatch services to fire departments in and around the northwest region of Harris County, including some that are currently contracted with CCEMS. Ms. Broadrick highlighted that CCEMS will no longer receive funding from ESD 11 (area to be covered by TECC), and will no longer respond to EMS incidents within the ESD 11 territory as of September, 2021. Ms. Broadrick said construction of the TECC center is scheduled to be complete by August, 2021. On behalf of TECC, Ms. Broadrick requested GHC 9-1-1 Board approve the creation of an SSAP and the installation of GHC 9-1-1 call-taking equipment and system at their new center for the purpose of providing emergency dispatch services.

Mr. Rodney Reed, Assistant Chief with the Harris County Fire Marshal's Office, informed the Board that CCEMS submitted a request to provide EMS subscription based fire and EMS services. He noted that the request was not supported by Harris County Commissioners Court and CCEMS's request did not make it to Commissioners Court agenda for discussion.

Mr. Heffernan stated that it will be a challenge for GHC 9-1-1 to complete the installation of the 9-1-1 equipment in a short time, but there are contingency plans for both entities just in case the construction projects are not completed by the deadline. Chairman Rau advised the staff to schedule a date for a virtual Special Board meeting

to take action on agenda items 8 and 9. Without any further questions, ESD 100 and TECC ended their presentations.

Agenda Item 4—“Financial Report.” Chief Financial Officer Tino Fonseca provided a brief overview of the monthly financial report totals ending April 30, 2021 as follows:

- Cash and cash equivalents \$ 11.0 million
- Invested funds for Operations \$ 10.0 million
- Liabilities \$ 5.5 million
- Receipts \$ 14.7 million
- Disbursements \$ 13.5 million

Next, Mr. Fonseca provided a brief overview of the remaining budget balance report. Mr. Fonseca continued to report on the Receipts and Disbursements report, the 9-1-1 service fee revenue, cash expenditures trend-line charts, and the HEC training expenses report funded by GHC 9-1-1. After brief comments from the Board, Mr. Fonseca ended his report.

Agenda Item 5—“Executive Director Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Legislative/Regulatory and Administrative Matters.” GHC 9-1-1 Government Liaison, Anya McInnis reported that on May 7, 2021 the House of Representatives approved HB 2911 on a 103-40 vote. The bill then went to the Senate where the 9-1-1 fee bill was stalled. Ms. McInnis mentioned that in regards to the critical need for NG 9-1-1 funding, Chairman of the Commerce Committee, Senator Kelly Hancock, and other representatives from telecommunication companies were assured by the Governor’s office that there are federal dollars available that could be expended for NG 9-1-1 infrastructure. Ms. McInnis stated that HB 2911 was substituted and re-written as “Next Generation 9-1-1 service to be funded with federal dollars through the Governor’s office with an application process set up by the Comptroller’s office to be allocated to the 9-1-1 districts and CSEC.” Ms. McInnis stated her legislative team felt strongly about not opposing the re-write of HB 2911 since 9-1-1 is in critical need for NG 9-1-1 funding. Ms. McInnis advised that on May 25, 2021, HB 2911 as rewritten was passed by the Senate with amendments on a 30-1 vote. Ms. McInnis reported that HB 2911 will go back to the House, where author of the bill, James White, Chair of the Homeland Security & Public Safety Committee will decide if he wants to concur with the amendments. If he does not concur, the bill will die. Ms. McInnis mentioned that the 9-1-1 legislative team encouraged Chairman White to concur with the Senate amendments, so that the bill can get signed by the Governor. Ms. McInnis stated that she is hopeful that the application process would work well, once the federal dollars go into an NG 9-1-1 fund. Chairman Rau asked who decides for the Comptroller where the money goes. Ms. McInnis stated that there are some federal dollars that the Governor has authority to allocate. There was no further discussion; Ms. McInnis concluded her report.

Retiring Executive Director, Lavergne Schwender thanked both the Board and GHC 9-1-1 staff for their support and for making it a wonderful work experience for many years. Ms. Schwender stated she is grateful to have worked with an incredible team who keep 9-1-1 moving forward.

Agenda Item 6—“Operations Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Operational Matters.” Chief Operations Officer Stan Heffernan reported that there were no internal/external P1 service issue tickets during the month of April, 2021. Mr. Heffernan provided an overview of the network utilization graphs, PSAP 9-1-1 call sessions and trending charts, and the call statistics provided by Houston Emergency Center (HEC) and Harris County Sheriff’s Office (HCSO). Board Member Denman noted that HEC’s average speed of answer time for 9-1-1 text messages was 51 seconds and asked if 51 seconds was acceptable. Mr. Heffernan stated that processing of a text to 9-1-1 was more technically challenging than voice call. Mr. Heffernan said GHC 9-1-1 will work with the centers to make sure that the reported response time data is accurate. Mr. Heffernan proceeded with an update on the 9-1-1 call Service Level Agreement (SLA) report for all PSAPs/SSAPs. He added that all the centers performed very well. At the Harris County Mayors and Councils Association (HCMCA) meeting, GHC 9-1-1 recognized all the centers for their great SLA performance in the month of April, 2021. Mr. Heffernan proceeded with the training report; GHC 9-1-1 hosted two in-person 9-1-1 equipment training classes. Mr. Heffernan added that with the COVID case numbers going down, GHC 9-1-1 will offer more in-person training courses. Mr. Heffernan ended with an overview of the GIS/database report and the Network Operations Center (NOC) monthly case-load report.

Agenda Item 7—“Public Information/Education Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Public Education Outreach Efforts.” Public Information Officer Sonya Clauson reported that April, 2021 was a very active month with distributions of 9-1-1 education materials, telecommunicator recognitions, and 9-1-1 education month. Next, Ms. Clauson highlighted a variety of media messages for the 2021 media campaign plan for June 2021 through December 2021. The plan includes billboard, radio, TV, Over the Top/Streaming, and digital media plan. Ms. Clauson concluded her report with examples of the GHC 9-1-1 social media messages that promoted 9-1-1 education month, telecommunicator recognitions, and GHC 9-1-1 training.

Agenda Item 10—“GHC 9-1-1 COVID-19 Vaccine Incentive: Discussion and Consideration of COVID-19 Vaccination Incentive for GHC 9-1-1 Employees and Related Policies.” This item was tabled during the April, 2021 Board meeting. Chairman Rau asked Mr. Fonseca to provide an update on the staff vaccination. Mr. Fonseca stated 77% of the staff have taken the vaccine. There was no further discussion and no action taken by the Board.

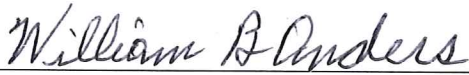
Agenda Item 11—“Executive Session (if needed): Personnel Matter and Consultation with Attorney.” Chairman Rau advised that no executive session is needed.

Agenda Item 12—“Announcements”. Chairman Rau announced that the next meeting of the Board of Managers is scheduled for Wednesday, June 23, 2021 and the NENA 2021 Conference & Expo is scheduled for July 25 – 29, 2021 in Columbus, OH. Ms. Hughes will contact the Board to schedule a date and time for the virtual Special Board meeting. Regarding the July, 2021 Board meeting, Chairman Rau said at the next meeting (June 23, 2021) the Board can discuss whether there will be a July Board meeting.

There being no further action, the meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.



Russell S. Rau, Chairman



William B. Anders, Secretary