

Minutes  
Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network  
Board of Managers  
July 22, 2020

The July 22, 2020 meeting of the Board of Managers of the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network (GHC 9-1-1) convened virtually at 1:07 p.m. via the Zoom videoconference service. GHC 9-1-1 is located at 10220 Fairbanks N. Houston Rd., Houston, Texas 77064.

Board Members Bill Anders, Mark Denman, Dennis Storemski, Russell Rau, Vergil Ratliff, Shawn Thompson, and legal counsel Tommy Ramsey, Harris County Assistant Attorney, were present for the virtual Board meeting; 21 people were in attendance. (Chairman Rau announced that Board Member Denman would be joining the Zoom meeting late via mobile phone.)

Agenda Item 1—“Pledges of Allegiance.” The U.S. and Texas pledges of allegiance were recited. Board Secretary Anders recited the Boy Scout Oath. Chairman Rau mentioned that his son Noah was watching the meeting for the purpose of meeting the requirements for his eagle required communications merit badge.

Agenda Item 2—“Approval of Minutes.” The minutes of the Board meeting of June 24, 2020 were approved with a motion by Board Secretary Anders 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.” Chief Financial Officer Tino Fonseca presented the investment report for the second quarter ending June 30, 2020. He reported that the average yield for the investments was 1.865%. Mr. Fonseca continued with a brief overview of the monthly financial totals ending June 30, 2020 as follows:

- Cash and cash equivalents                      \$ 14.5 million
- Invested funds for Operations                \$ 6.9 million
- Liabilities    \$ 6.4 million
- Receipts    \$ 21.9 million
- Disbursements                                      \$ 17.8 million

Mr. Fonseca provided a brief overview of the remaining budget balance report, receipts and disbursements report, the 9-1-1 service fee revenue by type and cash

expenditures trend-line charts, and investment book/ market value report. Without any further questions, Mr. Fonseca concluded his report.

Agenda Item 5—“Executive Director Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Legislative/Regulatory and Administrative Matters.” Executive Director Lavergne Schwender provided a report by RaidoResource Mission Critical Communications, which advised that the impact by COVID-19 has raised pressure on states and counties that have not yet initiated NG9-1-1 deployments to expedite rollouts. Next, Ms. Schwender reported that the NG9-1-1 Interoperability Oversight Commission (NIOC) announced an award to Eonti, Inc., and DigiCert, Inc., to operate a PSAP Credentialing Agency (PCA). Mr. Heffernan mentioned there has been a lot of discussion over the last year regarding the PSAP Credentialing Agency (PCA), he explained that it would allow for secure interoperability for different networks and systems to exchange and make use of information for NG9-1-1.

Ms. Schwender proceeded with an update on the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). Ms. Schwender announced that the CISA within DHS expects to see an increase in cybersecurity issues and phishing due to people working remotely. They would like cybersecurity issues or phishing scams related to COVID-19 to be reported through their helpdesk. Ms. Schwender asked Information Technology Officer Mike Hayes if GHC 9-1-1 had recently experienced any cybersecurity issues. Mr. Hayes stated GHC 9-1-1 had not experienced any cybersecurity issues. Lastly, Ms. Schwender stated that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Ajit Pai would be asking his fellow Commissioners to vote, at their July 2020 meeting, on an order designating “988” as a national short dialing code for suicide prevention and mental health crisis. The draft order would set a July 16, 2022 deadline for carriers and VoIP service providers to implement the three-digit dialing code, giving them two years to make any needed changes.

Board Secretary Anders asked if the Board was required to take the online cybersecurity training class. Ms. Schwender mentioned that the Texas Legislature passed a law that required government employees to take and pass the cybersecurity training. Mr. Heffernan stated that all staff had taken the training, but he wasn’t sure if appointed officials were required to take the training. Board Secretary Anders recommended that Mr. Heffernan forward the link and said it would be a good for the Board Members to take the cybersecurity class. Mr. Ramsey stated that Harris County had requested an AG opinion and until there’s clarity, he agreed that Board members should take the training. (Board Member Denman connected via mobile phone at 1:28 p.m.).

Next, Ms. Schwender provided an update on the proposed reliability and sustainability legislation. She stated that per the Board's request, she sent the draft GHC 9-1-1 stand-alone fee bill, and the Alliance proposed statewide flat-fee bill to the Board for their review. Chairman Rau inquired what was the dollar amount requested as the cap. GHC 9-1-1 Government Liaison, Anya McInnis explained that the draft Alliance flat-fee bill has a cap of \$1.25, with GHC 9-1-1 carve out as a fail-safe in case GHC 9-1-1's stand-alone bill is not successful. The GHC 9-1-1 stand-alone fee bill also has a cap of \$1.25, and can only be increased to that amount with yearly increments of 10%. Ms. McInnis stated that the next step would be to send the stand-alone bill to Legislative Council. She mentioned that there will be some tweaking and discussion from legislative council, and once a satisfactory draft fee bill is received from legislative council, she would work with Board Members and staff to schedule meetings with legislators and hope the bill gets filed later this year. She added that it would also be a good idea to reach out to the government affairs teams for the local cities to get their support. Board Member Denman commented that he supports both fee bills as drafted and he would help as much as he can. Chairman Rau asked if the annual 10% increase, if needed, would be sufficient the first year to meet GHC 9-1-1's financial needs. Mr. Fonseca stated that if the annual 10% adjustment gives the bill a better chance of passing, that amount is workable. Without any further questions, Ms. McInnis concluded her report.

Agenda Item 6—"Operations Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Operational Matters." Chief Operations Officer Stan Heffernan reported there were no internal P1 service issue tickets during the month of June, 2020. Mr. Heffernan stated there was one external P1 service matter. On June 15, 2020 T-Mobile experienced a widespread cellular outage throughout their network, which lasted from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. The FCC is investigating the cause of the widespread outage. Preliminary reports attribute the outage to a fiber circuit outage. Mr. Heffernan reported that the GHC 9-1-1 NOC monitored the outage closely, doing test calls and staying in contact with T-Mobile until it was resolved. He proceeded with a brief overview of the Network Utilization report and the PSAP 9-1-1 call sessions report, noting that the 9-1-1 wireless calls were very close to 90%. Chairman Rau suggested creating a line chart that will show the history/progression of the wireless increase; noting this could show legislatures graphically how this has caused the need to increase the wireless fee. Next, Mr. Heffernan provided an overview of the PSAP 9-1-1 trending charts, the call statistics for Houston Emergency Center (HEC) and Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) provided by those agencies. Chairman Rau inquired about the red numbers on the HCSO call statistics report. HCSO Director of Communications Kathi Yost explained that the red numbers indicate a reduction, the difference from last year's call volume to this year's call volume. Chairman Rau inquired about the red numbers in the HEC call statistics report. Mr. Heffernan stated that the red numbers also

indicate the difference from last year's to this year's call volume. Mr. Heffernan continued with the 9-1-1 call Service Level Agreement (SLA) report for all PSAPs/SSAPs. He mentioned that GHC 9-1-1 staff continues to train and work closely with those centers that have a decrease in service level.

Mr. Heffernan continued with an overview of the training for the month of June, 2020. GHC 9-1-1 Service Officer Roger Hauck added that there were several professional growth classes via the Zoom platform, and GHC 9-1-1 has been working closely with TCOLE to make sure that students who have been attending the courses via Zoom can earn their credits. Mr. Heffernan mentioned that a few PSAP's have reached out to GHC 9-1-1 asking when will there be on-site training. GHC 9-1-1 staff is working on putting systems and protocols in place to keep everyone safe when staff and visitors do return to the office. Chairman Rau suggested, even after the pandemic, making training more accessible and more of a virtual platform. Lastly, Mr. Heffernan briefly reported on the GIS/Database metrics, and the network operations center (NOC) monthly case-load and response stats. Chairman Rau thanked the GHC 9-1-1 executive staff for keeping staff safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, while at the same time meeting responsibilities to various member governments.

Agenda Item 7—"Public Information/Education Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Public Education Outreach Efforts." Public Information Officer Sonya Clauson reported that due to COVID-19 there have not been many community outreach events throughout the GHC 9-1-1 territory. Ms. Clauson mentioned that she touched based with a regional public information officers group and found out that most of their cities have outreach events on hold, but they are working on some creative ways to reach out to the public. Ms. Clauson proceeded with an update on the public awareness media campaign, reporting that preliminary reports are indicating that the campaign is progressing very well. The media ads are generating an increase in views to the 9-1-1.org website and the GHC 9-1-1 Facebook page. Ms. Clauson highlighted that the 9-1-1.org website has over 6,000 users, and the GHC 9-1-1 Facebook page has gained a great number of followers.

Next, Ms. Clauson provided a brief overview of the GHC 9-1-1 social media sites. During the month of June, 2020 social media messages included summer educational messages; heat and drowning prevention, stroke awareness, 9-1-1 texting messages and shared posts from partner agencies related to COVID-19 and 9-1-1 tips. She mentioned that the City of Houston and Harris County have been promoting 9-1-1 messages during their press conferences; such as, do not be afraid to call 9-1-1, do not avoid going to the hospital and the importance of informing 9-1-1 calltakers if anyone in the home have any COVID-19 symptoms, in order to protect first responders. Ms. Clauson concluded her report with examples of GHC 9-1-1's social media posts and

digital media campaign ads. Board Member Storemski said that he liked the ads and inquired if there free public service announces that TV stations have to run or if were paid for by GHC 9-1-1. Ms. Clauson stated that the 9-1-1 TV commercial ads are paid for out of the GHC 9-1-1 advertising budget.

Chairman Rau announced that he received a notice from the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) that on July 24, 2020 Shell stations/convenience stores across the U.S will honor 9-1-1 professionals with a free snack. Ms. Clauson stated that she will make an effort to spread the news through social media. Lastly, Chairman Rau mentioned that there's a political campaign ad running that depicts what a 9-1-1 call center would look like if the police were defunded, which is a misleading message about the 9-1-1 system. Chairman Rau is hopeful that NENA and other organizations would approach the candidate and remove that kind of advertising. He stated that the Board is not seeking any action towards the campaign ad, he just wanted to share and make aware to anyone who has not seen it.

Agenda Item 8—Action Item—“Consideration for Adoption of a Resolution Designing September 11, 2020 9-1-1 Day in the Territory Served by GHC 9-1-1.” Chairman Rau asked Ms. Clauson how she would acquire the Board's signatures on to the resolution document. Office Manager Daveda Hughes stated she could send it around for signatures or with the Board Members permission, she can add the Boards electronic signature to the resolution. Board Members agreed to give permission to have the resolution document electronically signed. Board Secretary Anders motioned to approve the request. Board Member Ratliff seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Agenda Item 9—Action Item—“Consideration of Houston Police Chief Acevedo's Request for Funding for New Dispatch Workstation Furniture for HPD at the Houston Emergency Center (HEC).” ‘Ms. Schwender mentioned that GHC 9-1-1 staff sent the Board members some background information regarding Chief Acevedo's request and GHC 9-1-1's funding of such requests. Board Member Storemski expressed his support to approve Chief Acevedo's request; stating facts regarding HEC's lack of funding and current work environment situation. Board Member Storemski added that GHC 9-1-1 should consider requests for funding for jurisdictions on a case-by-case basis, and made a motion to approve the request. Board Member Ratliff seconded the motion. Board Member Denman stated he needed to learn more about the history and issues regarding GHC 9-1-1 funding. Board Member Denman suggested establishing a subcommittee and bring this item back for consideration at the August, 2020 Board meeting. Board Secretary Anders stated that he was sympathetic to the situation and understands the City's budget constraints, but he had some concerns and agreed that a subcommittee was a good idea for further review. Board Secretary Anders provided

some history on what GHC 9-1-1 funds for PSAPs and how that was determine. He added that it needs to be discuss how funding these type of requests would impact GHC 9-1-1 financially in the future. Board Member Ratliff said she was in support of the request; noting that Chief Acevedo may be the one asking and whether or not he’s doing a good, ultimately the new consoles are for the dispatchers. She stated the call-taker may be the first person to receive the call and redirect the service requests to a dispatcher, which it is her belief that the dispatch function is a direct correlation to handling 9-1-1 calls. Therefore, the furniture is a part of the equipment needed for them to be able to execute the call for service. There was an in-depth discussion about the possible downstream impact associated with approving HPD’s funding request, the call delivery process, the availability of funds, and funding equitability among all jurisdictions. Chairman Rau moved to make a substitute motion to see a committee appointed to bring back a recommendation to the next Board Meeting. Secretary Anders seconded the motion. Board Member Storemski withdrew his motion in favor of the substitute motion. Chairman Rau then appointed members to the committee to include: Board Members Storemski and Denman, and Ms. Schwender appointed GHC 9-1-1 staff member Stan Heffernan to the committee. Chairman Rau advised that the committee carefully discuss what funding is available and evaluate the need for the request. He requested that the committee bring back a recommendation at the August 26, 2020 Board meeting. Secretary Bill Anders seconded the substitute motion. Chairman Rau pointed out since Board Member Storemski had withdrawn his motion, that the substitute motion was now the main motion. There being no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously. Regarding communication between Board Members on the committee and non-committee Board Members, Mr. Ramsey reminded the staff to ensure compliance with the Open Meetings Act. . Board Secretary Anders suggested Board Members send questions and concerns to Mr. Heffernan so the committee can carefully discuss and bring it up at the August Board Meeting.

Agenda Item 10—“Announcements—Next Board Meeting, Upcoming Events.”  
Chairman Rau advised of the following: 1) The next meeting of the Board of Managers is scheduled for Wednesday, August 26, 2020. (Platform TBD)

There being no further action, the meeting was adjourned at 2:32p.m.

Minutes approve unanimously. Signatures pending.

Russell S. Rau, Chairman

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William B. Anders, Secretary/Treasurer

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|-----------------------------------|
| Motioned: <u>Dennis Storemski</u> |
| Seconded: <u>Bill Anders</u>      |
| Vote: Yes <u>5</u> No <u>0</u>    |
| Date: <u>9/2/2020</u>             |

Meeting held virtually due to health/safety concerns related to COVID-19.