

II. Approval of Minutes—Board Meeting on September 25, 2024

Minutes

Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network

Board of Managers Meeting

DATE September 25, 2024
TIME 1:06 PM
LOCATION Board Room of the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network (GHC 9-1-1) at 10220 Fairbanks N. Houston Rd., Houston, Texas 77064.

IN ATTENDANCE

Board Members Russell Rau, Bill Anders, Mark Denman, Vergil Ratliff, and legal counsel Haley New were present. Board Member Shawn Thompson was absent. There were 29 people in attendance.

- I. Call to Order—The U.S. and Texas pledges of allegiance were recited.
- II. Approval of Minutes—The minutes from the Board meeting of August 28, 2024, were approved with a motion by Board Member Denman, and seconded by Board Member Ratliff. The vote passed unanimously.
- III. Citizens Comments—There were no citizens wishing to appear before the Board. Board Member Denman suggested adding a recurring agenda item for Board Member comments and updates. He shared two updates with the Board and staff. First, he discussed his conversation with the Vice President of Government and Public Policy at NENA DC, urging all PSAPs and municipalities to update their job descriptions to "telecommunicator." This reclassification is important for accurate data collection by the Office of Management and Budget, which requires proper job titles and descriptions. Second, Denman highlighted the success of the recent GHC 9-1-1 Golf Tournament, mentioning that while final figures are still pending, over \$42,000 was raised. He expressed excitement about making the event an annual fundraiser, with the goal of attracting more prominent sponsors like the Texans, Astros, and Rockets.
- IV. Taken out of order: IX: Audited Financial Statement – Transmittal and discussion of the audited financial statement for the year ending December 31, 2023. Fiscal Officer Richard Corbitt introduced Robert Belt, Director of auditing firm Crowe LLP, and gave the Board of Managers a handout of the 2023 audit report.
 The auditor's unmodified opinion for the 2023 audit indicates that the financial statements present a true and fair view of the organization's financial position. Notably, the organization received over

\$750,000 in grant funds, and the audit complied with government audit standards, resulting in two additional clean reports. In terms of financial health, the auditor highlighted that net assets exceed net liabilities, providing nearly one year's worth of reserves. When Board Member Denman questioned discussing benchmarks, the auditor classified liquidity as follows: 30 days is acceptable, 60 days is good, and 90 days is considered very good. Regarding management oversight, the auditor confirmed that there were no management letters issued. Chairman Rau raised concerns about pension funding and staff welfare, noting that there are \$70 million allocated for post-employment benefits and \$5.7 million in pension plan liabilities. The auditor assured us of familiarity with the Public Funds Investment Act and indicated ongoing monitoring of compliance.

There being no further questions, Mr. Belt concluded the audit report.

- V. Executive Director Report— Executive Director Stan Heffernan informed the Board about a regular Legislative meeting where staff will discuss plans to pass new legislation in the upcoming session. Chairman Rau expressed interest in conducting a public poll regarding a fee increase to support a state-of-the-art 9-1-1 public safety system, an idea that Mr. Heffernan supported. Chairman Rau also mentioned time constraints for advancing legislation next session. In response, Mr. Heffernan noted that Governmental Affairs Anya McInnis has already drafted a piece of legislation, which she will present at a future Board Meeting. Additionally, Mr. Heffernan referenced an earlier discussion about the Golf Tournament, and Chairman Rau praised such events for strengthening community relationships.
- VI. Financial Report— Fiscal Officer Richard Corbitt briefly reviewed invested funds and overtime expenses at the Houston Emergency Center (HEC) due to staffing shortages. As requested by Board Member Denman in the previous month's meeting, Mr. Corbitt provided a new graph illustrating the 14-year trend in 9-1-1 service fee revenue from wireless, landline, and IP fees. He noted a significant increase in landline and IP fees before 2018 and 2019, which he attributed to a surge in Comcast users from 2 million to nearly 4 million. Mr. Heffernan expressed surprise at the decrease in IP fees between 2022 and 2023, while Board Member Denman was surprised by the steady growth in wireless fees. Mr. Corbitt explained that this growth correlated with Houston's population increase. Board Member Denman requested a revenue chart of landline and wireless fees, created by Mr. Hayes, for the next report. Chairman Rau questioned where the "Public Education" category is in the "How the Money Was Spent – By Category" graph, to which Mr. Corbitt committed to addressing in the next meeting. Secretary Anders inquired about overtime expenses relative to the budget, and Mr. Corbitt confirmed that they were \$650,000 under budget.
- VII. 9-1-1 Division Report— 9-1-1 Services Division Officer Roger Hauck presented the divisional activity tickets, noting that there were no unusual findings. He then reviewed the PSAP 9-1-1 Sessions Report, highlighting a slight decrease in overall sessions for August compared to July. Chairman Rau referenced a recent news article about smaller 9-1-1 systems integrating video technology and

inquired about GHC 9-1-1's progress in this area. Mr. Hauck explained that GHC 9-1-1 possesses the necessary technology and has implemented an initial stage where videos and pictures can be used upon request, though live streaming is not yet available. He noted that while the capability exists, it has not yet been rolled out to all PSAPs due to cybersecurity concerns. Chairman Rau expressed his enthusiasm for this development. Mr. Hauck then moved on to the call volume chart for the Houston Emergency Center (HEC), indicating a slight increase in call volume for August. However, he pointed out a overall downward trend from 2023 to 2024, as well as highlighting the Service Level Agreement (SLA) currently at 78%. Board Member Anders invited comments from the three major call centers, which Chairman Rau confirmed, encouraging them to raise their hands if questions or remarks ever arise. Mr. Heffernan noted multiple meetings with HEC and Roderick Jackson, indicating anticipated changes in the SLAs. Mr. Jackson assured the board that adjustments are forthcoming to improve SLAs, with expectations for better results in the next report. Board Member Denman praised Harris County (HCSO) and Fort Bend (FBCSO) for their impressive SLAs of 99% and 96%, respectively. He expressed confidence in Mr. Jackson's ability to enhance HEC's performance and commended the 4% increase observed in the last month. Mr. Hauck then continued with the Call Volume charts for HCSO and FBCSO. Board Member Denman requested a report detailing the number of positions and how many are filled. Mr. Heffernan and Mr. Corbitt noted that this information can be found in the notes section of the main financial report. Chairman Rau inquired about the mayor and city council's plans for salary adjustments and whether these would affect telecommunicators. Mr. Jackson explained that a salary study will be conducted for agencies similar in size to HEC to ensure appropriate compensation for telecommunicators. Mr. Hauck continued his report by informing the board about the ongoing upgrades to HEC's configuration, which will align with those of the other major call centers to facilitate load balancing. He concluded with the Call Center SLA Statistic chart, highlighting a strong overall SLA of 98.04% across all call centers.

Mr. Hauck presented the Training Report in the absence of PSAP Education Manager Mindi Bartee. He detailed that GHC 9-1-1 offered four classes in August, including one equipment course and three professional development courses. Additionally, there were sessions on CPR, Advanced Communication Training for Officers, and Engaging Your Audience. In response to a question from Board Member Anders regarding NIMS training for public officials, Mr. Heffernan indicated that this topic had been researched following discussions in a prior Board meeting, and he would provide further information.

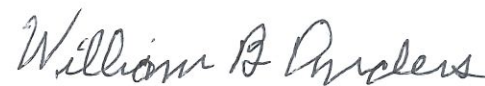
Public Information Officer Sonya Clauson highlighted the distribution of public education materials for August. She reported that digital media efforts are thriving, showcasing various reels and stories on Facebook and Instagram. As mentioned last month, GHC 9-1-1 is now active on the Nextdoor app, which has proven effective in reaching a broader audience. Ms. Clauson also announced that the media campaign is ongoing, focusing on recruiting telecommunicators and promoting the appropriate use of 9-1-1. Additionally, social media messages are directing users to a list of non-emergency resources on 911.org, which has been receiving a significant number of visits.

- VIII. Operations Division (Ops) Report— Operations Officer Sam Mitchell presented the Divisional Activity chart for the Operations team, noting minimal changes compared to last month.
- IX. Information Technology (IT) Division Report— IT Officer Mike Hayes reviewed the Divisional Activity for IT and presented a graph that illustrated the current number of tickets categorized by group. He noted that there were no unusual issues to report. Mr. Hayes then introduced the Managed Detection and Response graph, explaining that the six alerts displayed were triggered internally during IT's testing of system vulnerabilities. Before concluding, Mr. Hayes stated that a more detailed report would be provided next month regarding his meeting with the FCC concerning the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl.
- X. Taken Out of Order: XI. Executive Session – For discussion of legal matters. Entered Executive Session at 2:13 PM.
Reconvened at 2:50 PM. No motion from Executive Session.
Board Member Ratliff left shortly before the Executive Session; however, a quorum was still present.
- XI. Budget Workshop – Discussion of GHC 9-1-1 proposed budget for the year 2025. Mr. Corbitt presented a ten-year budget projection (2025-2034), a summary of projected receipts, and the operational and capital budget for 2025, along with detailed breakdowns. He highlighted two changes since the previous month's proposal: an increase in interest income due to a \$4 million reduction in capital expenditures, resulting in more cash reserves, and additional funds allocated for anticipated capital needs in 2026-2027. Chairman Rau inquired about potential service fee adjustments, with Mr. Corbitt confirming that the fee would remain at 50 cents. Chairman Rau also sought clarification on the 4% salary increase and the addition of two new positions, noted on page 49. Secretary Anders motioned to approve the budget, seconded by Board Member Denman, with the vote passing unanimously. It was noted that the approval includes further information on the Legacy Pension funds for future budget impacts. Additionally, a reminder was given that Board Member Ratliff, while absent for the budget approval, attended all prior budget workshops.
- XII. Announcements: The next Board of Managers Meeting is scheduled for October 23, 2024. Next month is Fire Prevention Month and October 1st being National "Night Out".

There being no further action, the meeting was adjourned at 3:06 P.M.



Russell S. Rau, Chairman



William B. Anders, Secretary