

Minutes
Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network
Board of Managers
February 24, 2021

The February 24, 2021 meeting of the Board of Managers of the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network (GHC 9-1-1) convened virtually at 1:02 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, Russell Rau, Dennis Storemski, Shawn Thompson and legal counsel Tommy Ramsey, Harris County Assistant Attorney, were present for the virtual Board meeting. Board Member Vergil Ratliff was not at the meeting; 30 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 January 27, 2021 were approved with a motion by Board Member Denman and seconded by Board Secretary Anders. Motion passed unanimously.

Taken Out of Order: Agenda Item 7B—Public Information/Education Report—“2020 Media Campaign: Post-campaign Analysis” Public Information Officer Sonya Clauson introduced advertising agents Amanda Davis and James Fogarty with Brand Rand Media. They provided a summary overview of the GHC 9-1-1 2020 media campaign: analysis, review, results, and comparison of media year over year 2019-2020 and campaign messages. Mr. Fogarty stated in 2019 Brand Ranch Media served as a consultant to analysis on previous media campaigns. In 2020 Brand Ranch contracted with GHC 9-1-1 to serve as media buying agents. Mr. Fogarty and Ms. Davis thanked GHC 9-1-1 for the opportunity.

Taken Out of Order: Action Item 8—“Consideration of Request for Approval of the Installation of GHC 9-1-1 Call-Taking Equipment and Related Systems at Emergency Service District 11 (ESD 11), New Secondary Safety Answering Point (SSAP)”—Chief Operations Officer Stan Heffernan explained the request for provisioning 9-1-1 call-taking equipment and related systems at the new ESD 11 call center. (Board Member Storemski joined the virtual Board meeting.) Mr. Heffernan introduced ESD 11 Executive Director Douglas Hooten and Commissioner Kevin Brost. Before Mr.

Brost addressed the Board, Chairman Rau provided a brief history on the Harris County emergency service system. He stated that when GHC 9-1-1 system was established, Harris County did not have an emergency service (fire/EMS) plan countywide. At the time, GHC 9-1-1 was instrumental in making sure that all residents of Harris County were provided with emergency services. Mr. Brost stated that after 15 years of contracting with one agency to provide EMS service, the ESD 11 Board had decided to become a self-operated EMS and dispatch service provider for their corresponding areas. They've hired a team to head-up the service and will hire staff for all positions. They will also coordinate to dispatch for other fire department agencies. Mr. Hooten mentioned that the services currently provided by the contracted agency, ESD 11 will continue to provide and enhance those services, and add additional services. Board Secretary Anders advised that Cypress Creek Emergency Medical Services (CCEMS) currently provides emergency services to Harris County residents in the ESD 11 area. Mr. Hooten stated the contract with CCEMS ends September 1, 2021. Mr. Hooten advised that ESD 11 has purchased a new facility, which is currently under renovation and will be ready on August 16, 2021. He stated there will be 12 positions (8 positions for daily operations and 4 positions for training.) Chairman Rau inquired about the possible consequences if Cypress Creek is no longer in business, and how that might create gaps and risks for the EMS structure in the ESD 11 area. Mr. Brost said no gaps would be created as a result of the change, and ESD 11 will provide better services, with more EMS trucks resulting in better response times. Chairman Rau asked if the staff had information regarding the cost implications to GHC 9-1-1 in favor of ESD 11's request. Mr. Brost added that they are building a 100 to 200 feet microwave tower at their new call center. In response to Chairman Rau's question, Mr. Fonseca estimated \$150,000 annual recurring costs depending on the number of positions, and call volume. Regarding the up-front capital costs, he stated the amount would depend on the number of positions, but estimated \$100,000 for capital not including microwave equipment. He noted that some of the annual recurring costs would be offset if Cypress Creek no longer provides dispatch services, eventually resulting in a wash of most of the recurring service costs.

There was a short discussion among Board Members about not having enough information regarding costs in order to vote in favor for the installation of the call-taking equipment into the new ESD 11 call center. To move forward, Chairman Rau advised GHC 9-1-1 staff to provide regular updates to the Board on both annual recurring costs and up-front capital costs. Board Secretary Anders moved to approve the installation of GHC 9-1-1 call-taking equipment and related systems at ESD 11. Board Member Denman seconded the motion. 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 provided a brief overview of the monthly financial report and the overtime expenses ending January 31, 2021 as follows:

- Cash and cash equivalents \$ 11.3 million
- Invested funds for Operations \$ 10.0 million
- Liabilities \$ 8.1 million
- Revenue \$ 3.2 million
- Expenses \$ 1.6 million

He provided the revenue and expense comparison report for January 2020 and January 2021. Mr. Fonseca concluded his report with the 9-1-1 service fee revenue by type and cash expenditures charts.

Agenda Item 5—“Executive Director Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Legislative/Regulatory and Administrative Matters.” Executive Director Lavergne Schwender briefly reported on the potential nominees for the FCC Commissioner position. Next, GHC 9-1-1 Government Liaison Anya McInnis provided an update on the proposed reliability and sustainability legislation. Ms. McInnis reported that Texas House Representative Senfronia Thompson has agreed to file the 9-1-1 fee bill. Ms. McInnis mentioned that she will let GHC 9-1-1 know as soon as the bill gets filed and the house bill number is provided. Next, she reported that there has been positive discussions with both Harris County and the City of Houston governmental affairs teams who have expressed their support regarding the proposed 9-1-1 fee legislation. Ms. McInnis stated that she has updated both Harris County and the City of Houston about the bill being filed in the house by Representative Thompson. Lastly, she reported that the Alliance’s legislative consultants Shayne Woodard and Mike Tomsu met with State Representative James White, the new Chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety, to brief him about GHC 9-1-1’s goal and purpose for the 9-1-1 fee legislation. Ms. McInnis said that Chairman White expressed his interest in filling the 9-1-1 statewide flat fee bill and he was pleased to hear that Representative Thompson was going to file the GHC 9-1-1 stand-alone fee bill.

Ms. Schwender asked Office Manager Daveda Hughes to provide an update on the tracking of the cities who have adopted the 9-1-1 fee Resolution. Ms. Hughes stated since the last update, she had received a couple more resolutions, and would send an update at the end of the week.

Chairman Rau expressed contentment regarding the sponsorships for the 9-1-1 fee legislation. After no further questions, Ms. McInnis concluded her report. Next, Ms. Schwender announced that Houston Emergency Center Director, David Cutler retired effective January 31, 2021 and Mayor Turner appointed Robert Mock as the interim director. GHC 9-1-1 wishes Mr. Cutler a happy retirement. City of Houston Public

Safety and Homeland Security Director Mr. George Buenik commented that Mr. Cutler was dedicated to HEC and welcomed Mr. Mock as the new interim Director for HEC.

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 January, 2021. Mr. Heffernan added that during the historic winter storm Uri, GHC 9-1-1 systems remained healthy and operational with contingencies in place. He said that some PSAPs experienced issues with generators, but 9-1-1 calls were re-routed to provide services needed. Mr. Heffernan reported that some cell towers were without communication, which he will further discuss at the next Board meeting. Mr. Heffernan thanked the GHC 9-1-1 staff for their amazing performance during the winter storm. He added that on February 16, 2021, at the height of the winter storm, call volume was at its highest peak reaching 208% across the network, but the 9-1-1 system remained operational. Chairman Rau stated that Mr. Heffernan will provide more information about security sensitive parts of the network during the March meeting and executive session, if necessary.

Next, Mr. Heffernan provided an overview of the network utilization graphs, the 9-1-1 call session charts, and the 9-1-1 trending charts. He presented the call statistics for Houston Emergency Center (HEC) and Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO). Mr. Heffernan continued to report on the 9-1-1 call Service Level Agreement (SLA) report for all PSAPs/SSAPs, stating that all call centers are doing well, performing above 90% except for one call center. He said that GHC 9-1-1 would get with that call center to help them reach the acceptable percentile. Mr. Heffernan continued with the training report, he highlighted that in the month of January, 2021 GHC 9-1-1 safely provided in-person “Mental Health for Communications” course at the GHC 9-1-1 headquarters, also provided “9-1-1: Hacked, Attacked, and Where's That” course via Zoom. Next, Mr. Heffernan reviewed that the GIS/database and the Network Operations Center (NOC) monthly case-load reports, noting that all looked good. Regarding the Board's previous inquiry on the class of service when a call is made via Wi-Fi calling, then switching to cellular service—GHC 9-1-1 performed test calls, and the results of the testing is being confirmed with cellular service providers. Mr. Heffernan stated more information on this study will be reported at next Board meeting.

Agenda Item 7—“Public Information/Education Report—Transmittal and Discussion of Public Education Outreach Efforts.” Chairman Rau noted that Item 7B was taken out of order and already discussed. Public Information Officer Sonya Clauson mentioned that she would provide a more detailed public information summary relating to the winter storm at the next Board meeting. Ms. Clauson stated that during the winter storm, GHC 9-1-1 worked closely with Harris County and Fort Bend County Offices of Emergency Management (OEM), HCSO and HEC call centers, area PIO's and other

9-1-1 partner agencies to disseminate 9-1-1 public educational messages through social media, news releases, and phone alerts. Ms. Clauson reported that GHC 9-1-1 has been looking at other ways to educate the public and has reached out to many organizations, such as Meals-on-wheels and Greater Houston Faith Ministries to provide them with 9-1-1 education materials for their communities. Ms. Clauson concluded her report with an update on the GHC 9-1-1 social media pages. She reported that GHC 9-1-1 social media messages included training opportunities, proper usage of 9-1-1, and messages sharing messages posted by local area public safety agencies. Chairman Rau thanked Ms. Clauson for providing a great presentation on the media campaign.

Action Item 9—“Request for Approval of a Resolution Declaring April 11-17, 2021 Telecommunicator Week in the Territory Served by GHC 9-1-1.” Ms. Clauson briefly explained that each year in the month of April GHC 9-1-1 honors 9-1-1 telecommunicators and dispatchers for their contributions to emergency services. She added that the resolution will be shared with the call centers and the jurisdictions that they serve. Chairman Rau asked how the Board Members signatures would be acquired. Office Manager Daveda Hughes stated that with the Board Members permission, she can place an electronic signature on the resolution. The Board Members gave permission to have the resolution electronically signed. Board Secretary Anders motioned to approve the resolution. Board Member Denman seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Action Item 10—“Request for Approval of the Investment Policy for the Year 2021-2022.” Mr. Fonseca presented the proposed investment policy effective March 1, 2021 through February 28, 2022, prepared coordination with Harris County Financial Services Division and the Public Funds Investment Act. He noted minor revisions that are in the list of “Approved Banks and Broker/Dealers.” Board Member Denman made the motion to approve the Investment Policy for the Year 2021-2022. Board Secretary seconded the motion. Board Member Storemski advised that in the future, Mr. Fonseca highlight changes in the investment policy. Mr. Fonseca agreed and said he will send the highlighted changes in the investment policy to the Board Members. Without any further questions, the Board Members voted in favor of the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 12—“Announcements—Next Board Meeting, NENA 2021 Conference.” Chairman Rau announced that the next regular meeting of the Board of Managers is scheduled for Wednesday, March 24, 2021, virtually via Zoom. NENA 2021 Conference & Expo, July 24-29, 2021 will be held in Columbus, OH. Ms. Hughes reminded Board Members to let her know if they would like to attend. Board Secretary Anders asked if there will be a Texas NENA conference. Ms. Clauson stated that the annual joint Texas NENA/APCO Spring conference was canceled, and there might be

a conference scheduled for the Fall. Once she gets more information, she will provide it to the Board.

Agenda Item 11—"Executive Session." The Board went into virtual Executive Session at 2:49 p.m., pursuant to Section 551.074(a)(1) Texas Government Code for the purpose of discussing personnel matters and/or consultation with attorney concerning the Executive Director position. The Board returned from the virtual Executive Session at 3:20 p.m. There were no recommendations for action.

Chairman Rau advised on the following: 1) schedule a virtual *Special* Board meeting to be held on March 10, 2021 at 1:00p.m to include on the agenda an executive session concerning the Executive Director position; 2) Virtual regular Board meeting on March 24, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. to include on the agenda an executive session concerning the Executive Director position, and an action item in case the Board is ready to fill the Executive Director position. Chairman Rau advised the staff to consult with Mr. Ramsey on wording of these agenda items.

There being no further action, the meeting was adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

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Russell S. Rau

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Russell S. Rau, Chairman

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William B. Anders

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William B. Anders, Secretary