

The Board of Directors of the Emergency Communications District (ECD) of Nashville and Davidson County met in regular session at the Metro Emergency Communications Center, 2060 15th Avenue South. Chair Cleo Duckworth called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM and presided over the meeting with the following board members present: Ruby Baker, Lorinda Hale, William Johnson, Susan Mattson, Rick Cowan, and Eliud Trevino. Board members David Gleason and Charlane Oliver were not in attendance. Others present included: Mark Lynam and Larry Law (ECD Admin), Angie Milliken, Michelle Peterson, Dwayne Vance, and Bruce Sanschargin (Metro DEC), Philip McGowan and Tiffany Childress (DVL Seigenthaler), and Russell Freeman (Legal Counsel).

### **Minutes**

Ms. Hale made a motion to accept the minutes from the June 20, 2019 ECD board meeting. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously by voice vote.

### **Financial Report**

Mr. Lynam discussed the July 2019 financial report with board members. He went over all of the business transactions that took place during the month. He reported that income for July was \$24,376 while expenses were \$792,692. This reflected a net loss of \$768,316 for the month.

Mr. Lynam reported that cash available for operations amounted to \$11,938,797. This consisted of \$176,489 in our checking account and \$11,762,308 in our LGIP account.

### **Training Requests**

Mr. Sanschargin reported that there were no training requests for the current month.

### **Public Awareness Update**

Mr. McGowan went over the call analysis report for June and July. It was noted that abandoned calls had increased considerably for both months. Board members were concerned that we may be seeing more abandoned calls because of the shortage of call takers. Ms. Milliken pointed that they definitely need more people but frequently when a call is cleared they find out that many of the abandoned calls often come from one telephone number that keeps hanging up and calling back regarding the same incident. Our new system is better equipped to capture the counts from these abandoned calls than our old system. Therefore, the report results tend to be skewed when comparing this year's number of 911 calls to the previous year, which were gathered by the old system. A footnote will be added to past and future reports pointing out this situation.

Mr. McGowan handed out a 911 Awareness report showing:

- 911 creative that is currently running (billboards, radio, new mover campaign, digital display ads). Ms. Baker asked for the locations of the billboards and a list of the radio stations that were running our educational messages.
- New media starting in September (bus bench wraps).
- Upcoming (recruitment campaign, new creative for digital billboards & radio spots)

Mr. McGowan provided a status report on Rescue Rex. Rehearsals are currently underway at East Park Community Center. School outreach is taking place and shows are being booked. The program continues to seek opportunities for Rex to take part in community events. Earlier this month Rex attended the "NES Home Energy Uplift" community event in Bordeaux. Ms. Hale mentioned that it might be nice for Rex to attend the "Neighbor to Neighbor" festival that will take place on September 28th at Hickory Hollow.

### **Update Regarding 911 Surcharge Fee Increase**

Mr. Lynam reported that the TECB met on August 7, 2019 and voted to increase the 911 surcharge fee from \$1.16 to \$1.50 and that the net proceeds from this increase go back to the districts. The vote was six “for” and three “against” for the increase. This came about after the TECB held a public hearing on July 16, 2019 to gather information regarding the need for a 911 surcharge fee increase. At that meeting a number of individuals associated PSAP’s across Tennessee spoke to the need for such an increase. Numerous resolutions were also submitted from districts across the state encouraging the TECB to increase the surcharge fee. Staff director Curtis Sutton said the new recommended rate will be sent to the governor’s office which in turn will draft a joint resolution for the general assembly to consider.

### **Waffle House Lawsuit**

Mr. Lynam was recently told by Metro’s legal department that the ECD may be brought into a lawsuit that has been filed against Metro by the family of one of the victims. After having learned of this Mr. Lynam asked the board’s attorney, Russell Freeman to contact Metro’s legal department to see what he could find out regarding the matter. Mr. Freeman stated that neither he, nor Metro’s attorney, understand how the plaintiff could base a claim against the ECD. He cited Tennessee Code 29-20-108(a) which states that ECD boards and board members are immune from such claims except in cases of gross negligence. Employees who operate the 911 centers are also extended the same immunity. The ECD does not employ the 911 operators so even if gross negligence became the issue, it would apply to Metro, not the ECD.

Mr. Freeman also cited Tennessee Code 7-86-320 which states that emergency communications districts are immune from suit or liability for civil claims arising from the actions or omission of emergency communications district personnel in processing emergency calls, except in cases of recklessness or intentional misconduct. Since the ECD does not process 911 calls, it is almost beyond comprehension to understand how a claim could be brought against the ECD. At this point we will just have to wait and see how things develop.

### **DEC Directors Report**

Ms. Milliken thanked the board for allowing a number of DEC employees to attend the APCO Conference.

There are currently 42 vacancies within the Department of Emergency Communications. To fill these vacancies Ms. Milliken and Ms. Peterson are looking at having two training classes take place at the same time with as many as 10 – 15 people in each class. Another instructor was added to the training section last week.

Ms. Milliken and Ms. Peterson are also looking into the testing procedures that new applicants go through. “Criticall” is the first test that applicants have to take. If they pass that test they are given a “scenario based” test. As many as 65% of the applicants fail the second test. There is consideration being given to do away with the scenario based test. Most 911 centers only use the Criticall test for new applicants. Ms. Mattson asked if a consultant might be helpful in examining how to get more qualified applicants through the door.

Ms. Hale asked about our retention rate for new employees. Ms. Milliken stated that probably 30% of new employees leave after their first year on the floor. Most are able to find less stressful positions in other PSAPs for the same money.

Ms. Milliken reported that she had no new information regarding the vacancy for the director's position. She will continue to serve as the interim director until someone is hired.

On August 1<sup>st</sup> the family of a man who suffered a medical emergency and required CPR visited the 911 Center and met with the call taker who handled the call. The wife of the man who suffered the medical emergency stated that her husband is alive today because of the actions of the call taker.

#### **Miscellaneous**

Mr. Freeman reminded everyone that the TENA Conference will take place in Murfreesboro on September 8<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Duckworth told board members that they should work with Mark Lynam if they would like to attend the conference.

#### **Adjournment**

Upon proper motion by Ms. Hale and second by Ms. Baker the meeting adjourned at 3:54 P.M. Mr. Lynam noted that our next board meeting will be held on September 19<sup>th</sup>.