

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 1:02 PM and presided over the meeting with the following board members present: William Johnson, Ruby Baker, Lorinda Hale, Susan Mattson, Carolyn Tucker, and Rick Cowan. Others who attended the meeting included: Mark Lynam & Larry Law (ECD Admin), Stephen Martini, Michael Bateman, Kristin Mullen, James Matthews, and Dwayne Vance (Metro DEC), Kiel Martin (ITS-Radio), Neil Pickering & Tiffany Childress (Finn Partners), and Russell Freeman (Legal Counsel). Attending virtually were Noah Mladenovski, Paul McCallister, Exzabia Dukes, Erin Wilson and John Buckner (ITS)

### **Minutes**

Ms. Hale made a motion to accept the minutes from the February 15, 2023, ECD board meeting. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by voice vote.

### **Employee Recognition**

Michael Bateman, a member of DEC's technology division, was recognized for his efforts in reducing phone costs within his department. Mr. Bateman was able to identify multiple phone circuits that are no longer being used. His undertaking will result in annual savings of over \$480,000. Mr. Bateman mentioned that there may be more savings forthcoming.

### **Radio Replacement**

Kiel Martin, who serves as manager of the ITS Radio Division, updated board members on how his department is using the annual \$1 million appropriation of ECD funds to assist in the replacement of radio equipment. Mr. Martin pointed out that we are currently in year four of this 5-year funding initiative. He reported that the funds are used to purchase and replace "end of life" portable and mobile radio units in the public safety community. He conveyed that it can take up to 4-6 months to receive these radios once they have been ordered. He noted that Motorola is working to reduce delivery time to 13 weeks.

Mr. Martin conveyed that a new radio tower site is being planned for the Huntington Ridge area of Davidson County. This would improve radio coverage on the south side of the county. At the present time there appears to be a \$1.7 million shortfall in funding for this project. Mr. Martin asked if there might be a possibility for the ECD to fund this shortfall. Director Martini remarked that he would prefer that ECD funds be used to increase radio coverage than be used to replace subscriber units. Mr. Martin was asked to submit additional information on this project to Director Martini, who in turn will share it with the ECD Technology Committee for funding consideration.

### **Financial Report**

Mr. Lynam went over the February financial report with board members. Cash available for operations as of February 29, 2024 was \$26,414,643. This consisted of \$343,522 in our checking account and \$26,071,121 in the LGIP account.

Mr. Lynam went over the various financial transactions that took place during the month. He reported that income for January was \$1,640,079 while expenses amounted to \$264,653. This resulted in a net gain of \$1,375,426 for the month.

Mr. Lynam pointed out that we anticipate being within budget in all categories.

After discussion ended, Ms. Hale made a motion to accept the financial statement as presented. Ms. Baker seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by voice vote.

### **Public Awareness Update**

Ms. Childress provided board members with a report showing school appearances and the number of shows performed. Rex has 20 shows confirmed in April and expects to reach 1,700 students. She conveyed that this is a new record for monthly appearances. Ms. Childress also expressed her thanks for the feedback on the coloring books and will be meeting with her creative team next week to review the recommended changes. Board members asked for a list of the 20 schools at which Rex will be appearing in April. Ms. Childress indicated that she would provide this information.

Mr. Pickering went over the advertising report. He reported that our ads continue to perform well. He pointed out that the new creative has been finalized and went live the first week of March.

Board members were also able to listen to the two new radio spots and the two new video spots. The theme of this year's advertising campaign is "how changing one word can mean the difference between needing to call 3-1-1 versus 9-1-1". The two audio spots will rotate on a 50/50 basis as will the video spots.

### **New PIO - James Matthews**

Director Martini introduced James Matthews as DEC's our new public information officer. Mr. Matthews remarked that his role will be to help educate the public and others on what we do and how we accomplish it.

Ms. Hale voiced some concerns about the new push to call 3-1-1 for non-emergency calls versus the 862-8600 number. She felt that there still was a need for using the 862-8600 number (such as non-injury traffic accidents), and this effort is taking away from the ECD's previous efforts to stress the importance of calling 862-8600 for public safety related non-emergency situations. Michael Bateman pointed out that when a caller dials 3-1-1, the first option the caller hears is to push "1" if this is a police, fire, or medical related issue. This will automatically route the caller to an 862-8600 call-taker. Director Martini stated that this will be something that our PIO will work on.

### **Legislative Update**

Ms. Mattson went over the various bills currently in front of the Tennessee General Assembly that may affect emergency communication districts. She updated board members on where each bill stood, and how it might impact our district if passed.

### **DEC Directors Report**

Director Martini reported that DEC currently only has two vacancies, which is less than 1% of the total staff. He also conveyed that more than half of February's non-emergency calls were answered from home.

While going over February's Director report, Director Martini noted that while February was their 2<sup>nd</sup> busiest month in the last five years, the call answering times for emergency calls were the best they had been in five years, with 97.22% being answered within 20 seconds. He also noted that DEC had achieved the lowest percentage of abandoned calls, which was 0.8% and that while DEC's primary focus continues to be on 'emergency' calls, 92% of non-emergency calls were answered within 20 seconds.

Director Martini reported that the Council orientation sessions were highly successful. Thirteen council members were able to attend a site visit at the call center. At these sessions they were able to engage with staff members, listen to 911 calls, and learn firsthand what DEC does. Board members Ruby Baker and Lorinda Hale also attended most of these orientation sessions and familiarized council members with the role of the ECD.

### **AI Training Demonstration**

Kristin Mullen performed a demonstration of the new 'Angie' AI training program, which allowed board members to see how new call takers can benefit from engaging with an AI program playing the role of a caller. Ms. Mullen explained that coaching and grading is available to the trainee at the end of the training based on the questions asked by the trainee. James Matthews noted that this type training for 9-1-1 call takers is the first such program in the world.

### **Adjournment**

Upon proper motion by Ms. Mattson and second by Ms. Baker, the meeting adjourned at 2:22 PM.

The next meeting of the ECD Board of Directors will be held on April 18, 2024, at 1:00 P.M.

Minutes submitted by Larry Law