

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE 9-1-1 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT BOARD OF MANAGERS HELD ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2003 IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL, 555 WALNUT, ABILENE, TEXAS.

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Public notice having been duly given, the 9-1-1 Board met at 1:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of City Hall.

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Board Members Present: George Newman, President, County Representative
Roy McDaniel, Vice President, Cities Representative
Jo Moore, Secretary, Cities Representative
Don Russom, County Representative
John Bogart, Volunteer Fire Department Representative

Others Present: Alan Plumlee, Assistant Fire Chief
Larry Swanson, Communication Services
Debbie Hurley, Secretary II
Tracy Phillips, Management Assistant
Jack Dieken, Taylor County Sheriff
Greg Brown, GIS Coordinator
Mike Saxton, 911 Program Specialist
Ronnie Kidd, 9-1-1 District Director and Administrative Services Director
Cindy Steele, Southwestern Bell
Donna Littlefield, Abilene Police Dept.
Carol Taylor, Taylor County Sheriff's Office
Kenton Kidwell, Hamby VFD

President George Newman called the meeting to order. President Newman stated that Don Russom has been reappointed as the Taylor County representative to the Board; and John Bogart has been appointed as the Volunteer Firefighters' representative, terms expiring February 2005. Debbie Hurley administered oaths of office to the newly appointed and reappointed members.

No Board action was required.

Mrs. Moore made a motion to appoint George Newman as President, Roy McDaniel as Vice President, and herself as Secretary of the 911 Board. Mr. Russom seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to approve the 911 Board minutes of the August 21, 2002 meeting as printed. Mr. Bogart seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mike Saxton, 911 Program Specialist, briefed the Board on the Primary Safety Answering Point (PSAP) digital mapping equipment installation and training completed in February in the Police Department and Sheriff's Office, which completes the Wireless E911 Phase II implementation to display the location of a cellular call on a digital map.

Mr. Saxton explained the installation process, and briefed the Board regarding the differences in the Police Department and Sheriff's Office PSAP equipment. Mr. Saxton stated this upgrade posed

a problem at the Abilene PSAP due to the limited expansion capabilities of the current workstations, and recommended a review be conducted to determine future needs and current expansion capabilities and requirements.

Discussion among Board members and staff included: 1) the purchase and installation of a backup generator that was done in conjunction with the city hall basement renovation; 2) the purchase of an SUV for staff having gone through final stages of bidding and is on the March 27, 2003 Abilene City Council's agenda; and 3) the number of workstations and equipment currently at the Abilene Police Department.

No Board action was required.

Mr. Saxton gave an update on the Wireless Phase II Implementation, stating the mapping equipment is installed and operating at the Primary Safety Answering Points (PSAPs); and the four Phase I Wireless Service Providers (WSPs); Cingular Wireless, Nextel Partners, Inc., Sprint PCS, and Western Wireless (a.k.a. Cellular One) are moving toward or have **achieved** Phase II completion. T-Mobile, formerly VoiceStream Wireless, which is also operating in the District, will move straight to Phase II as quickly as possible.

No Board action was required.

Greg Brown, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Manager, presented the Mapping Status Report, stating the 911 map books have been completed and distributed. Mr. Brown reported in all, 911 incurred the cost for 95 map books, which includes a street index, county areas mapped by a grid of 5 miles by 5 miles, cities in Taylor County excluding Abilene at a larger scale, and various mapped features. Mr. Brown stated version 2 of the product is already in development and will include a three dimensional perspective of each grid, land mark index, master legend sheet, labels for alias road names, and an index for alias roads. Mr. Brown concluded by reporting that since the last meeting, the dispatch mapping software was upgraded in the Sheriff's Office and installed in the Abilene Police Department. The software will allow dispatchers to view the incoming caller's location on a map with all the features contained in the map book, will allow more features to be added in the future, and eventually will allow the adding of sign locations as another reference for the system.

No Board action was required.

Mike Saxton, 911 Program Specialist, presented the 911 Legislative and Regulatory Issues Report. Mr. Saxton stated with the current climate in the State Legislature and the state budget deficit, massive across-the-board budget cuts and taxes not being raised this session can be expected. Mr. Saxton outlined some of the bills and amendments that have been filed which might affect the District. Mr. Saxton then addressed regulatory issues regarding wireless and wire line service providers and cost recovery associated with Phase I and Phase II implementation. Mr. Saxton further stated the budget structure needs be changed to separate wire line from wireless, noting staff has started the process having completed the revenue portion, and is now working on the expenditure portion. Mr. Saxton further noted the Abilene/Taylor County District participation with the rest of the Texas Districts is providing strong leverage in these issues and that funding allocated for representation is well utilized.

No Board action was required.

Ronnie Kidd, Director of Administrative Services, briefed the Board concerning staffing changes and addition for District operations. Mr. Kidd recommended to: 1) add a Computer Aided Design (CAD) Technician I position to work with the address database and continue integrating it into the District's mapping processes; and 2) to reclassify Mike Saxton to Program Coordinator, providing supervision and assistance to the CAD Technician position in its daily duties, with more focus on the administrative duties of the District. Mr. Kidd addressed the annual salary increase and explained the benefits to the District the staffing changes will bring.

Board and staff discussion included: 1) the District's overall financial situation; 2) new system and reimbursement to the WSP's costs; 3) this pay period being the effective date for the changes for Mike Saxton; and 4) staff advertising for the CAD technician position.

Mr. Russom made a motion to approve funding the staffing changes as recommended by staff. Ms. Moore seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Kidd presented the results of a study, pertaining to the Public Safety Communication System, by RCC Consultants Inc., which was presented to the City Council at its March 13th meeting, and summarized its findings and recommendations for the Board. Mr. Kidd stated staff is preparing to move into Phase II of the project with RCC, which will entail developing specifications for the new systems, releasing RFP's to vendors, evaluating vendor proposals and ultimately making vendor selections and negotiating contracts. Phase III, the implementation and acceptance-testing phase, will follow with an estimated two-year timeline for the entire project.

Mr. Kidd stated the project cost is estimated at \$9.85 to \$10.85 million, plus a consulting fee of approximately 5%. Staff is in the process of developing a financing/funding plan for the project, having received \$2 million to date in federal funds and having submitted a request for an additional \$3 million in federal funding through the District's Congressional delegation. Several grant applications are in progress with continuing research on other grant opportunities.

Mr. Kidd further stated staff is committed to finding as many funding sources as possible for this project. Mr. Kidd then introduced Tracy Phillips, Management Assistant with the Information Technology Department, who presented information on the funding received to date and on funding being sought for the Public Safety Communication System project. Ms. Phillips stated besides the \$2 million previously mentioned that has been received staff is pursuing funding through a Federal Fire grant, National Telecommunication and Information Administration, the Department of Justice, a Domestic Preparedness Assessment Grant and through foundations that support communication programs.

Mr. Kidd outlined the following steps in moving forward with the project:

- Staff will present to the Abilene City Council by mid May of this year a contract amendment with RCC consultants, which is the next step of entering into Phase II.
- Staff will identify funding sources for the consultant fees due to funding not currently being in the technology fund.
- Once the funding/financing plan is developed staff will request that the 9-1-1 Board consider utilizing (increasing) the district's surcharge to participate in funding the project (as discussed at the previous 9-1-1 Board meeting). A special 9-1-1 Board meeting may be needed due to a 90 day notice being required if the surcharge is increased.

Mr. Kidd then reviewed how the 9-1-1 District might participate in the project assuming it is appropriate for the District to participate in funding communication equipment and systems that relate to receiving 9-1-1 calls and dispatching responders to the scene.

City Attorney Sharon Hicks stated she had advised Mr. Kidd to analyze what components of the project are appropriate for the district to fund (components that are involved in receiving the calls and dispatching out; i.e. personnel, equipment and infrastructure).

As an example Mr. Kidd presented a scenario based on relative usage of the components of the system: 56% would be for dispatch and response (infrastructure, radio equipment, mobile data system) and 43% would be for all other (computer aided dispatch and records management system). The percentages were applied to the cost estimates provided by the consultants and the total participation percentage came to 51.9%. Mr. Kidd reiterated that he is not advocating the district fund the entire project. Mr. Kidd stated Certificate of Obligations may be needed or some sort of financing instrument to cover a part of the project, with the possibility of tying 9-1-1 District participation into the debt service. Mr. Kidd further stated the consulting fees will need to be funded and perhaps the district could participate in that funding as well.

Staff and Board discussion included: 1) comparing Abilene/Taylor County 9-1-1 District to other districts in the state; 2) staff currently seeking a grant on behalf of the District; 3) grants and federal funding expected to make up 50-60% of the cost of the project; 4) raising the District surcharge from 3% to 5% resulting in a revenue increase of approximately \$240,000 per year; and 5) the communication project being related to 9-1-1 but to what degree the District should participate needing to be determined.

City Attorney Sharon Hicks clarified that Mr. Kidd is asking the 9-1-1 Board what other information the Board wants him to acquire and bring back to them in order for the Board to determine the answer to the question of what level the District should participate in the project.

The Board requested that staff research how other districts have addressed this issue (noting specifically Midland, Odessa, and Lubbock). The Board also noted no other district operates as the Abilene/Taylor County one does, but justification is needed on where the funding line is drawn.

Further Board and staff discussion included: 1) the appropriateness of looking at funding improvements on County issues and assisting the volunteer fire departments in seeking grants; 2) the overall cost of the project and the district surcharge being capped at 6%; 3) the County, Cities and Volunteer Fire Departments working together as partners in enhancing public safety; 4) the District having a beginning year fund balance of \$1.7 million and \$2 million has been acquired by the City to date toward the project; 5) the challenge faced by staff in not being able to answer questions on how the project will be funded until the project is moved forward; and 6) the District participating in funding the consultant fees.

Mr. Kidd stated the importance of the 9-1-1 District's support of the project and that staff will bring to the Board at a future meeting a proposed surcharge increase; also noting a commitment by the 9-1-1 District to participate in some pro rata funding of the consultant fees would be helpful in moving forward into the next Phase.

Staff and Board discussion included: 1) the consulting fee cost being 5% of the total project, with Phase II estimated at \$247,000; 2) the Board being able to give a consensus of the importance of the project and the appropriateness of the District participating in funding a pro rata portion of the overall scope of the project; and 3) with no action item noted on the Board's agenda, and not knowing what the District's pro rata portion of the project would be, no vote on any issue pertaining to the project would be taken today.

Mr. Kidd thanked the Board and stated staff would fine-tune the calculation of the 9-1-1 District's participation percentage and possibly would request a special meeting to present an action item pertaining to the 9-1-1 District at least funding a portion of the consulting fees for the Public Safety Communications System Project.

No Board action was required.

President Newman announced the next scheduled meeting of the 9-1-1 Board will be August 13, 2003 in the basement Conference Room of City Hall at 3:00 p.m., with the possibility of a called meeting taking place before that time.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

ATTEST:

Jo Moore, Secretary

George Newman, President