

MINUTES
Tarrant County 9-1-1 District
August 3, 2020

According to Section 551.021 of the Government Code, minutes of a meeting must state the subject of each deliberation and indicate each vote, order, decision, or other action taken. These minutes do not include a summary of the discussion but only reflect the action taken by the body. A complete audio recording of this meeting is available on the District's website www.tc911.org.

A meeting of the 9-1-1 Board of Managers was held at 12:00 PM, Monday, August 3, 2020, via WebEx conference call from Tarrant County 9-1-1, 2600 Airport Freeway, Fort Worth, TX 76111. Don Crowson presided.

Board Members present:

Don Crowson, Chair
Rick Brunson, Vice Chair
Robert Brooks, Secretary
Aubry Insko, Treasurer
Douglas Hooten
Brian Johnson
Jeff Spivey
Jim Davis

Others present:

Wayne Olson, Attorney

Staff Members present:

Shinar Haynes, Executive Director
Aniel Austin, Finance Manager
Renee Boeglin, Executive Assistant
Shantelle Oliver, Director of Support Services
Phillip Rohrbough, GIS Manager
Kevin Kleck, Director of Technical Services
Yvonne Krumm, PSAP Support Analyst
Travis Trevino, Interoperability Coordinator
Gail Wicks, Telephony Analyst
Sofia Brabham, Lead Trainer

CALL TO ORDER

Don Crowson called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM.

2021 BUDGET

Shinar Haynes reported she took the original budget as requested and removed performance evaluation increase, the COLA for retirees, reduced the TCDRS payment to the minimum allowed, and removed all travel until January 2021. Don Crowson asked if there were any questions regarding the budget. Rick Brunson inquired FY2021 revenue is \$14,926,70, the projected disbursements \$24,909,983, and the net loss in the reserves is (\$9,983,513); what portions of those expenses were approved by previous Board members. Shinar stated 5.3 is leftover from the CPE project and 1.7 is from the network upgrade; she would have to look at the exact number, but about \$7.3 or \$6.6 million. Rick stated we have a deficit in next year's budget of \$2.7 million and asked if the staff has any other recommendations for possible cuts to the proposed budget to eliminate the deficit. Shinar said as far as the budget, between the \$7.3 million and the 5452 9-1-1 Telephone Service, and 5453 9-1-1 Enhancements pretty much wipes out all of the \$14 million we get in revenues. Short of removing everything, including removing salaries, we would not be able to break even, and we would have to go into the reserves. Rick stated that is what's sending us down the path of projecting deficit reserves in FY2023. Shinar said if you look at the numbers going forward, in 2021-22, the CPE project will be paid off and the extra \$7 million we're using this year for the final CPE plus the upgrade will no longer be a factor, and at that point, our budget will be \$4 million over.

Regarding procedures, Rick stated there are usually two separate agenda items, one to approve the budget and the second to approve the service fees. He said approval of service fees is not on the agenda and asked if it's something that can be talked about. Wayne Olson stated it can be discussed as part of the budget, but the fees cannot be approved because there is not a resolution. Rick asked Shinar if she's received any input from any of our member entities to raise fees, and she said no.

Rick made a motion to remove the Radio Assistance fund out of the existing proposed budget. He asked if that balances the budget for this year. Shinar stated we're about \$3 million over, and the Radio Assistance is only \$2 million. Don asked Shinar if \$2 million was already removed from FY20 to FY21. Shinar confirmed that is correct, and \$1.7 million was allocated to the remaining PSAP's that were not P25 Motorola equipment for this year. Rick amended his motion and recommended removing \$2 million from Radio Assistance and \$1 million from PSAP Assistance to get to a balanced budget. Explain to member entities that the budget is balanced because the two funds were removed. If the budget is rejected, then the Board has the mandate to approve a new budget with the fees added back in. Don suggests the opposite, to leave the budget as is, and if it is rejected, then we would have a mandate to remove it from the budget. Mayor Johnson agreed with Don and said the goal is to run an efficient 9-1-1 District. Rick said his suggestion is based on the assistance funds were originally set up to be funded by surpluses from previous years, and the member cities were always told it was a year to year deal. If we include the fees now with a deficit projected, then that's an entirely different discussion that was had when the fees were initially set up. Mayor Johnson said if the cities have become dependent on the grants and if the system is effective, then it should not be cut just to balance the budget. Don said the funds were set up to support the system because the system needed support. Now we're in a situation where we either follow through or we don't. We're simply moving forward with what we've been moving forward with, and if it's no longer tolerable by our member cities, then they should tell us that, not have us cut the budget and be surprised by budgetary issues in their own cities now. Don said in 2020-21 we'll still be in the black moving forward with the Radio Assistance and PSAP Programs, and we should put forth the effort to get the issue resolved. He is not in favor of Rick's recommendation. Rick said that was the same conversation that was had in 2017, and those conversations never happened. Mayor Johnson said he's talked to several Mayors and they don't want the grant money to go away. The cities depend on the money to upgrade and they may put off upgrading things. Mayor Johnson said he is going to explain it at the Mayor's Council tonight. Don suggested leaving it in the budget but put a moratorium on dispersing it, maybe six months. Mayor Johnson agreed.

Shinar asked about raising fees. Don said leave fees as they are and fund the budget based on what we have and put a freeze on the disbursement of the Radio Assistance Program and PSAP funds until the issue is resolved within this fiscal year. Chief Spivey agreed with Don and said we should approve the budget as it is and don't approve any expenditures until we work through the issue. Shinar stated the issue is we need more revenue, but we're not going to attempt to raise fees until the next budget so how is holding off spending on the assistance programs for six months going to allow us to find a fix if we're not going to raise fees for 12 months. Don asked Wayne if fees can be raised at any time during the year or if it has to be done on an annual fiscal basis. Wayne stated it can be done at any time it's appropriate, but before the fees go into effect you have to give 90 days' notice to the service providers. Doug agreed to approve the budget as is and hold off on fees and have conversations about expenses. Don asked Rick if he finds this as an acceptable solution. Rick said we're getting there, but before we start the dialogues with our member cities, the Board needs to decide what expenses will be allowed under each of the assistance funds. He said we talk a lot about investing in new technology for the future, but over 70-80% is being spent on normal, day to day expenses.

Don asked Rick, based on the current framework, if he would rescind his motion and consider an additional motion. Rick asked Wayne if the Board would open themselves up to any potential issues if they approve a deficit budget. Wayne stated not legally, but possibly politically. Don said even with Rick's premise of cutting the accounts out permanently, we'll still end up in this situation a few years from now and we need to address the imbalance sooner than later. Rick said when you look at it that way, he doesn't see any difference in Don's suggestion and his suggestion. Mayor Johnson said if there were an emergency, the money would be there; holding off on spending is a lot different than cutting it.

Motion to approve the budget as is and putting a moratorium on spending for six months was made by Mayor Johnson and seconded by Doug Hooten. Jim Davis abstained from voting. Motion passed 5-1-1, with Rick Brunson opposing.

Mayor Johnson will bring up at Mayors Council tonight and discuss the Executive Board polling member cities.

The fee structure and fee resolution will be addressed at the next Board meeting – set timelines and develop a plan of action. Wayne stated in the past we’ve had two different resolutions, a fee resolution that sets the fees for landlines, and on occasion, the Board will adopt a resolution regarding the VOIP service fees. The VOIP fees need to be treated the same as the local exchange access lines, and that affects the budget. The VOIP services will not pay \$0.50 fee anymore, they’ll pay the landline fee.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 PM.

Don Crowson, Chair
Tarrant County 9-1-1

ATTEST: Robert Brooks
Tarrant County 9-1-1
