

**MINUTES OF THE  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF MANAGERS**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**May 14, 2014**

LOCATION: 9-1-1 Board Room  
150 Hilbig Road, Conroe, Texas

**BOARD ATTENDING**

PRESENT: Paul Virgadamo, President  
James Simon, Secretary  
Robert Hudson, Treasurer  
John Young, Ex-Officio Member

ABSENT: Vicky Rudy, Vice President  
Tommy Gage, Member

IN ATTENDANCE: Larry Foerster, Legal Counsel  
Chip VanSteenberg, Executive Director  
Jeanne Frey, Operations Manager  
Roberto Gutierrez, Systems Manager  
Robert Brewer, Systems Technician  
Regina Payne, Database Coordinator  
Andrea Wilson, Public Education Coordinator  
Terri Gill, Executive Assistant  
Rick Erickson, Woodlands Fire Department  
Matt Walkup, Montgomery County Hospital District  
Capt. Peggy Frankhouser, Montgomery County Sheriff's Office  
Diana Porche, AT&T

Mr. Paul Virgadamo, President, called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m., noting Sheriff Tommy Gage and Ms. Vicky Rudy were unable to attend.

**Public Comments**

No one requested to address the Board.

**Wireless Network**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item one of the agenda, consider and take action on a proposal to develop a wireless network.

Mr. Chip VanSteenberg, Executive Director, requested the matter be deferred due to an issue related to the proposal. A special meeting will be schedule when the issue is resolved and the proposal is ready.

No action was taken, the matter was deferred.

## **Upgrade 9-1-1 Call Management Software and Hardware**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item two of the agenda, consider and take action on a proposal to upgrade 9-1-1 call management software and hardware.

Mr. VanSteenberg reported staff worked with AT&T and Cassidian on a proposal to upgrade the hardware and software in the 9-1-1 call management program. The proposal from AT&T totaled \$1,251,108.36 but the final price will fluctuate to include shipping and minor modifications in the final count for each unit. The project will be funded from the Capital Fund. MCECD budgeted \$800,000 in Fiscal Year 2014 and will budget the balance in Fiscal Year 2015.

Staff recommended the board approve the proposal and authorize the executive director to sign a master purchase agreement.

Chief Robert Hudson made the motion to approve the proposal and authorize the executive director to sign the master purchase agreement. Mr. James Simon seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

## **Call Monitoring and Reporting**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item three of the agenda, consider and take action on a proposal for call monitoring and reporting.

Mr. VanSteenberg noted the district uses a reporting program supplied by Cassidian named Aurora. It is a powerful database with impressive capabilities. Unfortunately, those same features make it difficult for users to navigate the system and find the correct information.

The staff recommended going with ECaTS which is more user-friendly. Instead of software ECaTS is a service that may be accessed from anywhere through the internet. The ECaTS model requires a one-time set-up fee and a monthly recurring cost. The interface compiles data much faster and allows report parameters to be saved and scheduled. The one-time set-up fee is \$20,588 and the monthly recurring fees are \$2,009.33 over a five year period for an annual total of \$24,111.96. In contrast, extending the agreement for another five years with Aurora will cost over \$45,600 in fees for licenses and support plus as estimated \$30,000 for hardware.

Mr. Simon made the motion to approve the proposal for call monitoring and reporting. Chief Hudson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

## **Capital Plan**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item four of the agenda, consider and take action approving the Capital Plan.

Mr. VanSteenberg reviewed and explained the five-year Capital Plan with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation.

The plan calls for \$1,169,500 in spending in the upcoming fiscal year. Several major initiatives of the plan have already been discussed by the board, including:

- Phase II of the upgrade to the Cassidian call management system (480,000)
- Extending fiber optic cable to The Woodlands Fire Department PSAP (\$65,000)
- Exterior improvement to the MCECD facility (\$83,500)

There are two new initiatives in the plan. One is a cost-sharing program for the four PSAP's. The program would allow MCECD to contribute 60 - 70% toward the cost of an improvement at the PSAP, up to a maximum of \$75,000. These improvements could include complementing technology, facility improvements, workstations, process engineering, or any other item or service that will enhance the 9-1-1 experience. The requests submitted would be vetted by the staff and

presented to the board for consideration.

The other new initiative is an inflatable safety house to be used in MCECD's public education program. The house is a fun way to educate children on safety and 9-1-1. The staff is proposing to budget \$10,000 toward the cost of the house and partnering with the Montgomery County Fire Chief's Association to contribute the balance. The estimated total cost is \$15,000 - \$17,000.

Mr. Simon made the motion to approve the capital plan. Chief Hudson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

### **Fiscal Year 2015 Proposed Budget**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item five on the agenda, consider and take action approving the Fiscal Year 2014 proposed budget.

Mr. VanSteenberg noted the board appointed Paul Virgadamo and Vicky Rudy to serve as a budget committee and provide guidance to the staff. The budget, as proposed, was developed by the staff using input and feedback provided by the committee.

Mr. VanSteenberg reviewed and explained the Fiscal Year 2015 Proposed Budget with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. VanSteenberg explained the proposed funding of certificate pay for the call-takers at the Sheriff's Office and the Conroe Police Department. Recently activated certificate and training requirements for call-takers include multiple certificate levels: basic, intermediate, advanced and masters. One of the goals the board set was to find ways to enhance the employment opportunities for the PSAPs and the call-takers. This program is an idea to extend certificate pay to the call-takers who go beyond basic, and pursue intermediate, advanced or masters certification.

Captain Frankhouser asked Mr. VanSteenberg to clarify the requirements, "... if 48 call-takers obtain a certain level you would do that, not just the ones you pay for?" Mr. VanSteenberg replied, "Right, at all four PSAPS."

Mr. VanSteenberg discussed a proposed pilot program, 9-1-1 Trail Markers, special markers for identifying the location on a trail, with the trail name or mile marker. Possible locations include the George Mitchell trail in Creekside, and the green belt in Spring Creek.

The FY2015 budget includes an increase in budgeted revenues by \$137,100 or 3.3%. Budgeted expenditures increase by \$101,400, or 2.5%.

Mr. Virgadamo asked Mr. VanSteenberg to share the amount of savings to be realized over the next few years. Mr. VanSteenberg replied affirmatively. Some circuits have been disconnected, saving about \$30,000. The ALI database will save a projected \$110,000 annually, and the microwave project will save close to \$200,000 annually. We are keeping a scorecard and will share those numbers from time-to-time.

Mr. Virgadamo asked if there were any questions, being none requested a motion.

Chief Hudson made the motion to approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2014 Budget. Mr. Simon seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

### **Meeting Calendar for Remaining 2014 Meetings**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item six of the agenda, consider and take action changing the meeting calendar for the remaining 2014 meetings.

Mr. VanSteenberg reported the board meeting schedule is the same schedule for the Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC). CSEC is the state agency charged with planning, implementing and overseeing 9-1-1 service in all areas of Texas not otherwise covered by a district such as MCECD. The staff believes it is important to attend the CSEC meetings to remain informed of their plans and activities, what they do may impact us as a district. Therefore the staff requests the board consider moving its meetings to the third Wednesday of odd numbered months.

No action was required; the board meetings are moved to the third Wednesday of the odd months.

### **Executive Director's Report on Items of Community Interest for Which No Action will be Taken**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item seven of the agenda, Executive Director's report on items of community interest for which no action will be taken.

Mr. VanSteenberg reported the interior improvements are almost complete, cabinetry and appliances.

The Sheriff's office has been planning and doing testing at the EOC, and are planning a date to shut-down upstairs and work from the EOC for a day. It is good to exercise the back-up facilities and equipment.

The new billboard is running a Code Red message, encouraging people to sign up.

April 26<sup>th</sup> was a busy day in Montgomery County with Kidz Fest in Conroe, the Sawmill Festival in East Montgomery County and Healthy Kids Day in Oak Ridge North. We had staff at all of these events representing 9-1-1.

MCECD staff added a feature on the map, Pictometry, which is a 3-D view of the map if the call-takers need more detail.

May 15<sup>th</sup> is the day the four largest wireless carriers agreed to have text-to-9-1-1 available for those entities that requested it.

MCECD staff is in the process of separating The Woodlands into a separate ESN group, to facilitate the gathering of statistical data, and should The Woodlands ever become a primary PSAP, we will be ready to transfer the calls.

No action was taken.

Mr. VanSteenberg suggested the board address the consent agenda prior to adjourning to the closed executive session.

### **Consent Agenda**

Mr. Paul Virgadamo noted items ten, eleven, twelve and thirteen of the consent agenda; stating these may be taken separately or as a whole.

Mr. Simon made the motion to approve items ten, eleven, twelve and thirteen of the consent agenda. Chief Hudson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

### **Closed Executive Session**

Mr. Virgadamo noted item nine of the agenda, take action, if needed, on matters involving personnel matters.

Mr. Virgadamo recessed the open meeting to closed Executive Session at 1:11p.m.

The Board may meet in closed Executive Session as authorized per the Texas Open Meetings Act, to consider personnel matters pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.074.

### **Reconvene Open Meeting**

Mr. Virgadamo reconvened the open meeting at 1:19 p.m.

No action was taken.

Mr. Virgadamo requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Simon made the motion to adjourn. Chief Hudson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 1:19 p.m.

These minutes were approved at regularly scheduled board meeting on SEPTEMBER 17, 2014.

If needed, an official, signed copy may be obtained at the MCECD office.