

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

REGULAR MEETING

November 20, 2019

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

BOARD ATTENDING

PRESENT: Paul Virgadamo, President
Robert Hudson, Vice President
Ryan Gable, Secretary
Jack Yates, Treasurer
James Simon, Member
John Young, Ex-Officio Member

NOT PRESENT:

IN ATTENDANCE: Larry Foerster, Legal Counsel
Chip VanSteenberg, Executive Director
Andrea Wilson, Assistant Director
Terri Gill, Office Manager
Miss Riley Gable, Citizen
Deputy Chief Jerry Bittner, The Woodlands Fire Department
Rick Erickson, The Woodlands Fire Department
Lt. James Waller, Conroe Police Department
Mike McClosky, AT&T
Michelle Riggs, Conroe ISD Police Department

Mr. Paul Virgadamo, President, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m., noting all members were present.

Public Comments

No one requested to address the Board.

Mr. Larry Foerster reported he had been asked to serve, on an interim basis, as the attorney for the Montgomery County Hospital District. In the event that there is any conflict with contracts or other items that would impact both boards, then he will notify both clients accordingly.

Conroe Police Department's Request Under the PSAP Improvement Program for a Computer Aided Dispatch System

Mr. Virgadamo noted item one of the agenda, consider and take action approving the Conroe Police Department's request under the PSAP Improvement Program for a computer aided dispatch system.

Mr. Chip VanSteenberg reported the Conroe Police Department (CPD) presented this request in September 2018 with a plan to use PIPP funding over three fiscal years (FY 2018, 2019, 2020). They requested an extension due to issues related to a corporate merger involving the company selling the CAD system. The board voted to table the request and roll the funds forward. The merger is now complete and CPD is ready to present their request again.

The total system cost for the CAD system is \$1,275,636, which is being financed over four years. CPD is eligible for \$407,046.84 in PIPP funding as follows:

FY 2018 - \$157,046.84

FY 2019 - \$125,000.00

FY 2020 - \$125,000.00

PIPP is a reimbursement program which provides a 90% match for approved projects. Therefore, CPD will have to pay a 10% match or, in this case, \$40,704.68. CPD plans to request PIPP funds to make the next two annual payments. They are aware that future payments are not guaranteed and are subject to annual appropriation and board approval.

Mr. Virgadamo abstained from action on this matter.

Mr. Virgadamo asked if there were questions, and being none, requested a motion. Mr. James Simon made the motion to approve Conroe Police Department request under the PSAP Improvement Program. Mr. Jack Yates seconded the motion.

The motion carried with all in favor.

Resolution on the Annual Review and Approval of the District's Investment Policy and Other Matters

Mr. Virgadamo noted item two of the agenda, consider and take action on a resolution on the annual review and approval of the District's investment policy and other matters.

Mr. VanSteenberg explained the public funds investment act covers governmental agencies in the State of Texas. One of the requirements is a written policy, that must contain strategies for the types of allowed funds. The policy must be reviewed annually, and any changes that are made to the policy must be called out in the resolution.

The resolution reflects that there are no changes recommended to the policy.

Mr. VanSteenberg noted FTN Financial Services has changed their name to FHN Financial Services.

Mr. Virgadamo asked if there were questions, and being none, requested a motion. Constable Ryan Gable made the motion to approve the resolution on the annual review and approval of the district's investment policy. Chief Robert Hudson seconded the motion.

The motion carried with all in favor.

Discussion of Installation of 9-1-1 System Equipment at the Conroe Independent School District Police Department

Mr. Virgadamo noted item three of the agenda, discussion of installation of 9-1-1 system equipment at the Conroe Independent School District Police Department.

Mr. Virgadamo asked if they are a PSAP. Mr. VanSteenberg replied the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) and the FCC have one requirement to designate a PSAP: the agency has to receive 9-1-1 calls, even if on a transfer basis. MCECD designates a PSAP if they receive a 9-1-1 call across a 9-1-1 trunk. A call received on a 9-1-1 trunk has all the special services: the location information, the subscriber information and other information that is important to handling the call. When a call is transferred to an agency that is not one of our PSAPs, the call goes across a normal 10-digit phone line, and all the extra information is stripped out.

Conroe ISD has requested to receive their 9-1-1 calls across a 9-1-1 trunk. Mr. Virgadamo asked when a 9-1-1 call is made, will it come into the primary call-center, not route directly to Conroe ISD. Constable Ryan Gable expressed

concern with the lack of communication between law enforcement agencies and Conroe ISD. Mr. VanSteenberg clarified the staff are not recommending any changes to primary PSAPs, 9-1-1 calls will continue to route to the Conroe PD or the Sheriff's Office. Conroe ISD receives a lot of transfers into their dispatch center. We have talked about making them some sort of secondary PSAP but would not want to equate them with Woodlands Fire or the Hospital District. They could be set as an Auxiliary PSAP or some other method, to enable them to use the 9-1-1 trunk capability. We believe this would improve communications between the agencies.

Constable Gable asked what costs are associated with the addition of a PSAP. Mr. VanSteenberg replied a workstation is \$30,000 to \$35,000, we have discussed putting one or two workstations in their call-center. This buys the three-year license for the 9-1-1 software, and no additional trunks will be required. Mr. Foerster asked if this was included in the budget. Mr. VanSteenberg replied affirmatively, while working on the quote for the upgrades to the Vesta system, we included funds for the possible addition of Conroe ISD. Mr. Foerster asked if we expect to get calls from the other ISDs. Mr. VanSteenberg noted Conroe ISD is the only ISD with a 24/7 dispatch center, which is an important criterion to qualify as a PSAP. The most likely candidate to make a request, would be the Lone Star College System, who also has a 24/7 dispatch center. Their call-center is in Montgomery County, but serves Harris and Montgomery County.

Mr. Virgadamo asked Constable Gable if he felt this would be beneficial to law enforcement. Constable Gable replied affirmatively, it would be beneficial to establish open communications. Mr. Virgadamo asked if the only reason there are not open communications is the 9-1-1 system. Mr. VanSteenberg replied it is a combination of both radios and 9-1-1. Ms. Andrea Wilson added this would give Conroe ISD access to all of the RAVE suite.

Mr. Jack Yates asked if Conroe ISD had made the choice to not participate in the 9-1-1 system at some point, and why would they want us to pay this cost. Mr. VanSteenberg noted Conroe ISD is the third largest police department in Montgomery County. Ms. Wilson added the other ISD police departments are dispatched by the Sheriff's Office. Ms. Michelle Riggs, Conroe ISD, added they are the only ISD that dispatches for themselves.

Mr. VanSteenberg stated the district does not have a clear policy for adding a PSAP. Mr. VanSteenberg asked to go back to Mr. Yates question, stating he did not think Conroe ISD had an opportunity to choose, to opt in or out, they have grown into this roll.

Mr. VanSteenberg stated the initial four PSAPs were fully funded by the district for 9-1-1 equipment, and any additional PSAPs should follow that model.

Mr. VanSteenberg added the operating group believes having Conroe ISD as a PSAP would promote greater efficiency. For the texting, the transferring, the conferencing, the RAVE suite of products, for all those reasons, and because of the size of the ISD, the size of the police force and the 24/7 call-center, we feel it is worth discussing and considering.

Mr. VanSteenberg inquired, based on this conversation, does the district want to begin drafting an agreement, where concerns could be addressed, secondary or auxiliary status, and funding concerns. Mr. Foerster suggested setting out recitals in the agreement noting why Conroe ISD has been qualified, certain things that meet the district's criteria that may not apply to smaller school districts or cities. Mr. VanSteenberg noted they should have 24/7 dispatch and a certain volume of calls.

Mr. Virgadamo asked if the district funds positions at all of the PSAPs. Mr. VanSteenberg replied, no, only at the two primary PSAPs, but the district does fund some other things, which is why he is reluctant to call them a secondary, which comes with some additional benefits.

Mr. VanSteenberg stated the feedback was good, and he and Mr. Foerster would work on a draft agreement to bring to the board.

No action was taken.

Board Meeting Dates and Holidays for 2020

Mr. Virgadamo noted item four of the agenda, consider and take action on board meeting dates and holidays for 2020.

Mr. VanSteenberg noted the annual request to set meeting dates and holidays for 2020.

Mr. Virgadamo requested a motion. Mr. Simon made the motion to approve the board meeting dates and holidays for 2020. Constable Gable seconded the motion.

The motion carried with all in favor.

Set the Date Time and Place for a Public Review Hearing

Mr. Virgadamo noted item five of the agenda, consider and take action, if needed, to set the date, time and place for a public review hearing.

Mr. VanSteenberg stated a public review hearing is required by state law every three years, at the end of the hearing the board votes on the continuation of the district. The last public review was held in the council chambers at Conroe City Hall. The available dates are:

- Monday, December 16
- Monday, January 6

Mr. Virgadamo requested a motion. Mr. Simon made the motion to hold the public review hearing on December 16 at 9:00 a.m. in the council chambers of the City of Conroe. Chief Hudson seconded the motion.

The motion carried with all in favor.

Demonstration of Recent Emergency Communication Technology Improvements Purchased by or Funded by the District

Mr. Virgadamo noted item six of the agenda, demonstration of recent emergency communications technology improvements purchased by or funded by the district.

Mr. VanSteenberg stated the board is asked to approve funding for interesting technology and does not always get to see the completed projects in action.

Ms. Wilson introduced Deputy Chief Jerry Bittner, who would demonstrate the personnel accountability system the district helped fund through the PIPP grant.

Deputy Chief Bittner noted the most important thing in public safety is good, accurate communications, and the Motorola Firefighters Personnel Accountability System is powerful tool for incident command and dispatchers.

Deputy Chief Bittner demonstrated the system's features through radios and alerts.

Ms. Wilson introduced Mr. Rick Erickson, who would demonstrate Motorola Command Aware.

Mr. Erickson explained the Motorola Command Aware is a data portal that pulls information from multiple systems together in one place, a good emergency communications tool, both in dispatch and out in the field.

Mr. Erickson demonstrated the system in real-time, showing active incidents in Montgomery County.

Ms. Wilson reported that RAVE had made available a new product in beta-testing called Video Services. The

Woodlands Fire Department has been actively using and testing the new offering.

Mr. VanSteenberg explained the program allows the 9-1-1 call-taker to send a link to your cell phone if you have called 9-1-1, you may click on a link, and it will allow the dispatcher to access your camera, and the call-taker can see what you are seeing.

Mr. Erickson performed a live demonstration with the fire department call-center.

Ms. Wilson demonstrated RAVE Facility, a tool that allows schools and businesses to build profiles with the campus details, contact information, and other information they deem relevant.

No action was taken.

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 on the following items:

- A major item in this year's budget was upgrading the Vesta system, we continue to work with Motorola to finalize the district's purchase order.
- The GIS staff are in the process of determining all the different ways a street can be named in different systems, the appraisal district's system, the county road log, the street signs, what the plat says, what 9-1-1 calls it. We are working with one precinct at a time to unify the systems.
- The training program is up and running. We have hired Ms. Kristi Dunn from the Conroe Police Department.
- The approved study with Black & Veatch is underway, looking at the PSAPs, the way they are performing, making recommendations for service level improvements, and putting together service level agreements.
- Starting January 1, Mr. VanSteenberg will serve as President of the Texas 9-1-1 Alliance, a two-year term.

Discussion only, no action was taken.

Closed Executive Session

Mr. Virgadamo noted 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.

The open meeting adjourned to the closed executive session at 1:10 p.m.

Reconvene Open Session

Mr. Virgadamo reconvened the open meeting at 1:31 p.m., to consider and take action, if necessary, on personnel matters.

Mr. Virgadamo stated no action would be taken.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Virgadamo noted items ten through fourteen of the consent agenda, noting the items may be taken separately or as a whole.

Mr. Simon made a motion to approve the consent agenda in its entirety. Chief Hudson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 1:31 p.m.

*These minutes were approved at regularly scheduled board meeting on January 15, 2020.
If needed, an official, signed copy may be obtained at the MCECD office.*