



Minutes of the Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1 Commission Meeting
July 2022 Meeting
Thursday, July 28th, 2022 @ 1730 hours
Accomack County EOC Building - Melfa

With Correction Noted from the August 2022 Meeting (Letter B (Action Items))

- COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Ben Byrd, *Wachapreague Volunteer Fire Company*
Terri Christman, *Northampton County Dept. of EMS*
Donald Hart, *Accomack County Board of Supervisors*
Donnie Kellam, *Chairman, Community Fire Company*
Charles Kolakowski, *Northampton County Administrator*
Mike Mason, *Accomack County Administrator*
Bill McCready, *Atlantic Volunteer Fire Company*
Kenny Reese, *Sergeant, Accomack County Sheriff's Office*
Jeff Renas, *Area 31 1st Sergeant, Virginia State Police*
Ron Wolff, *Vice-Chairman, Accomack County Board of Supervisors*
- OTHERS PRESENT:** Jeff Flournoy, *9-1-1 Director*
Caroline Hodgson, *9-1-1 Supervisor/Recording Secretary*
Krista Kilmon, *Deputy 9-1-1 Director*
- COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** AJ Ferebee, *Captain, Northampton County Sheriff's Office*
Ernest Smith, *Northampton County Board of Supervisors*
- OTHERS ABSENT:** Scott Chandler, *ESVA 9-1-1 Consultant*
- CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Kellam called the meeting to order at 17:31.
- INVOCATION:** Commissioner Ben Byrd delivered the opening invocation.
- PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** There was no public participation at this meeting. Commissioner Donald Hart took this time to thank the Commission for the kindness shown at the passing of his mother.



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MINUTES: *A motion to accept the minutes from the June 2022 meeting was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Ben Byrd. There were no other oppositions and the motion was carried.*

CONSENT AGENDA: *There were no consent agenda items at this meeting.*

BUDGET REPORT: Director Flournoy reported that he was still reporting on FY22. All wireless surcharge money is in which is over the budgeted amount due to the new tax that is helping. Accomack's twelve months are in and is over by \$27,000 which was anticipated. Northampton still has a few months to be credited back to FY22 but should be under by \$7,000 and Chincoteague is on track. On the Expenditures side, the report is through July 25th. Director Flournoy stated that we should not expect any more personnel changes. Those should be incorporated in the FY23 budget. Some invoices are still being credited back to FY22 (some work that was done). This is not a done deal but there are no big changes. 82% of the budget has been spent of FY22.

A motion to approve the budget report was made by Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff with a second from Commissioner Ben Byrd. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Director Flournoy reported that he attended Accomack County Circuit Court for a subpoena request for a trial. There are three full-time positions that are vacant and expect to fill soon. We have six part-time COs that are all fully released. Director Flournoy touched on the current hiring process and the new additions that have been added, including two recruitment videos. He also gave an outline of the hiring process and the plans as we resume. Director Flournoy played both videos for the Commission (one being about 30 seconds and the other being about 3 minutes). The Commission stated that both videos were very good. Director Flournoy mentioned that there was some work done to the 9-1-1 Center tower back in June including the removal of several antenna systems that were no longer in use. The generator that has had previous muffler issues is now experiencing a bad whining noise for a short period of time when it runs. Accomack County Public Works is aware and Director Flournoy reminded the Commission that there is money in the FY23 budget for a new generator. He also reported that the A/C unit on the Extension side of the building continues to have some issues but is also expected to be replaced in the upcoming budget year. Director Flournoy spoke briefly about the NG9-1-1 ESInet. It is expected that we have a Project Manager soon and our timeframe to convert should be around January 2023. No one in our region, except for Chesapeake, has migrated over at this point. A few weeks back, all 9-1-1 Centers were directed to complete a comprehensive survey/data collection to provide to the 9-1-1 Board, which Director Flournoy submitted prior to the deadline. There are several town-hall meetings scheduled throughout the State in August. Director Flournoy reported that an idea recently started was monthly employee recognitions via social media and in the 9-1-1 Center. CO Casey Decker was spotlighted for the month of July 2022. The March/April Bi-Monthly Award recipients were CO Brandie Kuntz, CO Tony Montross, and CO Kirstin Estelle for their work and



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performance during the military plane crash in March 2022. CO John Thornton, CO Leah Hall, and CO Brandie Kuntz were the recipients of the May/June 2022 Bi-Monthly Award for their efforts and professionalism during two house fires that occurred in close proximity of each other during a severe thunderstorm. Deputy Director Krista Kilmon also came in to assist during that incident. Motorola still has one bill left and some work needs to be completed before Director Flournoy will pay that bill. He is

frustrated that the Citizen Input feature is still not available and is one of the items that Motorola needs to complete.

RADIO INFRASTRUCTURE: Director Flournoy reported that we still have intermittent noise on Channel 7 and Channel 9, despite recent efforts to fix. The Accomack County SIRS radio also continues to experience issues. While this is not an immediate 9-1-1 Center issue, it is an issue for us because we do utilize this channel at times. Director Flournoy has reengaged the radio techs and while the range has improved, the interference still exists for unknown reasons. Atlantic Communications has finished the preventative maintenance of all primary equipment. Director Flournoy has executed the agreements with Atlantic Communications and Mobile Communications to maintain our radio system/consoles for the remainder of the year. Director Flournoy gave some updates on the RPSRS. The Community Funding Project applications were submitted. Local funds are still not included in the FY23 budget, pending any other funds/grants that may be available. The Evaluation Committee is still intact as we go through the procurement process. The other RFP for the microwave system should be coming once we know who we will be working with. Director Flournoy has not engaged Northampton County Public Schools anymore. We did a few months ago but have not heard anything from them as far as wanting to be included. He has deferred the relationship with CTA until we finish where we are now and know who we are going to work with.

OTHER: The childcare room at the 9-1-1 Center continues to be used in a trial period that started in May. Five of our employees who are authorized to use it with four of them using it to date. It has been used ten times since the last Commission meeting for a couple hours each time. Director Flournoy expects to have a future action item to continue the use of this room. Director Flournoy stated that months back we heard about 9-8-8 and the Marcus Alert system. There was some legislation passed in the General Assembly that stated that jurisdictions of less than 40,000 inhabitants could opt out but there are some parts of it that cannot be opted out of. Director Flournoy has talked to our attorney and Michelle Hallett from Northampton County for thoughts and opinions. There may be better platforms and less expensive ways to accomplish this and may require more attention in the future. It is unknown if this will be a 9-1-1 Center issue or if other localities will need to have their own ways of complying. Some calls may not need to come to the 9-1-1 Center depending on the nature of the call rather be transferred to a 9-8-8 dispatch center. The key is to not send law enforcement to every mental health call unless otherwise warranted. Director Flournoy is reaching out to other 9-1-1 Centers in the State to see how they are handling this law. If 9-8-8 is called, it is based on your phone number not your



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location. This makes the process messy as far as getting the correct help in a timely manner. Director Flournoy stated that there is more to come on this and he is trying to stay abreast of the laws and information available.

A motion to accept the Director's report was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

ACTION ITEMS: A. Reception of Baker-Tilly Compensation/Market Analysis/Report –

Director Flournoy provided in the packet and discussed at this meeting the information given to him by Baker-Tilly for the salary study and clarification on the grades that were selected. Director Flournoy read an e-mail that he sent Baker-Tilly earlier in the day prior to the meeting requesting clarification to protect the integrity of the study that the grade decisions were not based on his conversations and questions to alter the initial recommendations and that it did not complicate anything along the way. He advised the Commission that Baker-Tilly was available for a phone call, if needed. Chairman Kellam felt that a phone call was warranted. Director Flournoy did conference in Brenda Turner from Baker-Tilly at this point of the meeting for further confirmation that the recommendation of grade levels (6 and 11) were selected based on Baker-Tilly's independent study and were not influenced by any misunderstanding or interpretation of questions asked by Director Flournoy. Brenda Turner stated that she was comfortable with the grades 6 and 11 being used compared to the market data. Commissioner Mike Mason asked Brenda Turner if Baker-Tilly's professional recommendation was to use grades 6 and 11 and she answered yes, it is more reasonable from an internal perspective. Commissioner Mike Mason asked in regards to the years of service adjustment if Baker-Tilly's professional recommendation was .5% for all employees based on years of position. Brenda Turner replied that yes, that is a standard scenario to address position compression. Commissioner Mike Mason then asked that it doesn't matter what position the employee is in (dispatcher or supervisor); the recommendation was .5% for each year? Brenda Turner stated that was correct. Director Flournoy thanked Ms. Turner for the phone call and then ended the call with her. Director Flournoy then stated that the action item entailed the approval that Baker-Tilly's report was done, not approving the results.

A motion to accept this action item was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

B. Revised- Compensation Plan/Immediate Compensation Action – (3)

distinct action items here: A. Regardless of any study/compensation changes, implementing a 5% increase for all staff (effective August 1st, planned by both Counties) B. Proposes implementing the recommended changes for a minimum salary for dispatcher to go to grade 6 (any employee would move to this paygrade if currently below it), and proposes grade 11 for Supervisors, and C. Implementing Scenario 3 from the Baker-Tilly report (receive .5% for years of service in current position). Director Flournoy gave further details (available in the meeting packet) for this action item in regards to money



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in the budget to make it possible and where the money came from and any needed budget alterations. Director Flournoy's budget reflects for one year. He also mentioned that he reached out to Accomack County to see where they compare their salaries to as well as other rural localities in the State. Commissioner Mike Mason commented that his position on this item is that we engaged an outside expert third party to provide recommendations and we should be implementing those recommendations. He pointed out some differences that were provided from last month to this month. Last month's discussions entailed implementing the study and then adding the 5% increase. Director

Flournoy stated that was correct. Commissioner Mike Mason then stated that this month shows to provide the 5% to employees and then add the study which would cut down on the costs of the implementation, which is the decision that he supports. The consultant recommends a grade 6 for COs and a grade 11 for Supervisors and a .5% adjustment per year in position. Last month was .5% for a CO and .025 for Supervisors (half) but the consultant's recommendation is .5% for each year in position and he believes should be implementing. His understanding is to implement 5% before, grade 6 for COs, grade 11 for Supervisors, and .5% for each year in position for all and believes that is what should be done. Commissioner Mike Mason also recommended that our local dispatcher salaries be included in any future salary studies regardless of any actions that need to be taken to have them included, *this referencing not that other dispatch staff (from other local dispatch centers) be included in any future ESVA 9-1-1 Commission salary studies, rather referencing the effort to include local dispatcher salaries from other local dispatch centers in any future salary studies.*

A motion to approve this action item was made by Commissioner Mike Mason with a second from Commissioner Donald Hart. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

C. Position Requirement- 9-1-1 Communications Officer (HS

Diploma/GED)- Ultimately requesting approval to make a change in our policy manual for qualifications for a dispatcher position. Three options: A. (Preferred) Hire someone without a HS diploma/GED but require it to be acquired in a defined period of time, B. A HS diploma, GED, or combination of education and experience equivalent to a HS diploma (to include experience in law enforcement, fire or EMS service, dispatching, and coursework/experience in typing/keyboarding), C. Keeping the HS diploma/GED requirement as is.

Director Flournoy reported that a lot of research was put into this potential change including reaching out to numerous localities in the State (most require a HS diploma/GED) as well as DCJS and EMD for any of their certifications that may require a diploma/GED (none do) in addition to reaching out to ESCC for GED requirements and timelines and County resources, legal aid, and VaCo for advice/direction. Director Flournoy requested permission to issue option 1.

Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff asked if either of the two options would an interview still occur with each applicant. Director Flournoy said that each applicant would have to pass all testing and



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training. Commissioner Vice-Chairman then said that the managers would be able to get a good feel of each applicant completing an interview based on each person's abilities to speak and that he was torn between option 1 and 2. He mentioned that someone within the volunteer system may have knowledge of the services we provide and the terminology that is used but may not have a HS diploma/GED but could very much do the job better than someone with a college degree and no field experience. He said it is a good attempt to think outside the box and open doors. Commissioner Charlie Kolakowski disagreed. He stated that schools struggle to keep students in schools and we should not be sending any messages that we are encouraging them to dropout of school and can still get a job. He would hate for us to do anything to encourage dropouts or to lower our standards. Commissioner Jeff Renas spoke and said that he deals with probationary employees every month and they say the golden

rule is that if you cannot document what is going on with deficiencies then you are failing and it makes it challenging to dispose of the employee. Commissioner Ben Byrd spoke and said he prefers that applicants have a HS diploma but would entertain hiring them with the setting of a goal to obtain a GED if a parameter is set with probationary clause so that the applicant has a goal to work towards while maintaining their employment status. Commissioner Vice-Chairman suggested that Commissioner Donald Hart offer some light once he returns to the room. Director Flournoy said he could move on to the next item until he returns and Chairman Kellam approved. Once Commissioner Donald Hart returned to the meeting, Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff asked for his opinion on this matter. Commissioner Donald Hart stated that 9-1-1 is a very professional place and is a step above and if this door is opened, then salaries would be in question for an employee who has a degree versus those who do not and could create complications for termination. He would like to see the HS diploma/GED remain a requirement/standard since the 9-1-1 profession is a higher organization and the job at hand. He did add that he doesn't know if 9-1-1 in the future could help people obtain their GED in terms of being a guidance to do so. Instead of giving them a job first, assist them and encourage them to get their GED first and then apply if they are interested in the 9-1-1 profession.

A motion to table this action item was made by Commissioner Charlie Kolakowski with a second from Commissioner Bill McCready. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried. The HS diploma/GED will remain a requirement for employment.

D. Inclusion- P/T 9-1-1 Staff – Anthem EAP Program- Request to allow part-time 9-1-1 Center staff to receive EAP services through a separate agreement we would have with Anthem Local Choice. In years past, part-time employees had this service but was recently discovered that this service is no longer available through the current insurance. It would be less than \$80 annually for us to provide this service to our part-time staff. Director Flournoy stated that he spoke with the Northampton County Finance department and they advised that it was okay to offer this if it was



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approved by the 9-1-1 Commission and any documents were written by the 9-1-1 Commission and invoices were directed to the 9-1-1 Commission. Director Flournoy requested permission to execute the contract to provide these services to our part-time staff. Commissioner Mike Mason asked if you are full-time, you are covered even if you do not have insurance through Anthem. Director Flournoy said he thinks so but any part-timer in Northampton County is not currently included. A motion to approve this action item was made by Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff with a second by Commissioner Ben Byrd. Chairman Kellam asked for any questions or further discussion. Commissioner Charlie Kolakowski spoke and said he had discussion that he thinks the Commission needs to have a discussion about what the benefits and salaries for the Commission employees are going to be and what they are going to be based upon. He stated that he wants to see consistency and something that is systematic. He stated if this action passes then he would have to explain to other Northampton County part-time employees

who do not have this service. Chairman Kellam asked if the part-time employees were getting this service before and Commissioner Charlie Kolakowski answered yes but not with the current year negotiations with Anthem. Director Flournoy stated that he sees Commissioner Charlie Kolakowski's point but that he is ultimately trying to look out for the well-being of the 9-1-1 Commission employees the best he can and that is his goal since he was hired to do so. Commissioner Mike Mason stated that Director Flournoy has something on his to-do list that should cover this. Director Flournoy responded yes; he has the resolution/charter that should make more clarity for certain items but he still cannot with how to wrap his hands around how to make an agreement that forces each County to do something without the Board approving it each year. Commissioner Mike Mason responded that he thinks it provides a path and when there is a discussion such as this one, then they see the guiding documents that have been approved by the enabling Boards and that is where they look for clarification.

Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff then withdrew his motion to approve this action item. Chairman Kellam asked for any further questions or discussions and there were none so this item was dropped for the time being.

E. Policy Addition- Travel Regulations – Per Diem – Section 9.5-

requesting approval to keep the existing policy with adding the Northampton County reimbursement policy with some modifications for consistency.

A motion to approve this action item was made by Commissioner Ben Byrd with a second from Commissioner Donald Hart. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

F. Policy Change- Part-Time Availability- Section 13.18 –

requesting to change the current policy that requires part-time employees to provide four shifts a month to six shifts per month.



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A motion to accept this action item was made by Commissioner Mike Mason with a second from Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

At this time, Commissioner Donald Hart informed the Commission that there is currently a significant EMS/HAZMAT incident involving three EMS providers becoming ill while on scene at a potential fentanyl lab. Chairman Donnie Kellam asked Commissioner Donald Hart to say a prayer on behalf of the Commission.

CONSULTANT'S REPORT: Scott Chandler was not in attendance to present his report but a copy of his report was provided in the meeting packet.

A motion to accept the 9-1-1 Consultant's report was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

OFFICER ELECTION- Secretary-Treasurer Position- Chairman Kellam requested a motion from the floor to elect someone for this position. After hearing none, Chairman Kellam asked Commissioner Bill McCready if he would accept the position. Commissioner Bill McCready stated that he did not know what was involved and Director Flournoy gave an overview.

Commissioner Donald Hart made a motion to appoint Commissioner Bill McCready and a second was received by Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff. Commissioner Bill McCready accepted the position. There were no opposition and the motion was carried.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Chairman Kellam did not have any items.

OTHER BUSINESS: Director Flournoy introduced and welcomed Jeff Renas to the Commission as the new Area 31 1st Sergeant for Virginia State Police. He also informed that Deputy Director Krista Kilmon has a planned medical procedure coming up and asked that they keep her in their thoughts and prayers.

PAYABLES: *A motion to pay the bills was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.*

CLOSED SESSION: *A motion to enter a closed session was made by Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, for the following purposes: (A)(6) Discussion or consideration of the investment of public funds where competition or bargaining is involved. A second motion was made by Commissioner Ben Byrd. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried. The recording of the meeting stopped at this point. Chairman Kellam entered the closed session at 19:12 once all non-Commission members left the room. A motion to*



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come out of closed session was made by Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff with a second from Commissioner Bill McCready. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried. Chairman Donnie Kellam ended the closed session at 19:33 and resumed the regular meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Vice-Chairman Ron Wolff made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second from Commissioner Donald Hart. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried. Chairman Donnie Kellam adjourned the meeting at 19:35.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Caroline Hodgson, *Recording Secretary*