

**New River Valley Emergency Communications Regional Authority**

**Board Meeting**

**August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

**Montgomery County Public Safety Building – 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Training Room**

**Minutes**

**Attendees:**

**Members:** Sherwood Wilson, Chair, *Vice President of Operations*; Craig Meadows, *Montgomery County Administrator*; Marc Verniel, *Town Manager, Town of Blacksburg*; Randy Wingfield, *Town Manager, Town of Christiansburg*; Alan Fabian, *Joint Member*

**Staff:** Brad St. Clair, *Interim Director*; Deborah O'Brien, *Operations Manager*; Derek Rogers, *Communications Systems Manager*; Amber Stump, *Executive Assistant*

**Guests:** Jim Junkins, *Director, Harrisonburg-Rockingham Emergency Communications Center*; Kevin Foust, *Chief, Virginia Tech Police Department*; Jessica Moye, *Lieutenant, Support Service, Blacksburg Police Department*; Pete Haslip, *Radio Technician, Town of Christiansburg*; Drew Smith, *Chief, Blacksburg Volunteer Fire Department*; Brian Roe, *Captain, Service Division, Blacksburg Police Department*; Travis Johnston, *System Sales Director, EF Johnson Technologies, Inc.*; Jim Guynn Jr., *Attorney*

**Absent:**

**Recorder:** NRV 911 Staff

**1. Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:43pm.

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

The Chair presented the agenda for approval. A motion was made by Mr. Meadows and seconded by Mr. Fabian and passed unanimously.

**3. Approval of the Minutes**

The Chair presented the minutes from the July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019 Board Meeting (attachment a) and August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Work Session (attachment b) for approval. A motion was made by Mr. Meadows and seconded by Mr. Fabian and passed unanimously.

**4. Secretary/Treasurer's Report Budget Report**

An updated summary of the revenues and expenditures for July was provided at the start of the meeting (attachment c). Mr. Meadows reviewed the current expenditures and balance.

**5. Interim Executive Director's Report**

Mr. St. Clair presented the Executive Directors report (attachment d). There was additional discussion on the following topics:

- a. Text-to-911

Dr. Wilson inquired about the presence of any foreseen issues with the implementation of the new Text-to-911 software. Mr. St.Clair advised that there were no foreseen issues in terms of training or implementation and it is expected to be a smooth transition.

## **6. Review of NRV 911 Monthly Performance Statistics for July 2019 (attachment e)**

Mrs. O'Brien presented the stats to the board.

## **7. Old Business**

### **a. Radio Infrastructure Governance**

Jim Junkins was present to discuss issues and answer questions concerning the governance of jurisdictional radio infrastructure from his experience as Director of Harrisonburg-Rockingham's consolidated 911 center. Several inquiries were made in reference to primary ownership, funding, cost shares, promotion of interoperability, and agency cooperation of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham ECC (Emergency Communications Center) and their radio infrastructure. Mr. Junkins advised the City of Harrisonburg and County of Rockingham possessed a joint power agreement to oversee the ECC and is funded 50/50 by each entity. When inquired about ownership of their jurisdictional radio infrastructures, Mr. Junkins stated that their ECC had ownership over the infrastructures themselves and also possessed the liability and insurance policy for those respective infrastructures, along with service contracts for tower site maintenance. However, respective agencies that utilized the tower for their operations were responsible for and held ownership over their respective equipment. When asked about promoting cooperation from individual agencies in the process of attaining tower site control, Mr. Junkins advised their most successful point was the concept of allowing public safety entities to place their focus on their respective duties and not have to spend time and effort maintaining their tower sites. In terms of funding at the time of development for the center and infrastructure for the Harrisonburg-Rockingham ECC, Mr. Junkins advised that they did not impose new taxes to create the funding, but instead absorbed the costs, which were approximately \$20 million.

Dr. Wilson inquired of Jim Guynn regarding the charter of NRVECA and if it permitted the agency to move beyond jurisdictional boundaries for the purpose of radio operations and communications. Mr. Guynn responded that he believed the charter did go beyond the jurisdictional boundaries if the purpose was tied into NRVECA's mission – public safety and operations.

## **8. New Business**

### **a. Compensatory Time – Proposed Solutions**

Mr. St.Clair discussed the issue of compensatory time and placed suggestions for the handling of overages currently and in the future. In order to be compliant with FLSA each employee must be under 240 hours of compensatory time. Currently, there are 17 employees exceeding this threshold. If these employees were paid down to 240 hours of compensatory time, the estimated cost is \$37,672 and approximately \$76,000 if paid down to 150 hours of compensatory time. Mr. St.Clair recommended paying compensatory time down to 150 hours and setting a limit in which employees will automatically be paid out after it is met. In addition to the compensatory time

limit, employees would also be automatically paid holiday compensatory time for holidays physically worked, replacing the current system that issues compensatory time for all employees regardless of holiday being worked or not. The Chair seconded the recommendation of paying employees down to 150 hours of compensatory time. Mr. Meadows moved forth the motion and amended it to include capping all employees at 150 hours of compensatory time and requested Mr. St.Clair speak with the fiscal agent of Montgomery County for recommendations of best methods moving forward. Mr. Verniel seconded motion. Mr. St.Clair inquired of the Board's discretion for holiday compensatory time. Motion was made by Mr. Fabian to pay employees holiday compensatory time for holidays in which they physically work. The Chair amended motion for increasing full time staff to also offset excess compensatory time issue. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **b. Disciplinary Policy – Amendments**

Mr. St.Clair discussed the draft of the current disciplinary policy and also introduced a grievance policy, which was determined to be mandatory for an entity deemed as an authority in the state of Virginia. Mr. St.Clair advised that the primary goal of the disciplinary policy is developing consistency and elaborating upon expected behaviors and consequences of violations along with describing the roles of supervisors in this process. The policy also outlines sexual harassment reporting procedures and timelines. Dr. Wilson inquired of Mr. Guynn if there would be any action needed for notification of employees that were hired under the previous policy who will now be working under the new policy. Mr. Guynn advised the state of Virginia does not require this, however a disclaimer does need to be placed at the beginning of the new policy. Mr. St.Clair recommended that the proposed policy serve as a revision to the policy in place. Mr. Fabian made motion, Mr. Verniel seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Meadows left the meeting at approximately 4:45pm.

#### **c. Employee Retention**

Mr. St.Clair advised the Board that a survey was sent out to employees for feedback on retention and what they would like to see for morale improvement. A common response from employees was the desire for performance-based rewards. EMD (Emergency Medical Dispatch) and the methods in place for reviewing statistics and progress for this software was discussed. It was explained how employee retention could possibly be tied into improvements of EMD statistics through the form of group-based employee bonuses. Mr. St.Clair suggested bonuses or rewards be based on benchmarks set forth by administration for staff as a whole to meet by a set date. Mr. St.Clair suggested these performance-based bonuses be issued at least twice a year, with a suggested amount of \$300 each period. In terms of deciding subsequent benchmarks, it was determined that initial trends will have to be observed before those can be decided, with the ultimate goal being reaching and maintaining compliant standards slightly above accreditation level. Performance bonuses were also discussed as being a tool for tying additional standards to in the future when initial benchmarks were met. Dr. Wilson suggested agreeing upon a one-time deal and have Mr. St.Clair come back with a written proposal for the continuance of this reward system next Board meeting. It was suggested by Mrs. O'Brien that the percentage be met by middle of December and maintained until the middle of February, with initial bonuses being issued in March. Dr. Wilson suggested there be a reward for the maintenance of desired compliance percentage. Mr. St.Clair suggested setting an 'obtain-by' date and then the determined standard having to be held for 90 days for employees to receive the bonus. The

Board verbally agreed on this proposal with the understanding that a formal proposal will be brought forth and voted on next meeting.

**d. Closed Session to Discuss: Personnel Issues**

**Motion for Closed Meeting**

Motion made by Dr. Wilson and seconded by Mr. Verniel, all were in favor:

“I move that the New River Valley Emergency Communications Regional Authority Board convene in Closed Meeting, pursuant to §2.2-3711, Code of Virginia, as amended, for the purpose of discussing:

1. Personnel issues

Pursuant to the subpart of §2.2-3711, Code of Virginia, as amended, A.1.”

**Motion to Return to Open Session**

Following the Closed Session, members of the public were invited to return to the meeting. The Chair called the meeting to order and asked Mr. Verniel to make the motion to return to open session.

Mr. Verniel made the following motion:

**WHEREAS**, the New River Valley Emergency Communications Regional Authority Board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 2.2-3711, *Code of Virginia 1950, as amended*, requires a certification by the New River Valley Emergency Communications Regional Authority Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the New River Valley Emergency Communications Regional Authority Board hereby certifies that, to the best of each member’s knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia

Law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the New River Valley Emergency Communications Regional Authority Board.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Fabian and motion was adopted. The Chair proceeded with a roll call to certify the closed meeting:

**AYES:**

Dr. Wilson  
Mr. Verniel  
Mr. Fabian  
Mr. Wingfield

**NAYS:**

None

**9. Comments from Public**

None

**10. Board Member Comments**

None

**Adjourn**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:30pm.