

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
ARKANSAS 911 BOARD
March 18, 2021**

A regular monthly meeting of the Arkansas 911 Board was held at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 18, 2021 virtually with a Zoom link and conference bridge provided for participation.

The following members were in attendance:

Board

A.J. Gary (Chairman)	Director, Arkansas Division of Emergency Management
Shelby Johnson	Director, Arkansas GIS Office
Skot Covert	Chief Deputy Auditor of State
Rusty McMillon	Judge, Greene County
Brian Presley	911/Dispatch Coordinator, Independence County
Robert McGowen	Administrator of Public Safety, Benton County
Keith Edmonds	Madison County OEM
Doug Sprouse	Mayor, City of Springdale
Rodney Wright	Sheriff, Saline County
Danny Baker	Police Chief, City of Fort Smith
Tommy Sizemore	Fire Chief, City of Barling
Jamie Pafford-Gresham	Pafford EMS

Executive Director

C.J. Engel

Asst. Attorney General, Office of Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge

Brad Nye

A quorum was declared and Chairman Gary called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm and presided over the meeting.

Upon a motion presented by Robert McGowen and a second by Keith Edmonds, the minutes of the February 18, 2021 regular monthly meeting were unanimously approved.

With a motion by Keith Edmonds, and a second by Doug Sprouse, the minutes of the March 9, 2021 special meeting were unanimously approved.

Financial Reports – Following a motion presented by Robert McGowen and a second by Jamie Pafford-Gresham, the financial report was approved unanimously as provided which reflected the total assets and liabilities as of February 28, 2021 to be \$19,197,330.03 in which \$2,044,238.65 is in the State Treasury Money Management Fund account and \$17,153,091.38 is in the US Bank working capital account.

Expense Report - Monthly expenses of \$11,805,112.76 were approved for payment as submitted. Included in the approved expenses were:

- LEC Charges - \$232,203.37
- AT&T Mobility – FirstNet - \$41.23
- Arkansas GIS Office - \$15,597.34
- Federal Engineering - \$270.00
- Executive Director Travel Reimbursement - \$490.56
- Contract Labor - \$8,750.00
- 4Q20 PSAP Distributions - \$11,547,760.26

15% Allocation Balance by County Report – An updated report of the 15% Allocation Fund was presented reflecting a balance of \$666,573.37 with no new requests for approval. Shelby Johnson pointed out to the board that for some PSAPs such as the City of El Dorado and Union County, this funding could help with consolidation efforts.

Old Business

Annual PSAP Certification – C.J. Engel gave an update to the Board that approximately 14 certifications had been received. The certifications are due April 1, 2021.

HB1156: 911 Rural Enhancement – Chairman Gary updated the Board on the status of HB1156. The bill has made it through the House floor, but with questions from Senate committee it has been scheduled to be discussed again following the Board meeting at 2:00 pm. An amendment added would put this bill into effect in June if passed but will have to go back through the House floor if the Senate passes.

HB1373: T-CPR for PSAPs – Mr. Engel provided an update that HB1373 had passed the House committee and was scheduled for the House floor following the Board meeting at 1:00 pm. Shannon McCuin with ALETA stated that Rep. Andrew Collins presented the bill with no questions or comments.

RFP – ESInet and NG911 Core Services – Mr. Engel stated that the ESInet and NGCS RFP was released last Friday and that there would be a bidder's conference on March 19th at 2:00 pm. He also reminded the Board that the schedule puts proposals due by April 12th. C.J. Engel, Shelby Johnson, Skot Covert, Robert McGowen, Tommy Sizemore, and Rusty McMillon have volunteered to evaluate proposals. Keith Edmonds made a motion to accept the 6 evaluators to review proposals, with a second by Jamie Pafford-Gresham. Motion passed with no one opposed.

Federal Engineering PSAP Consolidation – C.J. Engel informed the board that he had visited 16 counties' PSAPs so far this year and that more dispatch centers or Secondary PSAPs are being identified than initially known. No new Federal Engineering updates, as they are continuing to work on the draft plan.

GIS Data Aggregation for NG911 Service – Shelby Johnson shared the following updates:

- GIS review meetings are taking place with 9 counties this month. Northeast Arkansas last week and Conway, Perry, and Faulkner counties this week.

- An example of notes from the first county (Izard) that had been closed out was shared with the Board members.
- Legislation passed for fire district maps to be managed by the Arkansas GIS Office and is now Act 382.

New Business

Yang vs. ADEM – Chairman Gary informed the Board that ADEM was named a defendant in a lawsuit initiated by a 911 call in Little Rock. Although the court case was closed and claimed the liability fell with the telecommunicator not the city or state, the family's attorney filed claim with the state claims commission stating a grant paid by ADEM to 6 counties for 911, none of which were Pulaski County. The claims commission ruled no supervision of ADEM over the City of Little Rock's 911 Center, but that decision was appealed to the legislative committee and the committee ruled that ADEM was to pay \$100,000 to the family. Mr. Gary stated that the Joint Budget Committee approved the distribution. More discussion may be needed at a later time on the potential ramifications of this decision.

AWIN Update – AWIN Director, Penny Rubow, gave an update that they are fully underway on upgrading the AWIN system. This upgrade will include existing repeater equipment, statewide microwave backhaul, tower replacement, and building remediation. A tower and shelter repair and replacement RFQ has been released for inspectors to provide per site reports for what is needed. Upgraded repeater infrastructure has been installed at 47 sites but currently being configured. The TDMA upgrade that doubles the capacity of system is still in process and almost completed. Through the current upgrade, new equipment would provide for an auto failover between zones if one of them is down. Robert McGowen asked about the TDMA upgrade and whether anything is in stone as to when the radios that are not TDMA capable are to be replaced. Ms. Rubow stated that currently they are not going to require replacement of radios and no time has been set. Mr. McGowen believes there should be a date set on getting these old radios off of the system due to the amount of channels they take up. Benton County has experienced this in their short time on the system with State Police tying up channels. Chairman Gary stated it was a good point but they are weighing that with smaller agencies as to what that timeline could be. Robert thinks the deadline could be years away but that it would be beneficial to set that date. Mr. Gary feels that would be a fair way to do it at least if it was several years away, that agencies would be aware well ahead of time. Shelby Johnson wanted to confirm that no new sites were included. Penny stated that they may look at additional sites but could only one or two. Mr. Johnson offered their help if any mapping was needed. Robert asked if the \$2 million per quarter stated specifics as to what that is used for with AWIN and whether that could go to help with consolidations putting new agencies on the system. Penny said that the bulk of the \$2 million is going to pay back bond and doesn't feel that there will be enough left to make a major impact on consolidation assistance with AWIN.

PSAP Training Requirement Exemption – C.J. Engel asked the Board if they would agree to exempt any entities that did not meet the 60% training requirement for 2020 due to Covid-19 and limitations of training available. Jamie Pafford-Gresham felt it was unprecedented times and would lean towards it. Danny Baker voiced concerns on exempting agencies from training and asked how we could communicate the importance of this issue with the agencies as well as make sure that they meet the minimum in a timely manner this year. A motion was made by Rusty McMillon to exempt the 2020 training requirement of 60%, and a second by Keith Edmonds. Motion passed unanimously.

AEMA Conference 2021 – The annual AEMA Conference is taking place August 24 – 27, 2021. AEMA has requested the 911 Board to take part in a panel discussion at the conference. Mr. Engel asked if the August meeting could take place at the conference as well. Mr. McGowen will have a date for the board meeting and panel discussion by the April meeting.

Expiring Appointments – C.J. Engel informed the Board that there were 4 members' appointments expiring on July 24, 2021 for their two-year terms. These members are Keith Edmonds, Jamie Pafford-Gresham, Robert McGowen, and Tommy Sizemore. Also, Brian Presley's appointment was only made for two-years although the legislation states a four-year term.

Saline County Consolidation Agreement – Mr. Engel shared the interlocal agreement for Saline County and the City of Benton to consolidate their two PSAPs into one. Shelby Johnson made a motion to accept the agreement and letter as well as combine their quarterly distributions into one. Keith Edmonds with a second. All members approved by vote. Shelby asked why the City of Bryant was not included. Rodney Wright stated the process began with all three entities in the room and it initially seemed all three would consolidate but that Bryant backed out from the process. He felt that Bryant would come back to the table at some point.

FROM THE FLOOR

Tina Owens asked for additional comments or questions from the Board. Skot Covert stated that he had accepted a new full-time role and would be leaving the auditor's office. He has been asked to remain on the board as her designee.

Danny Baker stated that if there are only a few agencies that did not meet the training percentage for 2020 that we need to make sure to reach out to those entities and ensure they are trained as soon as possible. C.J. Engel agreed and stated he would reach out to those directly and would work with ALETA to make sure these situations were addressed. Robert felt if they use waiver for 2020 that they should get a letter stating that it will only be for 2020.

Rusty McMillon has had County Judges voice concerns about the T-CPR bill. Mr. Engel clarified that this bill does not require training if they do not perform these services already. It would not impact agencies that do not perform EMD or provide pre-arrival instructions for medical situations.

The next regular meeting has been scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 15, 2021 at ADEM with a virtual option. Information for all Arkansas 911 Board meetings will continue to be posted on the Arkansas Public Meetings calendar as well as the Arkansas 911 Board website.

There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion by Rusty McMillon to adjourn and second by Robert McGowen. The motion carried.


Chairman