

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
ARKANSAS 911 BOARD
October 21, 2021**

A regular monthly meeting of the Arkansas 911 Board was held at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 21, 2021 at the Arkansas Division of Emergency Management with a Zoom link and conference bridge provided.

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 - Zoom	Designee, Arkansas State Auditor
Rusty McMillon - Zoom	County Judge, Greene County
Brian Presley - Zoom	911 Coordinator, Independence County
Bo Robertson	Director, Garland County Department of Emergency Management
Robert McGowen – Zoom	Administrator of Public Safety, Benton County
Doug Sprouse - Zoom	Mayor, City of Springdale
Rodney Wright	Sheriff, Saline County
Danny Baker	Police Chief, City of Fort Smith
Tommy Sizemore - Zoom	Fire Chief, City of Barling
Jamie Pafford-Gresham	Pafford Emergency Medical Services

Executive Director

C.J. Engel

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

Chairman Gary called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm and presided over the meeting with a quorum declared.

Upon a motion presented by Doug Sprouse and a second by Shelby Johnson, the minutes of the September 16, 2021 regular monthly meeting were approved unanimously.

Financial Reports – C.J. Engel informed the Board that due to a change in personnel with the Arkansas Public Safety Trust Fund, the ACH payment usually made to the Board was submitted as a physical check instead and was not deposited until October 8, 2021. Two deposits will be displayed for October and a loss reflected for the month of September.

Following a motion presented by Shelby Johnson and a second by Rodney Wright, the financial report was approved unanimously as provided which reflected the total assets and liabilities as of September 30, 2021 to be \$8,616,976.45 in which \$2,045,911.67 is in the State Treasury Money Management Fund account and \$6,571,064.78 is in the US Bank working capital account.

Expense Report – Monthly expenses of \$274,558.47 were approved for payment as submitted. Included in the approved expenses were:

- LEC Charges - \$248,989.06
- AT&T Mobility FirstNet - \$41.23
- Arkansas GIS Office - \$10,951.67
- ADEM - \$1,985.93
- Office Depot - \$199.16
- NASNA - \$260.00
- NENA - \$142.00
- U.S. Bank Visa - \$492.08
- Executive Director Reimbursement - \$1,082.34
- Contract Labor - \$10,415.00

Shelby Johnson asked if the AT&T bill will level off as the ESInet is implemented. Mr. Engel responded that because the cost of the ESInet will place more funding responsibility on the Board, the bill will slowly increase as new costs are charged and old costs are dropped.

15% Allocation Balance by County Report – An updated report of the 15% Allocation Fund was presented reflecting a balance of \$544,421.15 with no new requests for approval.

Old Business

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

- The GIS team continues to have regular regional meetings with counties. The most recent included Miller, Lafayette, and Columbia counties.
- Upcoming meetings include in Calhoun and Grant counties the beginning of November with Benton and Washington taking place in December.
- Jonathan is coordinating with AT&T and Intrado to verify map format that will be uploaded into NGCS.
- The GIS mentor assigned by Intrado used to work with the Arkansas GIS Office which should benefit the process.

ESInet & NextGen Core Services – Mr. Engel provided an update to the Board that Letters of Authorization (LOA) have been sent out by AT&T and the regional project introduction meetings were completed the week of October 11th. The first orders of circuits have been placed and AT&T is currently working on scheduling a kick-off meeting with Benton County to discuss implementation.

Arkansas 911 Board – PSAP Consolidation Plan – C.J. informed the Board that he was finalizing the draft of the plan that would be submitted with the Federal Engineering report. He expects to distribute the plan to the PSAP Consolidation Subcommittee the first week of November and the full board the following week pending review by the subcommittee. This will allow for the Board to have fully reviewed by the November meeting where discussions will take place around the plan.

New Business

Proposed Consolidation Timeline – C.J. Engel reminded the Board that a deadline for PSAP consolidation would need to be set in place for the plan being submitted. Some discussion has taken place in other meetings that included three, four or five years and there is a recommendation within the Federal Engineering Report to also consider as a phased approach but is up to the Board to adopt a timeline. A.J. Gary asked if the plan could include a three year deadline but also allow for extension under certain circumstances. Mr. Engel answered that he believes it would be best to leave the opportunity for extension no matter the timeline set so the Board could have flexibility in allowing those if absolutely necessary.

Shelby Johnson confirmed that if we set a consolidation timeline of three years from January 1, 2023, the deadline would then be January 1, 2026. That would ultimately give four years for the process. Bo Robertson also wanted to confirm that what deadline we are setting is the cut off for funding from the Board but not necessarily consolidation. Mr. Engel stated that this legislation requires us to present this plan to fund no more than the allotted PSAPs which the Board has now identified 79. This will force consolidation in most circumstances but in some may not due to decision of self-funding. C.J. mentioned that this would be where the Board would need to decide whether to have two funding cut-off dates such as a situation where a PSAP does not participate in consolidation planning versus a jurisdiction that is going to consolidate all PSAPs and will need the time to make that happen. Jamie Pafford-Gresham agrees with setting the timeline and then revisiting the small number of consolidation issues at that level but believes those that will move forward should be done no later than those three years. Bo Robertson believes some consolidations will be quick as the conversations have already started. Rodney Wright believes that one year to plan plus an additional three years is too much and would agree more with two years following the plan due date on January 1, 2023. Most of the work comes with the organization in the first year that is planning. Danny Baker was most concerned with making sure all impacted parties had a say in this timeline and through reaching out, the largest response has been that it can be accomplished under three years. He believes we should lean sooner rather than longer. Mr. Engel stated that a key piece is that we leave the ability for the Board to extend if needed under individual circumstances. Jamie stated that any contracts being put in place following these deadlines should not be considered justification for extension. A.J. wanted to confirm that we are now discussing January 1, 2025 which would be two years from January 1, 2023. Jamie Pafford-Gresham with a motion to set two years as the deadline for consolidation from the local plan deadline of January 1, 2023, Rusty McMillon with a second. Motion passes unanimously through vote.

Shelby Johnson wants to address the cut off date for funding with those entities that do not participate in the planning process. Mr. Engel stated that the Board could ultimately decide to have two separate funding cut off dates. If all PSAPs within a county participate within the consolidation planning process, the funding would remain as is until January 1, 2025. At that time the funding would be reduced to the number of PSAPs allotted in the plan. In a situation where a PSAP does not participate in the consolidation planning process, the Board could elect to stop their funding at the January 1, 2023 deadline of submission of their local plans. Shelby stated that the intent of this would be to encourage all PSAPs to participate in the planning process if their county has been identified as needing to consolidate but those entities could still self-fund. Bo Robertson believes that if anything trumps funding, it's control and that has been an issue in their county and some PSAPs will remain separate. A.J. stated we should address that as those situations come up potentially through rules. Tommy Sizemore clarified that if a PSAP remains self-funded, that does not

necessarily make them a secondary PSAP, they would just need to cover their expenses and connections. C.J. confirmed that if they are a PSAP today and lose funding, they could still be a PSAP but would be required to self-fund and cover their connection costs including to the ESInet. Shelby Johnson made a motion to cut funding to identified PSAPs that do not participate in the consolidation planning process on January 1, 2023, Rodney Wright with a second. Motion carried unanimously through vote.

Doug Sprouse agrees that the January 1, 2025 is a reasonable timeframe but wants to make sure that the Board is allowing a process in place to allow for extensions as they are currently experiencing delays in all aspects.

Shelby Johnson suggests that the Board takes a look at the plan and once the Board has reviewed the plan, take a vote at the November meeting whether to approve the plan that also include the deadlines in the plan.

From the Floor

Chairman Gary opened to questions or comments from guests. Hearing none.

Mr. Engel informed the Board that he and Chairman Gary had been informed that the IRS audit previously opened on the board, would be closed with no changes. He also stated that letters had been sent out reminding Originating Service Providers (OSPs) of the requirement to file a copy of their FCC Form 477 biannually with the Arkansas 911 Board. One company had self-reported that they had not been collecting the correct \$1.30 VoIP fees although the monthly remittance form provided reflected that amount. It was concluded that they could pay those missing fees to the Arkansas Public Safety Trust Fund over a reasonable amount of time to be determined.

The next regular meeting has been scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 18, 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 Rodney Wright. The motion carried.



Chairman