

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Directors of the Emergency Communications District (ECD) of Nashville and Davidson County met electronically via WebEx. Chair Cleo Duckworth called the meeting to order at 2:50 PM and presided over the meeting with the following board members present: Susan Mattson, Ruby Baker, Lorinda Hale, William Johnson, David Gleason, Eliud Trevino, and Rick Cowan. Board member Charlane Oliver was not in attendance. Others present included: Mark Lynam and Larry Law (ECD Admin), Russell Freeman (Legal Counsel), Stephen Martini, Angie Milliken, Dwayne Vance, Paul McCallister, and Tim Watkins (Metro DEC), Philip McGowan, Stephanie England, and Tiffany Childress (DVL Seigenthaler).

Opening Statement

Chair Duckworth read an opening statement which explained the necessity for meeting by electronic means in light of the COVID-19 threat and identified Governor Bill Lee's executive orders 16, 34, and 51 allowing us to do so.

Minutes

Ms. Hale made a motion to accept the minutes from the June 18, 2020 ECD board meeting. Ms. Baker seconded the motion and it carried unanimously by voice vote.

Financial Report

Mr. Lynam discussed the July 2020 financial report with board members. He went over the business transactions that took place during the month. He reported that income for July was \$3,486 while expenses were \$843,474. This resulted in a net loss of \$839,988 for the month.

Mr. Lynam reported that cash available for operations amounted to \$13,376,055. This consisted of \$179,166 in our checking account and \$13,196,889 in our LGIP account.

After discussion ended Mr. Gleason made a motion to accept the financial statement as presented. Ms. Hale seconded the motion and carried unanimously by voice vote.

Public Awareness Update

Mr. McGowan reported that he and Director Martini had a conversation with Portia Research about the quality assurance survey that is done each year. Questions are being reviewed and the survey should get underway soon.

Ms. England updated board members on our advertising campaign. She reported that both the New Movers and Call Awareness programs continue to perform well. Ms. England reported that the Recruitment Campaign has been paused for the time being since the 911 Center is now fully staffed. Ms. England also reported that the media buy has been completed for this year. It consists of six billboards rotating across Davidson County, thirteen radio stations running our 911 radio spots, as well as digital radio spots on Spotify and iHeart. She also mentioned that their creative team had met with the ECD Public Awareness Committee to review new creative concepts. She hopes to have new creative work ready to move into the advertising program soon.

Ms. Childress updated board members on the Rescue Rex program. She reported that due to the pandemic, DVLS was recommending that a 15 – 20 minute animated video be created which could be shown to students during this school year. The video would not be COVID related so that it could be used during the summer months and at other times in the future. The video would include breaks to allow interaction with the children. A link to the video would be placed on the Rescue Rex website. Once a school scheduled the program a password would be given to the school which would allow them to access the video. The cost to produce the video is estimated at \$25,000 to \$28,000. It would take a couple of months before the video would be ready.

Ms. Baker pointed out that the Public Awareness Committee was in favor of creating the video. She made a motion that the ECD Board grant approval for the creation of the video. Ms. Hale seconded the motion and it carried unanimously by voice vote. It was pointed out by Mr. Freeman that MNPS will probably have to view and approve the video before it could be shown in schools. DVLS was asked to contact Metro schools to get approval.

DEC Directors Report

Director Martini went over the August Director's Report that he had previously provided to board members. He reported that his department is now fully staffed. Call volume remains lower than normal due to COVID-19 keeping people home. This is allowing his department to concentrate on training newer staff members. Call answering time continues to fall below the NFPA compliance standards. DEC is working on categorizing the non-emergency calls and finding a way to pass some of them on to other answering points such as 311. There were a couple of FIRST team activations this month for various concerts but those may stop under the new police chief.

Director Martini reported that new 911 legislation is surfacing due to the surcharge increase. Some legislative officials are advocating for all 911 activities and costs to fall under the emergency communications districts and relieving the local governments of any obligation. Others are promoting the consolidation of all ECD's into a single environment. Director Martini feels that the current relationship between Metro and the Davidson County ECD is working very well, but he is becoming deeply concerned as to how these outside efforts could greatly impact Metro 911 in a negative way. He recommended that we investigate the possibility of teaming up with the advocacy group TN911 or hiring our own lobbyist to lend a voice to these issues.

Board members expressed that they wanted no part of overseeing the personnel matters that came with running a 911 center. Mr. Gleason asked that our legal counsel investigate the structural makeup of TN911 and also research whether or not we could spend funds on hiring a lobbyist. Ms. Hale asked if we should consider the possibility of forming a coalition with the larger cities in Tennessee to protect our interests. Ms. Duckworth felt it might be best to form a committee to look into these issues and come back to the board with a recommendation. She asked if board members would be interested in serving on such a committee. Mr. Gleason, Ms. Hale, and Ms. Mattson all stated that they would serve on the committee.

After discussion ended Ms. Baker made a motion that we form a committee to develop a plan on how we can make our voice heard regarding legislative matters that may affect us. Mr. Gleason, who will serve as the chair of this committee, along with Ms. Hale, Ms. Mattson, Mr. Martini, and Mr. Freeman will be tasked with bringing a recommendation back to the board. Ms. Hale seconded the motion and it carried unanimously by voice vote. Ms. Duckworth asked that the date and time of the committee meetings be announced in case other members of the board would like to take part in them.

Ms. Mattson asked Mr. Martini, who serves on the TECB, if the current financial crises was having a negative impact on surcharge fee revenue. Mr. Martini stated that there does seem to be a leveling off but it appears to be due to the cell phone market becoming saturated, rather than the coronavirus. He went on to add that before another rate increase can be considered, the TECB must first clearly identify the costs of running a 911 center by answering questions such as “What does it cost to have a console in place that can receive and dispatch a 911 call”. He also stated that the TECB is going to hold districts accountable for how they manage their money and the level of service that they provide.

Other Business

Ms. Mattson asked for an update on the new creative work that was submitted by DVLS for this year’s advertising campaign. Ms. Baker explained that there were six options presented to the Public Awareness Committee. She reported that some of the options seemed a little bit too lighthearted or busy and that they took away from the message that we were trying to impart. Ms. Baker stated that the Committee settled on option one (Pain That is Not 911), option three (Wrong Number), and option five (Digital Flicker). The DVLS creative team is going to take these three concepts and try to refine them.

Date and Time of Next ECD Board Meeting

Ms. Duckworth announced that our next meeting will be held on September 17, 2020 at 2:30 PM. She stated that she would like to have an “in person” meeting if possible. She asked Mr. Lynam to try and find a venue that was large enough to accommodate the board members, as well as Director Martini, and still allow us to social distance. She asked if anyone was in opposition to this. There was none. Ms. Duckworth asked that we try to have technology in place to allow virtual attendance if preferred.

Adjournment

Upon proper motion by Ms. Hale and second by Ms. Baker the meeting adjourned at 4:05 PM.