



QUINCY/ADAMS COUNTY 9-1-1

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QUINCY/ADAMS COUNTY 9-1-1 GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Minutes

July 15, 2009

9-1-1 Center, 222 N. 52nd Street, Quincy, IL, 5:15 p.m.

7 members present: Adams County Board Member John Johnson (Governing Board chairman), Quincy Alderman Dan Brink, Quincy Alderman Jack Holtschlag, Adams County Sheriff Brent Fischer, Quincy Police Chief Rob Copley, Rural Fire Association Secretary Bill Johnson, Adams County EMS Chief Paul Davis.

3 members absent: Quincy Fire Chief Joe Henning, Quincy Alderman Tony Sassen, Adams County Board Member Nick Peters with 1 vacant seat from the Adams County Board

Also present: 9-1-1 Director Steve Rowlands, 9-1-1 staff members Mark Krzystofczyk and Sharon Tedrow.

Quorum Call and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes. Chairman John Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:20 p.m. and indicated a quorum was present. Sheriff Fischer made a motion to approve the minutes of the April meeting and Chief Copley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the minutes were approved as distributed with no changes.

Chairman Johnson welcomed a new member, Quincy Alderman Dan Brink. Other new members to the governing board are Quincy Fire Chief Joe Henning and Adams County Board member Nick Peters.

204 Fund Status (WETSA). Director Steve Rowlands stated that the balance of both the WETSA surcharge and Vonage VOIP E9-1-1 remittance fee as of July 15, 2009 was \$140,698.23. The Vonage VOIP E9-1-1 remittance fee balance (including interest earned) is \$35,296.87. Steve Rowlands stated the WETSA balance is \$105,401.36 as of July 15, 2009.

In a letter received from the Illinois Commerce Commission on April 7, 2009, the appropriation is depleted as a result of transfer of funds in December 2008. No WETSA revenue until the new Illinois fiscal year, which is now subject to current budget issues. It is anticipated that the checks should start to be received in a couple of weeks.

9-1-1 Loan Status. The outstanding loan balance as of June 1, 2009 is \$585,981. The monthly loan payment to First Bankers Trust is \$21,224.84 (\$16,224.84 payment + \$5,000 principal reduction payment). As soon as the WETSA funds start to be received, it is planned to make a principal reduction payment of \$150,000 in August or September 2009. An additional principal reduction payment of \$50,000 is planned for May 2010. Based on the current monthly payment of \$21,224.84, previous principal reduction payments, and the two planned principal reduction payments, the 9-1-1 loan will be paid off by December 31, 2010 which is 3 ½ years early. Should the state withhold the WETSA funds, we can still make payments for 7 months.

Personnel issues. Steve Rowlands advised the board that there is one employee on unpaid medical leave of absence since February 23, 2009 following 12 weeks of FMLA that began on December 1, 2008. The employee is eligible for unpaid medical leave of absence until June 1, 2010 per the collective bargaining agreement (18 months total including FMLA and need verifiable every 30 days). The employee's return to work date is unknown, if at all, and is subject to a medical evaluation.

Steve Rowlands advised that a new employee was hired on June 8, 2009. This puts 9-1-1 dispatcher staff level one person above the normal staff authorization of 15 due to the circumstances. Right now with one employee on unpaid leave and the new employee at a lower rate, it offsets the budget.

However, with one additional employee, the group insurance is \$7,500 short of the amount budgeted. Steve Rowlands states should the employee on medical leave return; he will have to address these budget issues. He stated that budget would not be able to be sustained with the cost of 16th dispatcher without doing something.

Steve Rowlands would like to keep 16 employees until normal attrition brings the level back to 15 dispatchers. In the most recent past, there has been one employee leave per year with the average over the years being 2 employees a year. There are two employees eligible for retirement. Steve Rowlands stated that the current operating budget has no padding. There is a possibility that we may have to seek additional funding from the City and County to support the 16th dispatcher.

Another option to maintain budget levels is to use the WETSA funds. Steve Rowlands is hesitant to use those funds as it is primarily used to pay the loan and the intent of the 9-1-1 Governing Board is to use WETSA for capital purchases. He could use the WETSA to pay for 9-1-1 communications costs and transfer some of that line items money into the salary line item. This would be a departure from our standard practice not to use the fund for operational needs.

Steve Rowlands stated that a third option is that the employee could be laid off and then hired back when there is an opening. In the past year we have saved money as the employee is off without pay for more than half a year.

Sheriff Fischer asked if there were 16 employees would the four workstations be fully staffed. Steve Rowlands replied not all the time due to holiday and vacation time. There would be four employees working more than what there is now. He stated that there would also be reduction in overtime costs, but not overly significant.

Chief Copley said if the employee returns before the October meeting, do we need to make a motion to keep the new employee? Steve Rowlands said at this time there is no need for the Governing Board to take action as long as the operating budget can sustain the 16th employee.

John Johnson stated that the Director would talk with the city about the finances and talk about contingencies with salaries.

Dan Brink asked how much cost is involved in training a new employee. Steve Rowlands replied that most of the time the new employee is assigned with a supervisor for training and that also fills a position with no overtime involved. He stated that the training costs are not that high. Most costs are for the pre-employment physical and a 3-day EMD course. There are some costs involved for overtime if the vacant dispatch position is not filled. He stated that when the new employee is assigned with another dispatcher for training the trainer receives \$0.50 per hour as a trainer.

Dan Brink stated that the Quincy Fire department was in a similar situation last year and they ended up laying off personnel. Steve Rowlands commented that they have a much larger department versus a smaller department that he has. It is easier to absorb some of the duties with a larger department. John Johnson stated there was a significant wage differential between the departments. Chief Copley said that larger organizations can cover with other people but with a skeleton crew such as 9-1-1 staff it is hard to cover the loss of an employee. Chief Copley believes that hiring another employee was the right decision to make. Steve Rowlands stated that in hindsight he wished he had hired the new dispatcher two months earlier.

New Business. There was no new business to discuss.

Next meeting. The next quarterly meeting of the 9-1-1 Governing Board is scheduled for Wednesday, October 14, 2009 at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be held in the conference room located in the 9-1-1 building, 222 N. 52nd Street.

Meeting adjournment. Paul Davis made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jack Holtschlag seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Steve Rowlands