

Emergency Communications Community Advisory Board

February 20, 2025

Members present: Sharon VanHorn, Kevin McWhorter (ZOOM), Greg Kalkwarf, David Thorne (ZOOM), Rev. Dr. Pamela Hughes Mason (ZOOM), Randy Reynard (ZOOM), Daniel Alderson, and Hunter Hill.

Also, present: Director Elora Forshee, Assistant County Manager Rusty Leeds, Deputy Director Alayna Moreno, and 911 Workforce Specialist Jackie Blackwell.

1. Call to Order

David Thorne

2. Approval of 12-19-2024 Meeting minutes

Approved by the Board

3. 911 Updates – Director Forshee

- a. Jensen Hughes Report/Dashboard/Summary – Director Forshee** – Handouts provided from the Jensen Hughes Report – There were (9) recommendations specific to 911. Briefly those recommendations are:
- i. **Monitor TAC Channels – First Piece** - Inconsistencies with the policy that didn't match with what was occurring operationally in the field. Agreement was discussed between the departments back in April 2024 on how it needed to be utilized which was missing before. **Second piece** - Dedicated dispatcher on all TAC channels; talked with the Fire Department and anytime there are (3) or more units assigned to a call, there is a dedicated dispatcher. Working on this with the Fire Sub-Committee.
 - ii. **Instant Re-Call** – This is not new training, it has been more formalized in the training and is utilized quite a bit.
 - iii. **Minimum Staffing Standards for Call Takers** – When this incident occurred we didn't have minimum standards for staffing of Call Takers during overnight hours. As staff has increased, we do have minimum staffing standards for Call Takers and we will continue to go up as we work towards goal of completely separate Call Takers and Dispatchers.
 - iv. **Upgrading to 2nd Alarm** - Dispatcher trained on this couldn't remember the process. Since then everyone has been trained multiple times and testing for retention of this training. Continuous training is scheduled on this process throughout the year.
 - v. **Reviewing Operations Manual** – Ensuring what is simulcast on TAC channels and what does not. Policy misalignment that has been fixed has been agreed by all agencies.
 - vi. **Integrating Phone & Radio Systems into a Single Headset** – The single headset transition will be tried and put in place Quarter 1 this year. The end goal is to have Call Takers that are not Dispatchers and vice versa. **QUESTIONS: Greg Kalkwarf** - What is the timeline of achieving Call Takers and Dispatchers only? In 2026 Budget 40 Call Taker positions will be requested; allowing this to happen. **SUGGESTIONS: Randy Reynard** – What if Single headset w/Stereo phone & radio and left/right foot switches? This would not eliminate dichotic listening. **PRIOR EXPERIENCE: Hunter Hill** – Coming from a 911 background in a different State and familiar with the Call Taker and Dispatcher only aspect and explain the single headset is not as bad as the employees or board members would think. **QUESTIONS: Daniel Alderson** – Has any of the staff had any ideas or suggestions with 1 or 2 headsets? No. This is our norm and so change is hard and this may be something that they love. **QUESTIONS: Greg Kalkwarf** – During observation a speaker was used, is that normal? No. That is used when we need to playback to try to obtain more information about the call.

- vii. **Work with Carriers and 911 Service Providers to get automatic rebidding ANI/ALI (Automatic Number Information/Automatic Location Information), to provide Phase II location data** - This is already happening and not an issue and nothing to remedy.
 - viii. **Rapid SOS** - we have Rapid Deploy which is also an enhanced mapping system, both Rapid SOS and Rapid Deploy pull the same information. We have chosen to keep and use Rapid Deploy instead of having another map that provides the same information we already use.
 - ix. **Dashboard – Rusty Leeds** - The City of Wichita & Sedgwick County created a dashboard for the public/community to keep updated on the status of each of the recommendations from the Jensen Hughes report; as well as other issues that the City and/or Sedgwick County add to the dashboard for review. Once the dashboard is up and running The City of Wichita Communications department will notify the departments. **REQUEST:** *The Community Advisory Board be notified once the dashboard is up and running.*
 - x. **Summary of Incident** – A very high level summary of this incident would be that there was an apartment fire in the early morning hours of October 13, 2023. The apartment fire originated around apartments 304 and 306, and Miss Paoly Bedeski was the 1st caller from apartment 306. Miss Bedeski provided the apartment number. However, it was un-understandable by the call taker. They entered the call at the apartment complex, the phone line was opened she was no longer communicating. We had several other calls identifying apartment 304 is where we believed it originated. The Fire Department responded out, evacuated several patients and located Miss Bedeski later.
- b. Staffing & Training Update – Jackie Blackwell** - (5) Call Taker position open as of today. Another Academy Class will begin on Monday, March 24, 2025; looking at hiring ten candidates. Dispatch class of (10) that just graduated out of the academy are in the OJT part of the process. For 2026 we are looking at adding (40) positions for Call Takers. Career Fairs will be opening up at WSU, Butler County, and Newman University later this Spring. Job postings for 911 now on Facebook. Cards have been created to hand out to people you run into that you think would be a good fit on the 911 Team.
- c. Website feedback form** – Director Forshee - Working on revamping the website. Unable to have just a form on the website because it wouldn't be encrypted. Working with IT. An individual can still submit, and an email would be sent back to the individual. Jackie is doing most of our website updates then going thru our Tech Coordinator who is doing the work behind it then working with IT to get approvals.
- i. **Other feedback channels, including text, third-party alternatives** – Director Forshee WPD is using AXON through a Feedback Text- We could use our own AXON account for \$3000 set up, possibly waive that amount, (\$10000 to \$12000 year). AXON recommended adding more questions to the WPD and just piggy back their feedback. The other vendor, Power DMS with a \$2400 set up, (\$8300 year) some of their features may have more information available, that AXON may also have. Questions should be kept to 2-3 since we would be piggy backing with WPD. For example: Call Answer times, Overall experience.

4. 2025 Goals – David Thorne

- a. **Capturing general, immediate feedback through text, & other channels – See 4b below**
 - i. **Best and comparable practices** – Director Forshee – Quick pocket handout with brief information of who to call.
- b. **Harvest community feedback with surveys at community and neighborhood events**
 - i. **Clear and concise questions to ask, with context** – Inviting in people to do walk thru's and/observations. What can we do to help educate and serve the community better?
SUGGESTIONS: Sharon VanHorn – Asked 10-15 friends questions – **Text 911?** No one in her group knew this. **Why would you call 911?** Anything, because they wouldn't know who else to call.

What would you like to know about 911? Just that someone would be there to answer their call and to be able to help. **SUGGESTIONS: Rev. Dr. Pamela Hughes Mason** – There should be a scripted presentation used for each community. Different events, like Council meetings. Making sure the same questions are used at each event and what is the end result? What are we trying to get to? What is the purpose or expect to gain from going into the community? What is the goal? Important to know if the communities TRUST and if they don't, then why? Have we put together a list of upcoming events? No it is on the agenda for today. Importance of everyone having the same information when going to the events; ensuring the entire community is hearing all the same information **SUGGESTIONS: Hunter Hill** – Concerned about the communities we are reaching individually, getting out and getting broad and having some level of standardization as well as some level of customization. **QUESTIONS: Sharon VanHorn** – What is the possibility or what it entails to obtain a 311 number? There is an Infrastructure to get it activated, and a collaborative process to get it put in place. What 311 would be used for? If there is a Pothole that needs to be fixed, or a barking dog, which is Public works or Animal control. It is a discussion that is slowly being rekindled, there would be separate staffing needs for the 311 calls. **SUGGESTIONS: Director Forshee** – I would not endorse anybody from the board to go in and speak in any capacity for the department. Would not want anyone on the board to be portrayed as being part of the 911 Department instead of the Community Advisory Board. **QUESTIONS: Greg Kalkwarf** - Is there some sort of card or website to solicit more feedback? What do people not know that they want to know. How can we solicit more feedback? What is the purpose? What do we want to accomplish? – **SUGGESTIONS: David Thorne** – Refer back to the website form for feedback. **SUGGESTIONS: Director Forshee** – Be cautious of soliciting random feedback. Soliciting random feedback that looks like we are digging for more and creating issues when there isn't any. "I didn't know you could text 911", good feedback. Offering to come to certain events to represent the Department and answer the questions the community has and putting the face of 911 out there. The Board asked "What are some of the biggest complaints and questions we get?" One of them are "Why does it take so long for the officers to get there?" Elora, Alayna, & Jackie are working on the "Anatomy of a 911 Call".

- ii. **Specific community event(s) to engage – David Thorne** – The instructional video sounds great and to figure out how we will get it out there to our communities. Determine which community events we would like to plan on attending and to invite Elora and Alayna to.

5. Future Meeting Dates/Locations – Director Forshee

- a. **Future Meetings** – By-laws specify to have the meetings at 714 N. Main and the OMD Office at 200 W. Murdock has been gracious for us to use this space. Elora will get with the Medical Director on continuing to use this space.
- b. **June 19 – will need to be rescheduled due to Sedgwick County Holiday** – Director Forshee to send an email with tentative dates for board members to decide upon a rescheduled date.

6. Off Agenda Items/Comments

- a. **Housekeeping – David Thorne** - Request a records of attendance who has been able to attend, ZOOM is a great option but not the same as being able to attend in person. Any special upcoming presentations. List of community events specifically to present information for the 911 Department. Please obtain and provide to Elora.
- b. **Top 3 AHA moments – Randy Reynard** - From your observation experiences. Share at future meetings.

7. Adjournment @ 6:00pm