

Emergency Communications Community Advisory Board

June 26, 2025

Members present: David Thorne, Greg Kalkwarf, Sharon VanHorn, Melissa Webb, Hunter Hill, and Pastor Pam Hughes Mason (ZOOM).

Also, present: Director Elora Forshee, Deputy Director Alayna Moreno, Rusty Leeds, and Lieutenant Jackie Blackwell.

1. Call to Order

David Thorne

2. Approval of 04-17-2025 Meeting minutes

Approved by the Board

3. 911 Updates – Director Forshee

- a. **2026 Budget** – Budget process remains on track with all items listed in previous meetings. The timeline and the calendar of the budgets will be emailed so they are available to the board to attend those Public Hearings and such meetings regarding the upcoming budget (see addition at end of minutes for more detailed report of discussion).
 - i. 20 Call Taker Positions
 - ii. Accreditation Manager
 - iii. Issues Tracking System
 - iv. Funds for Public Education and Job Recruitment, inclusive of a public surveying software purchase
 - v. Funds requested for additional phone consoles, \$18,000 per system
- b. **Non-Emergency Number – 316-290-1011 – Deputy Director Moreno**
 - i. 4th of July – The non-emergency line will be in service during the hours of 6:00pm and 3:00am each night, beginning June 27 through July 6. Beginning with one to two people manning the line.
- c. **911 Academy Graduation – Director Forshee** - The next graduation will be held at the Ruffin Building on July 3rd at 1:00pm. There will be 11 students honored at the graduation ceremonies.

4. Workforce and Public Interaction Update – Lt. Blackwell

- a. There are currently eight overfilled call taker positions. A new Academy will begin on August 11. The new hiring process has begun and will close on Sunday, we had approximately 120 applicants, with those about 50 will attend the Job Information meeting.
- b. Maize had a 911 camp presentation for ages 8-13 years old; ICT Open Streets and the NOMAR booths with a mock dispatch console set up. At River Fest an area was set up for Future Fest exploring different career opportunities. Upcoming there will be two WPD Juvenile Camps coming through for a tour and presentation.
- c. The survey questions for the website feedback form with AXON and WPD are still in the process. Two positive emails were received back for the website feedback, and we are waiting on AXON for the dashboard completion. It has been approximately two weeks and we are doing what can be done since the Vendor is working for WPD.

5. Board Discussion – David Thorne

a. 2025 Goals

- i. Public feedback – **post-911 call texts**: Discussion on **the timing** of sending text **survey**, and what situations to send text surveys.
- ii. Non-Emergency Line – Director Forshee – Provided statistics from Tulsa with their Non-Emergency calls compared to their 911 calls, they didn't recommend combining the two services, keeping emergency calls handled by trained 911 Dispatchers. Board member opinions and questions were discussed and the board has decided to revisit this issue at the next meeting. Suggest Director Forshee obtain information from other states/districts and their take on Non-Emergency calls.
- iii. Public Engagement and education initiatives (including feedback on ECC initiatives, pilot dashboard) – Actively pursuing our team (LE Dispatch) going out on ride a-longs, open to having agency reps come in and sit in with our dispatch. Battalion Chiefs from WFD have been coming in and meeting with Deputy Director Moreno and Operational Lieutenants from 911 and has helped from understanding why certain protocols are made. Recommendations to encourage WFD, WPD, and other agencies to sit in with the dispatch. The dashboard and what to include for the public to have access and easy for the public to understand, recommendations from the board, specific to information that we have control over.

- b. Citizen's Fire Academy Insight – Greg Kalkwarf** – A 10-week course that is geared for those individuals interested in firefighting. Hands on drills and highly recommended by Greg. **Greg also suggested the Board send a recommendation letter to the County that fire personnel tour and sit with dispatch during the Fire Academy and every 2 years after.**

- c. Juvenile Courthouse visit – Greg Kalkwarf** – Tour of the juvenile courthouse very eye opening.

6. New Business

- a. Board members still needed – Two spots - Class 3 cities and Youth Class
- b. Guest speakers recommended for the next meeting from Comcare ICT and ICS team

7. Next Meeting – August 21, 2025 = 4:00pm – 6:00pm

8. Adjournment @ 6:00pm

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Addendum to Meeting Minutes – Detailed Discussion of Agenda Item #3, a.

Director Forshee reported out on the budget requests for 2026, inclusive of 20 call taker positions with the goal of separating out call taker and dispatcher positions to eliminate dichotic listening, as referenced in Jensen Hughes, and, most importantly, for the citizen to have full focus of the call taker and for field personnel to have full focus of the dispatcher. It was discussed that the Public Safety Advisory Board drafted a letter to Commission that supports the request, as they've supported it for at least ten years that it has been discussed.

David Thorne asked how much the monetary request is for adding 20 call taker positions, stating that it is a large request. That information was provided by Director Forshee with statement from Hunter Hill that it was actually less costly than anticipated.

The other requests were discussed, inclusive of an Accreditation Manager, a Public Education/Survey System, and an Issues Tracking System.

Reference the Public Education/Survey request, Director Forshee highlighted in the request that it was supported by the Community Advisory Board. David Thorne mentioned the community feedback piece is something supported by the Board's goals so the Board would consider writing a letter of support for "that piece" of the budget.

David Thorne requested a review of the timeline on the budget proceedings.

Melissa Webb asked about being able to go to public hearings and whether or not, when attending, they would go as a citizen or member of the board. Director Forshee said you would be able to identify as a member of the board. David Thorne stated that if the Board would do something they would have to collectively vote on it.

David Thorne asked Director Forshee to send a calendar invite to the evening meeting. David Thorne discussed they may have to do a vote by email to establish a Board position on budget items by email since there was not a quorum present at that time.

Hunter Hill discussed the potential of sending a letter from the Board regarding the budget requests.

David Thorne asked if there were any other questions.

Hunter Hill asked if January 1st is when the budget would start for those.

David Thorne discussed the non-emergency line goal in relevance to the 2026 budget requests, in that it was not relevant. Discussed that it was progress to see the public education and feedback item listed in the budget requests and offered to provide feedback from the Board to the Manager if there was pushback on that budget item.

Additional times of discussion regarding the budget –

After a quorum was established (28 minutes into meeting), there was a recap of the meeting to that point provided to Pastor Hughes-Mason, as she joined the meeting via Zoom. David Thorne asked that the agenda be shared on the screen and stated that we had finished discussion on all of the updates from section three. He noted that there was a significant budget item of adding 20 new dispatchers at a cost of a little over a million dollars a year, adding that one of the things that it resolves was the two headset issue that was pointed out by the Jensen-Hughes report. He continued that another item, that was a smaller item and his favorite, was the feedback tool and an education piece. Then a "couple hundred thousand" for some tools (referencing the call taker consoles). Then an update was provided about the non-emergency number for July 4th holiday and the graduation of call taker academy that was coming up on July 2nd, which brought the meeting back up to the current discussion item. There were no questions asked.

Later in the meeting, during the discussion regarding the non-emergency line (at 1:02 into the meeting), Director Forshee speaks about getting splitting out call taking and dispatching and that the request for 20 additional positions is phase one of the request. Director Forshee explained that the data examined shows that 43 additional positions are necessary to completely split out call taking and dispatching. Being that it was a very high number, Director Forshee is requesting 20 additional positions while looking for other opportunities to explore efficiencies or reductions in call volume. There were no follow up questions to this statement, the discussion shifted back to being more specific to the non-emergency line.

There was no further discussion, question, or call to vote on the budget reviews.