

ALABAMA 9-1-1 BOARD MEETING

Minutes of 5/15/2024

Prior notice of this regularly scheduled meeting of the Alabama 9-1-1 Board was given in accordance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act. The minutes were recorded by Ms. Michelle Peel, Program Coordinator for the Board.

Mr. Jeremy Williams, Chair for the Board, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

The roll was called as follows by Ms. Peel:

Brandon Broadhead	☒ Present ☐ Absent ☐ Virtual
Evelyn Causey	☐ Present ☒ Absent ☐ Virtual
Fred Johnson, Vice Chair	☐ Present ☐ Absent ☒ Virtual
John Nettles	☐ Present ☒ Absent ☐ Virtual
Greg Silas	☒ Present ☐ Absent ☐ Virtual
Joby Smith	☒ Present ☐ Absent ☐ Virtual
Robert Smith, Secretary/Treasurer	☒ Present ☐ Absent ☐ Virtual
Brandon Wallace	☐ Present ☐ Absent ☒ Virtual
Tim Webb,	☒ Present ☐ Absent ☐ Virtual
Jeremy Williams, Chair	☒ Present ☐ Absent ☐ Virtual

A quorum was established.

Mr. Williams called for unanimous consent for the approval of the agenda. It was unanimously approved with no objections. He called for the approval of the minutes of the March 20, 2024 Board meeting. Mr. Robert Smith made the motion and Mr. Brandon Broadhead seconded the motion. There were no changes or objections, and the approval of the minutes was ordered. Guest introductions were made.

Mr. Williams turned the meeting over to Ms. Leah Missildine, Executive Director for the Board, for programmatic reports.

Programmatic Reports

Finance Report

Ms. Missildine started the programmatic reports with the year-to-date financial statements for the seven months ending April 30, 2024. She advised the board that there was still a little more accounting to do for the User Conference so the breakdown of expenses would be presented at the July Board Meeting. She asked if there were any questions about the statements. There were none. Ms. Missildine recommended the Board accept the financial statements as presented. Mr. Robert Smith made the motion and Mr. Brandon Broadhead seconded it. A roll call vote was taken:

Brandon Broadhead	☒ Yay ☐ Nay ☐ Abstain
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Fred Johnson	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Greg Silas	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Joby Smith	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Robert Smith	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Brandon Wallace	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Tim Webb	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Jeremy Williams	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain

There were no objections. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Missildine continued the finance report with a review of the legacy 9-1-1 costs reimbursement program. Legacy reimbursements are trending lower since Brightspeed was directly billing the Board for 32 Districts for legacy costs. She informed the Board that staff is now looking to see what other carriers can transition to post NG911 billing.

Ms. Missildine continued the financial reports with an update on the audits conducted on the Districts by the Examiner's office. She stated she had received the quote for the FY24 audits a few weeks ago. She had not received any contracts. She reminded the Board that each year, half of the Districts are audited. The final invoice for FY23 was presented and explained.

Ms. Missildine informed the Board of the success of the implementation of the CPI increase. She provided a graph that highlighted the change from month to month from the \$1.86 fee to the \$2.23 fee. She explained that each month the baseline will change until all carriers are remitting \$2.23. She stated that staff had an upcoming meeting with the vendor providing the payment portal to discuss discontinuing the option to remit \$1.86 and improving the remittance process. She explained that a registration process for carriers is needed as is better reporting from the portal.

Ms. Missildine continued the finance report with an update on the Board's grant cycles 5 through 8. No progress update has been provided by one awardee. They will be sent a letter to either submit a status update or return the money. Mr. Jeremy Williams asked if the money could be withheld from their monthly distribution. Counsel advised that it could be held in escrow until the status is provided. Mr. Williams stated that option should be tabled until they are provided an opportunity to respond to the letter.

Mr. Adam Brown informed the Board that all of the contracts for Grant Cycle 9 have been returned. One District chose not to accept the award erring on the side of caution that the project would not be sustainable. Ms. Missildine expressed that future grant cycles would prioritize certain types of projects. She also stated that there could be a continuous grant opportunity for District consolidation. Mr. Brandon Broadhead asked if this continuous grant cycle could also be for co-location. Ms. Missildine stated that co-location would fall under a traditional grant cycle. There was discussion among Board members about true consolidation and co-location and the distinctions between them. Both Ms. Missildine and Mr. Brown expressed that Board input on the needs of the Districts is vital.

Education and Outreach Report

Ms. Missildine then turned the meeting over to Ms. Ehrhart. Ms. Ehrhart began her report with a recap of the 2024 User Conference held in Birmingham in April. 618 CEUs were issued to 170 participants from 48 PSAPs. Planning for the 2025 User Conference is already underway. The general location and potential dates will be presented at the July Board meeting.

Ms. Ehrhart informed the Board that staff visited 59 agencies during National Public Safety Telecommunicator week. During these visits, staff had the opportunity to talk with many telecommunicators about their needs and the Board. Many are underinformed as to what the Board does.

Ms. Ehrhart provided an update on the database Mr. Daniel Hipps has been working on for the Board. She reminded the Board that it would house ECD, PSAP, certification, and ALEMD information. Mr. Hipps has been working on importing over 35,000 records for approximately 2000 public safety telecommunicators and leadership staff from Virtual Academy, the Board's LMS provider.

Ms. Ehrhart concluded her report with a brief update on the ALEMD overhaul and the status of the Public Safety Telecommunicator Certification Program. She informed the Board that a letter had been sent to Perry County Emergency Communications District due to non-compliance and being unresponsive, a copy of which was in the Board packet. She stated 21 PSAPs were non-compliant. She has reached out to all of them with directions on how to move forward. Several had already made improvements.

Technology Report

Mr. Caleb Branch provided the report for INdigital. He began with a synopsis of network improvements, MEVO updates, and new features. He presented MEVO call volume numbers, Texty statistics, and primary PSAP to primary PSAP transfer numbers. He talked about how INdigital handled an Intrado ALI Outage at the end of April. He continued with a recap of the Talladega Speedway Geo-routing event and progress of the Starlink project in the Wiregrass. Mr. Williams stated that his Starlink connection will run his whole center with a priority account.

Mr. Branch continued his report with a significant event analysis of a mass shooting in Baldwin County on May 11, 2024. There was an extreme increase in call volume. The Director there reported that the telecommunicators did a phenomenal job handling the incident and had been provided emotional support. They also conducted an after-incident team review.

Mr. Branch reported that there will be a change to the toolkit database. Ms. Melissa Carpenter will discuss these changes at the Regional Training in Hunstville in June as well as present on them on the June 25th Talk About It Tuesday.

Mr. Anderson Brooms presented the GIS report. He started his report with a map of all the PSAPs he has visited. He has visited 55 PSAPs. During this reporting period, he visited 11. He then discussed the 15 districts Ms. Nida Jackson is supporting for their GIS data. He stated that because of PSAP participation, geo-routing anomalies are down. However, Jefferson County has many non-participatory Districts that need to participate to get the boundary anomalies corrected.

Mr. Brooms continued his report stressing the importance of locally authoritative data. Many Districts are still not aggregating accurate data frequently enough. He then presented the aggregation status of each district. He continued with an update on the RapidSOS Premium rollout. It has been successful but is stagnant at this time because nine districts will not communicate and eight do not have RapidSOS accounts. It takes eight to 12 weeks for Google and Apple to engage to set up the account. There was discussion of providing RapidSOS Premiums to secondary PSAPs and agencies with regional boundaries.

Mr. Brooms moved on to MSAG to RCL, ALI to RCL, and ALI to AP comparisons. He also discussed the VEP training in Morgan County and the VEP Doctor's Office at the User Conference. Both were successful with a lot of participation.

Mr. Brooms continued his report with an explanation of FCC rule FCC-24-4 which requires wireless carriers to roll out Location Based Routing. He stated carriers reached out to the Board quickly and because of the boundary facilitation meetings over the last year, we were able to deliver PSAP boundaries. He then talked about MSAG/ALI VEP updates in the VEP. He outlined the GIS data requirements INdigital provided for ANGEN core functionality. Mr. Brooms emphasized that Districts need to take the E off of their center and put up NG because in Alabama, we are moving forward with NG911. Districts need to be proud of the work they have done to get here. There was discussion by the Board members of non-participatory districts. Ms. Missildine stated that the Board could require participation in these programs as a requirement for additional funding such as grants and reimbursement programs. Ms. Missildine asked counsel if these Districts are preventing the Board from fulfilling their statutory obligation. Counsel confirmed they were. The Board asked the staff to send a letter to these non-participatory districts in Jefferson County to inform them of the need for their participation.

Mr. Jeremy Williams called for a ten-minute recess at 11:36 a.m.

The meeting was called back to order by Mr. Williams at 11:46 a.m. Mr. Brandon Broadhead was not present.

Governance Report

Ms. Missildine moved on to the Governance Report. She started with an update on legislation that impacts the Board and the local ECDs.

Mr. Broadhead returned at 11:47 a.m.

Ms. Missildine informed the Board that Senator Smitherman wants to have a conversation before the next session about the composition of the Board and how nominations happen.

House Bill 307, that provided for Emergency Communications Districts to be able to work together for contracting services, made it through the House but the companion bill in the Senate did not pass. The Board's next sunset review has been set for October 2026. That provides a two-year window to correct the perceived issues. Many of those issues have already been addressed.

Ms. Missildine reported that Senate Bill 270 passed and has been signed by the Governor to take effect on October 1, 2024. Much of this bill mirrors the Governor's Executive Order 743 issued last year regarding open records. If you mirrored that Executive Order, you need to make changes to mirror this legislation. She also reported that HB82 resulting from the very publicized incident of false reporting in 2023 has been signed by the Governor. This legislation stipulates that making a false report to law enforcement is a class C felony and provides restitution for agencies to recoup monies spent investigating the false report. 911 agencies need to make sure they are included in the costs submitted for restitution.

Ms. Missildine updated the Board on the conversations had with the Tallapoosa County 911 Board regarding the out-of-state hosted call handling solution they were considering. The Tallapoosa County 911 Board was appreciative of the information provided and asked that we respond to a letter with what we, as a Board, would require to fully utilize ANGEN. The response to that letter was provided to the Board in their packet. INdigital has considered a variety of options for call handling. Ms. Missildine advised that what was presented in that letter is the bones of an administrative rule to give 911 centers and vendors guidance on what is deployed, and these are the requirements of the PSAPs, vendors, or of all those involved. She advised the Board that staff would be working on a draft administrative rule to present at the July board meeting.

Ms. Missildine advised the Board that the letter provided in the packet was still designated as DRAFT because the Tallapoosa County 911 Board needed the letter prior to this Board being able to approve it. Counsel advised that the Board does need to approve the action. Mr. Greg Silas made the motion to approve the letter as written. Mr. Robert Smith seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Brandon Broadhead	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Fred Johnson	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Greg Silas	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Joby Smith	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Robert Smith	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Brandon Wallace	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Tim Webb	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Jeremy Williams	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain

There were no objections. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Fred Johnson asked about vacancies on the Board. Ms. Missildine confirmed the vacancies.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Ms. Missildine advised the Board that there is a new area code coming to Alabama.

Mr. Jeremy Williams advised the Board that during the Wiregrass Director's Meeting, there was discussion for the Board to issue an RFP for development of a Public Safety Telecommunicator basic course. It would be Alabama specific. Mr. Brandon Broadhead made a motion to authorize staff to explore options for an RFP for a Public Safety Telecommunicator course. Mr. Robert Smith seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Brandon Broadhead	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
Fred Johnson	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain
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Jeremy Williams	☒ Yay	☐ Nay	☐ Abstain

There were no objections. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Brandon Broadhead requested clarification on travel by Board members for Board business. Mr. Scott Barnett, legal counsel for the Board, stated that he would look over current legislation and rules and provide written guidance at the July meeting.

Mr. Broadhead presented a proposal for the Board to investigate owning a mobile dispatch unit for use in disasters. This unit would be focused solely on answering and dispatching calls. Ms. Missildine advised that during the last legislative session, there was discussion on what board and commissions could and could not own. Discussion ensued. It was decided that any further discussion on this would best be done by multiple committees.

Public Comments

No public comments.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:19 p.m.

Approved this 24th day of July, 2024.

Robert Smith
Signature

Secretary/Treasurer
Title