



Minutes of the Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1
April 2026 Commission Meeting
Thursday, April 30th @ 1730 hours
Accomack County EOC – Melfa

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Bill McCready, *Chairman, Atlantic Volunteer Fire Company*

AJ Ferebee, *Vice-Chairman, Captain, Northampton County Sheriff's Office*

Dane Lawson, *Sergeant, Virginia State Police*

Ben Byrd, *Wachapreague Volunteer Fire Company*

Donald Hart, *Accomack County Board of Supervisors*

Greg DeYoung, *Northampton County Department of EMS*

Jeff Parks, *Accomack County Board of Supervisors*

Adam Zieger, *Eastville Volunteer Fire Company*

OTHERS PRESENT: Scott Chandler, *ESVA 9-1-1 Consultant*

Jeff Flournoy, *ESVA 9-1-1 Director*

Katie Brewster, *ESVA 9-1-1 Supervisor/ Recording Secretary*

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Matt Spuck, *Northampton County Administrator*

Mike Mason, *Accomack County Administrator*

Ernest Smith, *Northampton County Board of Supervisors*

Bobby Taylor, *Lieutenant, Accomack County Sheriff's Office*

REMOTE PARTICIPATION: None

OTHERS ABSENT: Krista Kilmon, *ESVA 9-1-1 Deputy Director*

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Bill McCready called the meeting to order at 17:38.

INVOCATION: Commissioner Donald Hart delivered the opening invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Chairman Bill McCready led the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Sean Fate, *Chief, Wachapreague Volunteer Fire Department*

MINUTES:

A motion to accept the minutes from the March 2026 Commission Meeting was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Ben Byrd. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.



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CONSENT AGENDA:

There was no consent agenda items at this meeting.

BUDGET REPORT:

There are no anomalies or concerns with the budget. Ten months of the Wireless Surcharge have come in and are approximately \$20,000 over what was anticipated. For the Communications Tax, nine months have been received from Accomack and is about \$7,000 under, eight months have been received from Northampton and is about \$2,000 under. There will be a follow up as to why only five months have been received from Chincoteague. Director Flournoy provided an update on FY27. Overall, we are behind on the 9-1-1 Commission's FY27 budget development, contrasted with past years. The following items are expected to be included in the revenue for FY27: funds for salary/wage increases and funds for benefit cost increases. The twelfth 9-1-1 Communications Officer position is being included in the FY27 budget. Assuming the additional funding is provided by the counties, then work will continue on a budget difference needed to have a balanced budget for FY27. It continues to be a desire to have a separate budget for ESVARRS in Northampton County's New World budgeting system. Work will continue on the FY27 budget for the 9-1-1 Commission, with the expectation to have a proposed budget at the May 2026 meeting to be adopted at the June 2026 meeting.

A motion to approve the budget report was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Ben Byrd. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Operations: Personnel- Deputy Director continues on maternity leave, expected to return on May 11th. Niasia Dickerson has returned to work from her extended medical leave. Facility- There is a lot of work going on at the 9-1-1 Center. The kitchen area renovations began this week and is expected to last three weeks. The ceiling cable management is expected to start soon. This work was funded through a grant. Grants- The two items funded through the FY26 DCJS Wellness Grant, the peer support resources and the facility massage chair, have been purchased and we are preparing to use. We will be working on reimbursement requests with DCJS. VDEM placed the FY27/FY28 Resiliency Grant on a hold and we are currently unable to enter the grant submission. Once is re-opened, we will ensure the application is submitted before the deadline. Finance- For the FY26 VDEM GIS Grants, efforts are ongoing to work with Accomack County Finance and Northampton County Finance on these reimbursements. The fourth quarter funding requests for Accomack County were requested in early April 2026. Summer 2026- There is a notable increase in planning efforts and staff needed for events this summer, such as Pony Penning, the Onancock Sailfest celebration, and the Cape Charles Sailfest celebration. This includes additional planning meetings, planned use of ESVARRS, interoperability efforts, and some events with dispatch staff in the field. NPSTW- This occurred the week of April 12th-18th where numerous items to recognize our staff occurred. This was with the help of numerous donations and funds that were provided to be used, and will continue to be used to support our staff. On April 14th, we had our annual 9-1-1 Center Staff Meeting, where Brandie Hawk was announced as our 2025 9-1-1 Communications Officer of the Year. Other- Greg Lewis will be completing the needed APCO classes related to dispatch operations, with the long-term goal of being able to assist on the dispatch floor during busy periods – this is being funded through a VDEM Grant. We are working with Northampton County I.T. on an



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immediate need for the firewall at the 9-1-1 Center to be replaced due to numerous issues in recent weeks, impacting the connectivity. Verizon has completed the transition of a limited number of telephone lines to remain on copper. With three additional ESVA 9-1-1 staff completing the dispatch CIT training on April 21st, all 9-1-1 Center dispatch staff have now completed this training. Legacy- We continue to use and maintain aspects of the legacy Fire/EMS dispatch system.

ESVARRS: Director Flournoy provided an update on the ESVARRS system. Coverage- Numerous reports of coverage showing some decrease with pagers and portable radios in areas where had not been experiencing coverage issues. The Craddockville site is not functioning properly and is a work in progress. There has been outreach to several other localities that recently implemented a similar radio system (Ludenburg County, Amelia County, and Prince George County) focusing on pager coverage. The overall message is that they are no experiencing notable pager coverage issues. Pagers/Paging- There has been no change to the continued work with Wachapreague for short-term and long-term solutions and continuing to also alert them on the VHF system. There are potential pager/coverage issues in other areas. Activity- We continue to provide amplified G5 Unication pager chargers as needed. The reprogramming of Station 11 and Station 2 pagers is overall completed. Funding- There is nothing new to report or any concerns with funding. All COPS federal funds awarded for use towards ESVARRS have been requested and reimbursed. We are working with COPS staff and Northampton County Finance on the remaining report to be completed. For the USDA Grant awarded to Accomack County for radio dispatch console expenses, the documentation was provided for reimbursement in early December, and we continue to await reimbursement. In recent weeks, additional documentation was requested from the USDA, which was provided. The final invoice from L3Harris has been submitted for payment; other L3Harris invoices are from orders to be reimbursed. One invoice remains to be received from Williams Communications for Final Acceptance of the Microwave System. Time and effort will be devoted to securing the needed long-term maintenance/support for the microwave system. With the first year of maintenance from L3Harris covered as warranty, the first payment (at a reduced cost) for ongoing maintenance/support will be in January 2027. There are ongoing discussions with L3Harris on if the long-term maintenance/support for the logging recorder is covered in the maintenance agreement. Interoperability- We continue to work with and engage NASA/Wallops staff on solutions for interoperability for this Fire/EMS/LE radios and the ESVARRS system. Efforts are ongoing to program the primary talk groups for ACSO, NCSO, CPD and several other interoperability talk groups. This will allow VSP radios to transmit/receive on these ESVARRS talk groups. It remains a work in progress for the Maryland State Police to have all of the Trooper medevacs radios programmed. There has been ongoing dialogue with the Federal Wildlife Officers and the National Park Service request to have ESVARRS programmed on their radios. There has been ongoing dialogue for RSMH to purchase a limited number of portable radios as part of their operations. The radios and chargers for the Northampton County Public Works Department have arrived and it is anticipated to get them out next week. Time and effort are being devoted on the needed radio programming and personality development for these radios. Other- Control stations at the Eastern Shore Regional Jail were installed and have now been tested, with no issues. As-built documentation from L3Harris has been provided and we continue to work with Williams Communications on their as-built documentation. L3Harris will only be responsible for sites they used in ESVARRS. ESVA 9-1-1, working with ACSO, NCSO, CPD, and NCPS, will be developing a decommissioning schedule. Some of the decommissioning efforts and conversations have started. The funding approved for the use of CTA Consultants has ended, with CTA Consultants continuing to assist ESVA 9-1-1 as needed. The RSMH-ER-E talk group is now programmed into the radios on the



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Command9 vehicle however, this talk group is not being programmed into the other requested portable radios. We are working with Accomack County Administration and Big Wood Electric to coordinate efforts for the tower lighting and amateur radio equipment for this site to have back-up power from the ESVARRS site generator. Expenses- The following change orders for Delmarva Two-Way Radio were included: outside pager antenna installation, Unication one-way signal booster, and Klaxon device troubleshooting. Wachapreague- Work has continued with Station 11 leadership to install a pole to be used for the o-DAS at their back-up building location. The pole will be used to house the antennas to provide the coverage enhancement in the area, with the radio/amplifier being location inside the facility and using the building's commercial power and back-up generator. There are three overall efforts related to the implementation: the purchase/installation of the 80' wooden pole, the actual o-DAS, engineering, radios/antennas/cables, and other related equipment, and the installation of radio equipment inside the building. We are working with Rock Creek Line Construction on the purchase, transport, and installation of the 80' pole. We are working with C Squared Systems on the actual o-DAS system and are awaiting the detailed scope of work, coverage expectations and quote for the work. While a budgetary figure to use has been provided as a worst-case scenario, they need to visit the site location and this is tentatively planned for late next week or the following week. We are working with Attorney Wiggins in exploring the proper procurement/purchase vehicle, potentially using Section 7 (Emergency Purchases) and Section 8 (Sole Source Procurement) of the 9-1-1 Commission's Procurement Policy or an existing contract vehicle that can be used for this work. Unless otherwise directed, funding for this need is expected to originate from the following: first, from any remaining funds from the ESVARRS project implementation; secondly, from any remaining funds in the FY26 operational budget; lastly, from the 9-1-1 Commission's contingency funds. Getting an action item before the 9-1-1 Commission to move forward on this implementation is the immediate goal and will be requested as soon as possible.

A motion to approve the Director's report was made by Commissioner Ben Byrd with a second from Commissioner Adam Zieger. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

ACTION ITEMS: A. ESVARRS – Remote Network (System) Monitoring – Approval

While Eastern Communications does regularly review the RNM system for ESVARRS, as do ESVA 9-1-1 Center management staff, no current 24/7/365 active monitoring exists. The RNM system monitors for numerous and varying alarms and other activity at the six RF sites and four dispatch centers. Approval was requested to engage L3Harris to provide 24/7/365 monitoring of ESVARRS for a year for awareness of critical issues and/or quicker deployment of repair/troubleshooting efforts. The costs for the first year of RNM monitoring us under \$30,000. Funds to support this monitoring the first year can originate from maintenance costs not used in the FY26 budget. In the future, if determined this monitoring was warranted to continue, would explore funding efforts.

A motion to approve this action item was made by Commissioner Jeff Parks with a second from Commissioner Donald Hart. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.



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B. Additional Funding Requests – ACC BOS/NOR BOS – FY27 – Approval

Benefit expenses/costs for FY27 surpasses the placeholder used at the end of 2025 when budget requests were formulated. An additional \$20,574 placeholder/estimate was requested for potential benefit increases in FY27, with the amount actually being \$50,964 – this creates a difference of \$30,390 in increase for health insurance costs for the next fiscal year. The salary placeholder of 3.75% that was requested was already funded and only 2.75% was needed. It was asked for authorization to work with Accomack and Northampton County Administrators, after subtracting this from the needed additional benefit increase, to request the 2/3 (\$13,333) from Accomack and the 1/3 (\$6,667) from Northampton in FY27, as ongoing funds based on the increased benefit costs in FY27.

A motion to approve this action item was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Greg DeYoung. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

CONSULTANT’S REPORT:

Consultant Scott Chandler advised that aside from his routine duties of reviewing correspondence and emails and updating the ESVA 9-1-1 website, he was also involved in ESVARRS tasks. He attended the weekly project reviews, several different meetings with CTA, and drafted the personality profile for Northampton County radios.

A motion to accept the 9-1-1 Consultant’s report was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Ben Byrd. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Chairman McCready expressed his thanks to Sean Fate for being involved and showing good leadership.

PAYABLES:

A motion to pay the bills was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Jeff Parks. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice-Chairman AJ Ferebee made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second from Commissioner Adam Zeiger. There were no oppositions and the meeting was adjourned by at 18:26.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Brewster, *ESVA 9-1-1 Supervisor/ Recording Secretary*