



Minutes of the Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1  
February 2026 Commission Meeting  
Thursday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026 @ 1730 hours  
Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1 Center - Accomac

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Bill McCready, *Chairman, Atlantic Volunteer Fire Company*  
AJ Ferebee, *Vice-Chairman, Captain, Northampton County Sheriff's Office*  
Jeff Renas, *Area 31 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant, Virginia State Police*  
Donald Hart, *Accomack County Board of Supervisors*  
Greg DeYoung, *Northampton County Department of EMS*  
Matt Spuck, *Northampton County Administrator*  
Bobby Taylor, *Lieutenant, Accomack County Sheriff's Office*  
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:** Ben Byrd, *Wachapreague Volunteer Fire Company*  
Mike Mason, *Accomack County Administrator*  
Ernest Smith, *Northampton County Board of Supervisors*

**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 17:31.

**INVOCATION:** Chairman Bill McCready delivered the opening invocation.

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

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** There was no public participation at this meeting.



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**MINUTES:**

*A motion to accept the minutes from the January 2026 Commission Meeting was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Jeff Parks. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.*

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

There was no consent agenda items at this meeting.

**BUDGET REPORT:**

For FY26, there are no anomalies or concerns with the revenue coming in. The 9-1-1 Wireless Surcharge is coming in higher than projected by approximately \$20,000. The Communications Tax for Accomack is coming in slightly lower than anticipated and Chincoteague is on track. The spreadsheet showed data for seven months (through January). Of the Capital Budget, 116% has been spent, and is a few thousand dollars over due to additional consulting expenses. Of the Operational Budget, 55% has been spent.

For FY27, the following items were submitted to both counties: (A) additional F/T 9-1-1 Communications Officer position (B) funding for membership increases for the HRCJTA (C) place-holder for any salary increase at 3.75% (D) place-holder for expected benefit cost increases (E) 9-1-1 Commission vehicle. Topics C and D have been included in Accomack County's recommended budget. Director Flournoy attended Board of Supervisor meetings in both counties this month to address any questions they may have had for these requests or 9-1-1 Center Operations.

*A motion to approve the budget report was made by Commissioner Greg DeYoung with a second from Commissioner Adam Zieger. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.*

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Director Flournoy advised that Deputy Director Kilmon continues on maternity leave, likely through April 2026. Supervisors have assumed some of her duties. **Operations:** Staffing- There have been no changes to staffing. Several F/T staff are at/near maximum accumulation of annual leave. Our policy gives some leeway for Director Flournoy to manage and options are being explored. Training- With ESVA 9-1-1 being part of a multi-jurisdictional grant with other jurisdictions in the region, exploring opportunity to send staff to various training opportunities in the coming months. The February 2026 in-service training sessions for dispatch staff were postponed this week. Our staff has completed the annual harassment refresher training. Recent Winter Storm- With Accomack County offices being closed for weather on 2/23 and 2/24, non-exempt 9-1-1 F/T staff earned an additional 16 hours of compensatory leave. Based on forecasts ahead of the storm, staffing of the 9-1-1 Center was increased for Sunday night and continued into Monday and Tuesday. The ESVA 9-1-1 Center/sites generators were functionally checked. There were noted busy periods for the 9-1-1 Center, specifically for an extended period Sunday evening into Monday morning. It is expected to consider operational considerations, specifically as related to the use of ESVARRS talk groups during extreme busy periods. Other- In additional meetings with Eastern Shore Rail Trail related to planning for trails, there have been recent discussions on the use of mile-markers. The 9-1-1 Commission Annual Financial Statements for 2026 are almost complete. It is expected to devote time to ensuring the 9-1-1 Commission is compliant with



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the needed aspect of Library of Virginia records retention schedules/expectations. The employee evaluations expected in early 2026 for the 9-1-1 Deputy Director and 9-1-1 Supervisors positions will not occur and will resume with the next planned evaluation in mid-2026. **Legacy:** We continue to use and maintain aspects of the Legacy Fire/EMS system with no focus on tracking/managing issues/repairs. **Other:** General Assembly Bill Information related to 9-1-1/Dispatch was included. One that discusses 9-1-1 dispatch staff getting the same VRS benefits that Law Enforcement/Fire/EMS. **ESVARRS:** After Cutover- Since cutover for public safety agencies in mid-January 2026, Fire/EMS and Law Enforcement agencies continue to use the new radio system. Outside of the paging coverage issues, overall, no major issues notes/reported. NCPS personnel continues to use ESVARRS since mid-December, with little system/coverage issues reported. Notable Issues (Paging)- We continue actively working with L3H/AMK/CTA on short-term and long-term solutions for Wachapreague. We continue to also alert Station 11 on the VHF system. There are potential pager/coverage issues in other areas, such as Greenbackville and New Church. Activity Occurred- There have been numerous meetings with CTA Consultants on options for potential remedies. In mid-February, seven amplified G5 Unication pager chargers were provided to Station 11 leadership. It's understood these chargers are working as expected, providing solid pager coverage into the residence/location. In late-February, two amplified chargers were provided to Station 2 leadership. L3Harris will be conducting a review of the transmit equipment at the Chincoteague site to assure it is functioning properly. This was scheduled for this past Sunday but has been rescheduled for next week due to storm impacts. ESVA 9-1-1 staff are continuing to evaluate other types of antennas to be used on the G5 Unication pagers. Future Activity- The reprogramming of Station 11 and Station 2 pagers, including setting changes to ensure pager is only searching for ESVARRS for coverage and to modify the audible/vibration notifications when out of range to reduce impacts to battery, is planned for the next week or two. The collection of data where pager performance or coverage issues are occurring to allow appropriate plans for addressing/managing. Expecting information from CTA Consultants for a potential option to use a micro-transmitter to improve/expand coverage in areas. Some potential options/considerations include: (A) consider additional full site (B) consider limited additional site (C) use of a portable radio for alerting (D) adjustments to current RF site antenna configurations and/or power (E) consider use of the suggested solution from AMK services: back-to-back control stations using VHF (F) additional use of amplified chargers. Exploring options on how to address pager coverage issues being experienced at some Fire/EMS stations: additional use of outside/external antennas and addition on one-way signal booster. Portable related- Considering options to potentially be used to improve two-way communications inside critical locations, such as: two-way signal booster, use of Wi-Fi in needed locations, and use of the Be-On application. Other- Audio issues on Fire/EMS apparatus where they are unable to hear received transmissions are programming or other configuration related and are generally easily resolved once identified. Funding- To date seventeen drawdown requests have occurred for a total withdraw of approximately \$8,127,402. There remain approximately \$117,597 COPS federal funds available for use towards the ESVARRS Project. Director Flournoy continues to complete and submit all required reporting to DOJ/COPS, with the next report due by 3/2/26. It was understood the current project award period is through April 2026, however JustGrants platform shows through August 2026. For the USDA Grant, L3Harris submitted an invoice for \$75,000 and the invoice was submitted for payment. Interoperability- Temporarily, Station 25/26 has been provided an allotment of ESVARRS portable radios from a Fire/EMS unit that is not in-service to partially address interoperability needs. The following interoperability gateways are functional: ACPS, VDOT-Accomac, ANEC, COMLINC, VSP-LE-5, DPEM, EMS Statewide, UHF MED 5 and VDOT-Eastville. The gateway at the VSP-Eastville site for ORION is installed but appears to be a coverage issue that needs to be addressed. While is overall a responsibility for the



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law enforcement agencies, expect to devote time on procedures to ensure needed patches occur to the VSP-LE-5 during critical law enforcement events. Efforts continue on programming needed for the functionality of the ORION talk groups and Virginia Beach hospitals. The ISSI with Worcester County is functional; currently being used by Accomack County ambulances (Stations 2, 20, 3) when transporting to Salisbury. It is expected to program other ambulances in the future. While Nightingale and Life-EVAC have the needed ESVARRS programming, remains a work in progress for the MSP. There has been ongoing dialogue with the Federal Wildlife Officers and the National Park Service with requests 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. There has been recent communication with Northampton County leadership on their Public Works Department using ESVARRS and expect radio order to be placed soon. A limited number of talk-groups for county and local government use are already included in fleet-mapping. On-Going Effort- Dragon Force is functional, with additional configuration efforts ongoing. While a solution was developed related to talk group labeling in the Exacom system, continue to address volume issues on recorder. With MCM, we expect continued effort with L3Harris to ensure all infrastructure and subscriber equipment has been properly entered into the asset management system. The following are some other items in progress: functionality of control stations at ESRJ; resolve several punch-list items from and after cutover; inventory clean-up; final as-built documentation. The decommissioning of equipment is anticipated to be removed from the project completion expectation and will be completed during ESVARRS support. Based on Amendment #5, Final Acceptance is expected March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026. It is unknown if this date will be met; if not, may lead to contractual discussions between ESVA 9-1-1 Commission and L3Harris. Recent Winter Storm- During the recent winter storm, the radio system usage was heavy; it performed well. The Mappsville and Craddockville sites operated off generator power for an extended period. At Mappsville, the ANEC pole was broken, with commercial power restored Wednesday afternoon. While the reason for Craddockville being without commercial power was not obvious, it is noted that a tree fell on the fence around the shelter and onto the generator, with commercial power being restored early Wednesday morning. To be proactive, a diesel fill was requested for these sites. The Belle Haven site was also on generator for a period. Several issues did occur with the emergency back-up power equipment. At Craddockville, on late Monday, the UPS failed; configuration changes occurred to allow the site to come back on-line. At Mappsville, Wednesday morning, the generator failed and the site was off-line or about two hours. Generator functionality was restored and the generator repaired. CTA- The funding approved for the use of CTA Consultants will likely end in late March/early April. There is no intent to continue, unless engagement is needed. Miscellaneous- While L3Harris felt there were little system impacts, there was a notable effort exploring carrier alarms at the Craddockville and Accomack sites on our Channel 2. The FCC was requested to assist in resolution; after effort by FCC personnel in early February, the interference was determined to be originating from an improperly performing BDA system at the ESCC. The BDA has been powered off and the ESVA 9-1-1 staff were in dialogue with ESCC Police leadership during this effort and is understood some type of formal notice has or will be issued to the ESCC. Additional effort is being devoted to initial governance for ESVARRS. The direction being provided to L3Harris is that any additional orders of radio or different accessory equipment from any agency/station needs to originate from the 9-1-1 Commission; orders for more consumable supplies can originate directly from agency/station. While there may be something the 9-1-1 Commission considers in the future regarding public monitoring, it is deferred at this point. It is noted that the Broadcastify application is broadcasting the ESVARRS radio system. Change Order- The following change orders were included in the report: external station pager antenna; trouble-shooting use (fire engine); additional amplified pager chargers; G5 Unication pager antennas.



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Commissioner Greg DeYong expressed thanks and appreciation to 9-1-1 Center staff during the recent winter weather event. Commissioner Jeff Parks also stated that the 9-1-1 Center staff were calm and reassuring through the entirety.

*A motion to approve the Director's report was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Jeff Parks. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.*

**ACTION ITEMS:**

There were no action items at this meeting.

**CONSULTANT'S REPORT:**

Consultant Scott Chandler reported that in addition from his routine items of reviewing correspondence and emails, reviewing the radio documentation logs, and updating the ESVVA 9-1-1 website, he was also heavily involved in the ESVARRS project. He attended ISSI meeting, developed talk group mapping and worked with Exacom, conducted DragonForce testing, and attended several other meetings, including the weekly project meetings. He was also involved in pager coverage testing and assisting with the late cutover of E8-5.

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

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

Chairman McCready had nothing to report.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

There were no other business items at this meeting.

**PAYABLES:**

*A motion to pay the bills was made by Vice-Chairman AJ Ferebee with a second from Commissioner Bobby Taylor. 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 Bobby Taylor. There were no oppositions and the meeting was adjourned by at 18:44.*

Respectfully Submitted,

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



On Jan 14<sup>th</sup>, less than 24 hours after the new P25 system was cutover, I sent an email to Director Flournoy documenting events and concerns that were happening in and around Wachapreague. Jeff immediately acknowledged my email, confirming continued support working through the issues and ensured me that dispatch would continue to alert Wachapreague on the old legacy system until a resolution is found. To my knowledge, Wachapreague is the only station being alerted on the old legacy system.

Fast forward a couple weeks. Our situation hasn't changed. Now we have 2 weeks of data, we are documenting locations and times with poor or NO coverage. We've had multiple calls with no pager alerts, no siren alert, completely relying on the legacy system to page us. This usually adds a couple minutes to the initial alert. Possible life threatening minutes passing while dispatch does their best to get the page out to Wachapreague.

Separately, our portable radios are experiencing similar poor or NO coverage or connectivity to dispatch, even in open areas in and around Wachapreague.


We would like to go on record that these same issues WVFC is experiencing have and will be impacting Law Enforcement and EMS units equally. These problems exist across all users.

We also should acknowledge that there are currently no leaves on any trees. We are currently at the most favorable conditions for good signal during the entire year, and here we are having these conversations.

We believe this is a serious issue with possible very serious consequences if not addressed properly. Considering a band-aid on these problems instead of addressing it adequately could and likely will have life threatening results.

The Wachapreague area has dealt with radio issues for more than 20 years. Its time to fix the issues as responsible officials, the lives of first responders and the community deserve much better.

I'll ask one question, would either of you be comfortable sending a firefighter into a burning building, or a law enforcement officer into a potentially dangerous house and not be able to communicate with them? That is what you are asking me and our first responders to do.

LETTER SUBMITTED TO 9-11 COMMISSION  
BY CHIEF SEAN FATE ON 1/29/2026  
AT THE 9-11 COMMISSION MEETING. 

From: Sean Fate <[wvfcchief@gmail.com](mailto:wvfcchief@gmail.com)>  
Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2026 12:08 PM  
To: Jeff Flournoy <[jflournoy@co.northampton.va.us](mailto:jflournoy@co.northampton.va.us)>; Sean Fate <[sfate@vims.edu](mailto:sfate@vims.edu)>  
Subject: [External]Wachapreague pager and mobile coverage issues

Good morning Director Flournoy,

Submitting this email as official notification of what WVFC considers serious lack of radio and pager coverage for our district. The list below is in no specific order.

1. Since cutover on 1/13/25, switching to the Unication pagers on the P25 system, our pagers are not receiving signal in and near Wachapreague and Quinby. The pagers are literally jumping "out of range" and "in range" every couple minutes or worse. It is very likely that any member within this "dead zone" will not receive the page and not respond. This happened this morning with the Kiptopeake Inn fire. I was standing on Atlantic Ave (40 Atlantic Ave) when the call came out. The only way I knew there was a call is I happened to look at my phone and see I had missed the call 8 minutes earlier. Apparently the siren did not receive the dispatch as well, as that did not go off. Chief Engineer Kerry Paul was in his living room on Pearl St. did not receive the page either. One member on Brooklyn Ave heard the call and notified others.

2. We experienced yesterday that with the Unication pagers constantly searching for signal, they are using the battery life in hours. I unplugged my Unication pager at 7am, and it was dead at 1pm. Several other members experienced the same issue yesterday.

3. As the pager jumps back and forth, out and back in range, it either beeps or vibrates constantly, depending on your settings. So all of us had to listen to that overnight while pagers charged on our nightstands. There is no way to turn off the notification of "in and out of range".

The poor signal issue in our district has been identified by the leadership and staff of 911, and also the engineers of the new system. To the point that a "booster" was installed on the siren pager. To my knowledge, nothing has been done to solve anything other than the siren signal.

This is a serious issue and could cause someone in the community, or one of our members, their life. Not to dramatize any conversation, but these are facts. If paging for response, or firefighters needing reliable communications on a fire scene, we are obviously not there. Acknowledging there is a problem and not addressing it properly could have serious implications.

I would offer that we/you consider keeping Wachapreague on the Legacy system for paging until a solution is found. We had 1 Unication pager over the last 7 months operating in the Legacy mode programming and it has worked flawlessly. Keeping the mobile and portable radios on the new P25 system, just paging over Legacy.

I sincerely appreciate your interest in this problem and desire to find solutions. Please let us know what we can do to help solve these issues.

Respectfully,  
Sean Fate - Chief  
Wachapreague Volunteer Fire Co., Inc.  
[wvfcchief@gmail.com](mailto:wvfcchief@gmail.com)  
757-709-4076

E-MAIL PROVIDED TO THE  
9-1-1 COMMISSION AT THE  
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