Minutes of the Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1
March 2026 Commission Meeting
Thursday, March 26th, 2026 @ 1730 hours
Northampton Board Chambers – Eastville

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:	Bill McCready, *Chairman, Atlantic Volunteer Fire Company*
	AJ Ferebee*, Vice-Chairman, Captain, Northampton County Sheriff's Office*
	Donald Hart*, Accomack County Board of Supervisors*
	Greg DeYoung, *Northampton County Department of EMS*
	Matt Spuck, *Northampton County Administrator*
	Mike Mason*, Accomack County Administrator*
	Ernest Smith, *Northampton County Board of Supervisors*
	Kenny Reese, *Sergeant, 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:	Jeff Renas, *Area 31 1st Sergeant, Virginia State Police*
REMOTE PARTICIPATION:	Ben Byrd, *Wachapreague Volunteer Fire Company,* participated remotely from the Wachapreague, VA area due to medical reasons.
OTHERS ABSENT:	Krista Kilmon, *ESVA 9-1-1 Deputy Director*
CALL TO ORDER:	Chairman Bill McCready called the meeting to order at 17:32.
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, *Wachapreague Volunteer Fire Company*

Director Flournoy read and presented the Resolution of Appreciation, that was adopted on January 29th, 2026, to former Commissioner Charlie Kolakowski. Mr. Kolakowski expressed his thanks and appreciation to Director Flournoy and staff, first responders, and other 9-1-1 Commission members.

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MINUTES:

A motion to accept the minutes from the February 2026 Commission Meeting was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Adam Zeiger. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried. Commissioner Mike Mason abstained from this vote due to being absent for the February 2026 Commission Meeting.

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-$23,000. The Communications Tax is coming in about $6,000 under for Accomack, about $1,000 under for Northampton and about $500-$1,000 under for Chincoteague. The expenditure spreadsheet showed data for two-thirds of the year (through February). Of the Capital Budget, 190% has been spent, and about $75,000 should have additional revenue coming in that was approved. Of the Operational Budget, 63% has been spent and of the Other Expenses, 60% has been spent, with a total of 62% spent.

A motion to approve the budget report was made by Vice-Chairman AJ Ferebee with a second from Commissioner Adam Zieger. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Director Flournoy provided his report. **Meetings**: On 3/10, Director Flournoy and Supervisor Brewster attended a Landing Zone Control Platform meeting with ACDPS staff. We are looking at new ways to have pre-established landing zones along with looking into Life-EVAC's online request platform. On 3/19, Director Flournoy attended the first Pony Penning Planning Meeting with CPD. While there is more to come, it's expected to use the new ESVARRS system for interoperability within this event. Other- Deputy Director Kilmon continues on maternity leave, expected through early/mid-May. The January 2026 meeting minutes did include the letter from Station 11 that was presented at that meeting. **Operations**: Staffing- Twelve of the eleven 9-1-1 CO F/T positions are filled, with two still in training (expected to be released within the next two weeks). We currently have three 9-1-1 CO P/T positions filled, with Niasia expected to return from her LOA for the April schedule. Several F/T staff are at or near maximum accumulation of annual leave; following existing policies, three staff have been provided a temporary extension. FY27 Budget- Work continues on the FY27 Budget efforts for the 9-1-1 Commission. Facility- The following are being funded by a VDEM Grant to improve aspects of our 9-1-1 Center: ceiling cable management and kitchen area renovations. The work for these projects is expected to start soon. Grants- A DCJS Wellness Grant was utilized towards peer support resources and a facility massage chair due to being unable to send any staff to a wellness conference recently. NPSTW- 2026 NPSTW is occurring April 12th-18th, 2026 and the annual meeting will be Tuesday, April 14th, 2026. This week involves a lot of donations and efforts towards recognizing our staff. **Infrastructure**: Legacy- We continue to use some aspects of the Legacy Fire/EMS system, particularly with paging. At some point, time and effort will be devoted to the decommissioning aspects of the Legacy system.

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ESVARRS:

After Cutover: Paging- There have been notable challenges since cutover, specifically related to paging. (A) Wachapreague – we continue working on short-term and long-term solutions as well as alerting Station 11 on the VHF system. (B) There are potential pager or pager coverage issues in another areas, such as Greenbackville, New Church, and Sanford/Saxis. There have been changes made and we are awaiting feedback related to the concerns to the constant in and out of range in some areas, impacting battery life. We continue to provide amplified G5 Unication pager chargers to Stations 11 and 2, as well as others as needed. It's understood these chargers are working as expected, providing solid pager coverage into the residence. L3Harris staff conducted a review of the transmit equipment at the Chincoteague site to ensure functioning properly, with no performance/system issues noted. ESVA 9-1-1 staff continue to evaluate other types of antennas potentially to be used on the G5 Unication pagers. To date, none evaluated have provided a notable improvement. Stations 11 and 2 pagers were reprogrammed to ensure the pager is only searching for ESVARRS for coverage and to modify the audible/vibration notifications when out of range. There is potential to reprogram other station's pagers following an established plan. There's ongoing effort towards the use of micro-transmitter, o-DAS to improve/extend coverage in areas. The o-DAS solution provides coverage enhancement outdoors in a focused geographic area. Options are being explored on how to address pager coverage issues being experienced at some Fire/EMS stations. The collection of data where pager performance or coverage issues are occurring will allow appropriate plans for addressing/managing. Considerations- There are still several other potential considerations. Any need for the additional costs will originate from the following, ahead of any request to counties for additional funding: (1) request repurpose of existing funds from both counties from the deferred CAD project (2) use of any remaining ESVARRS project funds (3) use of ESVA 9-1-1 non-appropriated contingency funds (4) use of ESVA 9-1-1 Commission operational funds not used/spent in FY26/FY27 related to radio system maintenance costs (5) request to use existing additional from what Accomack County initially budgeted for ESVARRS (6) potential use of the FY27 VDEM Resiliency Grant. **Other**: System Coverage- While 100% portable coverage inside all buildings was never expected guaranteed, there are locations where portable radio coverage inside is marginal. Some considered options to potentially improve two-way communications inside critical locations are: two-way signal booster (BDA), use of Wi-Fi in needed locations, and use of the BeOn application. Audio Issues - A need to work towards a balance in the audio levels between the four dispatch centers consoles and the field radios has been addressed. On Fire/EMS apparatus, audio issues are programming or configuration related and generally easily resolved once identified. **Funding**: All COPS federal funds available for use towards ESVARRS Project have been requested and reimbursed. We continue to complete and submit all required reporting to DOJ/COPS. We continue to await reimbursement from the USDA Grant. Remaining project ESVARRS invoices- One invoice remains to be received from Williams Communications and one invoice remains to be received from L3Harris for Final Acceptance. Other L3Harris invoices are from orders. **Interoperability**: Gateways- The following gateways are functional: ACPS, VDOT-Accomac, ANEC, VSP-LE-5, Delmarva Power Emergency Management, EMS Statewide. The following interoperability gateways are partial/non-functioning: UHF MED 5, COMLINC, ORION, 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. Connectivity- While ESVARRS radios now have access to hospital radios in Norfolk, continuing efforts on programming needed for the functionality of the ORION talk groups and Virginia Beach hospitals. This will require re-programming of field radios. The ISSI connectivity with Worcester County is functional and is currently being used by Accomack County

ambulances (Stations 2,20,3,5,6,7) when transporting to Salisbury, MD. It's expected to program other ambulances in the future. Medevac Helos- While Nightingale and Life-EVAC have the needed ESVARRS programming, it remains a work in progress for the MSP: some of the Trooper medevac radios are programmed but most are not. NCPW- An order was placed for radios/chargers for the Northampton County Public Works Department using ESVARRS. A limited number of talk groups for county local government use are already included in fleet-mapping. **Ongoing Effort**: Dragon Force- After issues resolved, appears Dragon Force is overall functional. It is expected to start using at dispatch centers soon. The units being polled are ambulances and school buses. Other apparatus is identified when the portable is turned on or when they PTT. Exacom- The volume issue in Exacom was resolved by L3Harris. Equipment- All contractually required spare equipment for the radio system has been provided. The spare equipment for the microwave was delivered. L3Haris has entered the system infrastructure and subscriber equipment into the MCM. Control Stations at the ESRJ were installed. Other- Punchlist items were completed or moved to maintenance support. As-built documentation is currently being finalized. **Recent Activity**: Final Acceptance- Based on Amendment #5, Final Acceptance was expected by March 14th, 2026. However, it did not occur until March 20th, 2026. Amendment #6 to the project was executed on March 20th, 2026, removing the decommissioning of Legacy radio system from the project to the ongoing support/maintenance. Amendment #2 to the ongoing maintenance contract was executed on March 20th, 2026, noting the decommissioning of Legacy radio system is now part of the on-going support maintenance. L3Harris will only be responsible for the sites L3Harris used in the ESVARRS. Transition- While may be some engagement with L3Harris staff, the support for ESVARRSS has transitioned to using Eastern Communications as the company that will maintain ESVARRS as part of our fifteen-year support agreement. **Other**: CTA- The funding approved for the use of CTA Consultants will likely end in April. While will no longer have a formal/ongoing agreement with CTA Consultants, their leadership has communicated they will continue to assist and be involved as needed. Governance- Direction was provided to L3Harris 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 a station/agency. Station 9's Fire Chief sent communication questioning the decision to limit the programming of the RSMH-E talk group from some portable radios and requesting this talk group be programmed into numerous portable radios for Station 9 leadership. Ongoing- While cutover to using the new radio system has occurred, it is not expected that the pace of this project to really decrease anytime soon for ESVA 9-1-1 staff. We will continue to address notable issues that need attention, working on paging/coverage issues, working to ensure our operational procedures are sounds, implementing other aspects of the ESVARRS system, and assisting with other needs. Much effort continues related to operation procedures for ESVARRS. Numerous training classes were held in March for ESVA 9-1-1 staff. **Change Orders**: There are two change orders: Tower Work at EV-VSP – ORION Control Station and Spare TX/RX Antenna for Belle Haven Site. It is expected to talk with Northampton County Finance Director for an additional budget category for ESVARRS.

A motion to approve the Director's report was made by made by Vice-Chairman AJ Ferebee with a second from Commissioner Adam Zieger. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

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ACTION ITEMS:

A. VDEM – Resiliency Grant – FY27 – Submission

VDEM is offering a grant opportunity related to resiliency efforts. As noted in the grant guidelines, to focus on maintaining continuous, effective 9-1-1 operations with the evolving challenges and future demands overall related to PSAP readiness, cybersecurity, and the ability to evolve with changing technological and service expectations. It is understood items to be funded are broad natured. Applications are due to VDEM by April 30th, 2026 at 1700 hours. To date, little effort has been devoted to this grant opportunity however, potential uses of funds may include the following: staffing needs of the 9-1-1 center, funding regular budget costs in FY27/FY28 freeing local funds for other 9-11 Commission needs, phone/radio translations and other applications, additional back-up efforts for the 9-1-1 Center, cybersecurity protection efforts for the 9-1-Center, facility needs, and strategic planning efforts. Approval for the 9-1-1 Commission to apply for the grant was requested, with the specifics of items requested in the grant application provided at a future meeting. Grant amendments can be permitted, with approval from VDEM.

A motion to approve this action item was made by made by Commissioner Greg DeYoung with a second from Vice-Chairman AJ Ferebee. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

B. 2025 Annual Report – ESVA 9-1-1 Commission – Approval

The 2025 Annual Report was offered for approval by the ESVA 9-1-1 Commission. It was advised that there was a change made from the packets that were previously emailed out: the report had Matt Spuck instead of Charlie Kolakowski. The change was made for the final version to be approved.

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

C. Resolution – NPSTW 2026 – Approval

The Resolution of Appreciation for National Telecommunicator's Week 2026 was presented for approval.

A motion to approve this action item was made by 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 reported that aside from his routine items of reviewing correspondence and emails, reviewing radio documentation log, updating the ESVA 9-1-1 website, and preparing for an attending the Commission Meetings, he was also involved in ESVARRS items. He continues to attend numerous meetings, devote time and effort towards Dragon Force, GPS programming, checklists, and other items.

A motion to accept the 9-1-1 Consultant's report was made by Vice-Chairman AJ Ferebee with a second from Commissioner Adam Zieger. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Chairman McCready expressed his thanks to the Board of Supervisors and County Administrators for their support to this 9-1-1 Commission.

OTHER BUSINESS:

There were no other business items at this meeting.

PAYABLES:

A motion to pay the bills was made by Commissioner Adam Zieger with a second from Commissioner Greg DeYoung. 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 Kenny Reese. There were no oppositions and the meeting was adjourned by at 18:35.

Respectfully Submitted,

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