



Minutes of the Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1  
October Commission Meeting  
Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 @ 1730 hours  
Accomack EOC - Melfa

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Scott Chandler, *ESVA 9-1-1 Consultant*  
Jeff Flournoy, *ESVA 9-1-1 Director*  
Krista Kilmon, *ESVA 9-1-1 Deputy Director*  
Katie Brewster, *ESVA 9-1-1 Supervisor/ Recording Secretary*

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** None

**REMOTE PARTICIPATION:** Donnie Kellam, *Chairman, Community Fire Company*, participated remotely from the Parksley, VA area due to medical reasons.

**OTHERS ABSENT:** None

**CALL TO ORDER:** Vice-Chairman Bill McCready called the meeting to order at 17:32.

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Vice-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 September 2024 meeting was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Ben Byrd. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.*

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

There was no consent agenda items at this meeting.

**BUDGET REPORT:**

Director Flournoy advised that there are three pieces to the budget report. **Final FY24:** The Wireless Surcharge came in over \$7,000 over budget, the Communications Tax for both counties came in a little higher than budgeted and Chincoteague came in a little lower. On the expenditure side, 95% of the Operations budget has been spent and 102% of the Other budget has been spent, totaling 97%. **FY25:** There are no concerns or anomalies on the revenue side. Four months of the Wireless Surcharge has come in. We are still waiting on Northampton County's contributions to come in and a request was made to Accomack County for the second quarter. On the expenditure side, 38% of the Capital budget, 21% of the Operations budget, and 40% of the Other budget has been spent, totaling 26%. **Current Fund Balances:** We are still in a pretty good place with the fund balance report. It was questioned if an estimate was received for the updated costs toward the ESVARRS project timeline being extended to which it was answered that it is currently a work in progress.

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

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Director Flournoy went on to provide his report. **Meetings/Other:** On 10/1/2024, a meeting was had with NCSO leadership, NCEMS leadership, Nassawadox Rehab, as well as Deputy Director Kilmon and Director Flournoy to discuss changes on how to handle Mental Health Incidents that occur at the facility. On 10/8/2024, there was a meeting with Ron Wolff (ES Rail Foundation) on location planning for potential emergencies that may happen on the trail. On 10/21/2024, personnel from the Norfolk 9-1-1 Center come to ESVA 9-1-1 to learn more about What3Words so they could take it back to their center. On 10/28/2024, Deputy Director Kilmon and CO Scarborough assisted ACSO by covering their dispatch while they had other commitments. **Staffing/Personnel:** Currently, all eleven F/T CO positions are filled, with one in training, however Niasia Scarborough is resigning from F/T and transitioning to P/T effective 11/3/2024. We currently have four P/T CO's, with one in training. We will likely start advertising and recruiting beginning next week to fill the F/T opening. **Facility Related:** ACPW has been busy and doing a good job of getting some projects done, such as the repaving of the parking lots, and the installation of the new generator. **I.T. Related:** There has been continued frequent need for I.T. assistance from Northampton County from several employees on several separate instances. **Annual Training:** The FOIA officers for ESVA 9-1-1 recently completed the required annual FOIA refresher training. All ESVA 9-1-1 staff are currently completing the annual I.T. Security refresher training. **Budget Related:** Today, Accomack County sent out their Capital budget requests for FY26 and it's expected the Operations budget request would likely come in the next month.



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**RADIO INFRASTRUCTURE:**

**Radio Trouble-Shoot:** ACI was dispatched for possible performance issues with Channel 15, after concerns from Station 3 leadership. Ultimately, it checked out okay. MCA was dispatched to repair one of the failed radio/dispatch console positions and an issue with the back-up radio/dispatch console, both of which are now repaired. **Generator Related:** The bi-annual service of the Cape Charles generator was completed and it's reminded that this generator will be a part of the ESVARRS project and will be moved to the Eastville Water Tower site. On 9/30/2024, a failure of the Eastville site generator was noted and repaired on 10/2/2024.

**OTHER:**

Deputy Director Kilmon went on to provide her report. **VDEM Grant:** As of today, the purchase order has been submitted to order the NOMAD product and we are awaiting the next steps in the process. **New Hires:** There are still two new hires that are completing OTJ training: the F/T trainee is scheduled to be released at the start of the next calendar and there is no timeline for when the P/T employee will be released due to her F/T job. Tonya Blake has been released and is in her F/T position. **Server Replacements:** The quotes and purchase orders have been sent in for the two new servers that we are having replaced with Central Square, so that project should start moving shortly. **Career Development:** Supervisors Hodgson and Brewster completed the AHA CPR Instructor course, offered by Northampton County, to enter into the Career Development Program. The next step is for them to teach a class while being monitored to complete their certification, giving ESVA 9-1-1 three CPR Instructors.

Director Flournoy went on to provide an update on the ESVARRS project. **Coverage Testing:** Initial coverage testing on land started on 9/16/2024, however was temporarily paused as L3 Harris investigated some potential issues. On 10/4/2024, coverage testing resumed, however was stopped around mid-day due to alarms showing system issues. A message was sent to the ESVA 9-1-1 Commission later that day to communicate the stop in testing and the fact that testing this fall would be unable to continue and would be pushed to spring of next year. On 10/16/2024, L3 Harris provided a written plan of action to investigate coverage and system performance. The plan includes processes designed to identify potential issues as well as potential remediation processes. The timeline shows a tentative date of 11/21/2024 as a presentation of the next steps to get the system resolved, leading towards performance as expected and guaranteed. Outreach has been provided to the leadership of the numerous entities/agencies that are going to be a part of the ESVARRS system, making them aware that the coverage testing was not completed and that the cutover is no longer going to be February 2025. An updated timeline from L3 Harris has been requested, but ultimately, they have to troubleshoot what needs to be corrected first. Generally, coverage testing should hopefully restart early/mid spring next year, and potential cutover in later in the spring. Other aspects of the project will continue, which includes subscriber installations, that are going to be deferred some. There is an installation planning meeting scheduled for 11/4/2024 to get ready for installations. Other stuff such as backhaul completion, the microwave system, and installation of dispatch/radio consoles will also continue. It was discussed that the new equipment being installed would replace the current equipment as the current radio system will work on the new equipment, with the exception of NCPS. It was also mentioned that dispatcher/new console training is not scheduled for any time soon, but for much closer to cutover. **Funding Related:** Seven drawdown requests have been done; we have spent about \$2.6million, leaving about \$5.6 million remaining. Today, the Director of Finance for



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Northampton submitted all required reporting to DOJ/COPS, with the next report being due 10/30/2024. It has been communicated to our DOJ/COPS representative that we will need another grant extension and they directed to wait until the date gets closer, so it will be requested in early 2025. Director Flournoy stated he has been working with Accomack County to complete requirements for using the USDA Grant towards ESVARRS for dispatch consoles. **Microwave/Connectivity System:** The RRSM has been asked to continue spending time on additional network connectivity to connect the 9-1-1 Center to Accomack to provide more redundancy. He is working on getting quotes and then approval to move forward on this may be an action item at the next meeting. **Sites-Work/Plans:** At Craddockville, the installation of a microwave antenna remains. At Eastville VSP, work continues on the installation of a microwave dish. At Accomack VSP, there's not a lot to complete aside from punch-list items. At Chincoteague PW, installation of a microwave antenna remains. At Mappsville, a lot of microwave work remains. At Eastville Water Tower, a lot of work has been going on, which includes: ANEC has done their work to get power there, a cabinet has been installed, they are in the process of finishing the fiber installation, and the installation of a microwave dish on top of the tower. At the ACSO, a cabinet and microwave dish have been installed and effort remains related to the aerial/buried connectivity. At the CPD building, the damaged microwave dish will need to be replaced. At the dispatch centers, work has been dedicated to the installation of the dispatch consoles. **Ongoing Costs:** As expected, ongoing costs associated with the ESVARRS project continue ahead of cutover to the new system. Funds are expected to come from the ESVA 9-1-1 fund balance, as well as the future costs such as electricity at the Eastville Water Tower and additional ESVA fiber costs. **Interoperability:** Within the last few weeks Virginia Beach and L3 Harris recently signed the authorization to include the Virginia Beach Hospital talk groups and the ORION talk groups. **Logging Recorder:** Although there is a new logging recorder as a part of this project to record radio, the dispatch centers will still need to maintain tier existing logging recorders for any telephone or other recording needs. **ESVBA:** \$1,700 will be spent for ESVBA to provide and install a separate hand-off at the new Chincoteague PW Shelter. **Subscriber Radios:** The installation of radios was expected to start in November but will now not start until December/January. The general plan is that for Fire and EMS installations, they will come to the station and install there. The plan for Law Enforcement agencies is that there will be three locations: Station 14, Station 8, and Station 3. **Current Timelines:** It is no longer cutover/system use in February 2025 as it will be deferred until after successful testing, hopefully in the spring. The immediate project timeline is that in October/November, L3Harris will complete their trouble-shooting efforts and December-March, initiation of vehicle/agency subscriber installations. Efforts continue on other aspects of the ESVARRS project. Consultant Chandler advised that school system installs would likely happen in summer 2025. It was stated that the initial signed contract was for the system work to be completed by May 2025. It was requested to provide a timeline of completion dates, deadline, key dates, etc. It is noted that we are awaiting on L3 Harris to provide an updated timeline as well.

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



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**ACTION ITEMS:**

**A. Salary Schedule/Adjustments (From July 2024)**

At the September 2024 9-1-1 Commission Meeting, it was directed to provide the action item information/data related to salary/compensation that were recommended at the July 2024 9-1-1 Commission Meeting. Director Flournoy provided this information and then reviewed it again for the Commission. As a reminder, the following is what was included: action item memo providing an overview of the recommendations, a spreadsheet with 9-1-1 Commission requested information/data, and two pages from the JER HR Group report from the January 2024 9-1-1 Commission Meeting. An additional piece was also included: an overview noting the training/certifications typical for a 9-1-1 CO, formulated by Deputy Director Kilmon. It was requested that these three items be addressed individually rather than having all three in one action.

**A-1: Implement the provided FY25 salary schedule, provided by JER HR Group**

When the JER HR Group did a compensation study for our exempt positions, they also included some work toward recommending a new salary study for our other staff. The fundamental purpose is to increase our starting salary about \$2,000. No additional money is requested as it was planned for in the budget.

After the motion and second, discussion was initiated by Commissioner Mike Mason. He acknowledged the statements made by the public hearing at the last Commission Meeting on the Commission not being supportive of 9-1-1 Staff compensation and benefit increases and then advised that there have been 14 motions to approve compensation increases, career development benefits, and general employee benefits since December 2022. He also stated that he understands that employee compensation is one of the most pressing issues that local governments and departments are facing, how the take home pay for public servants is not keeping up in pace with inflation, and that this issue is not unique to the employees of the ESVA 9-1-1 Center. He acknowledged that the hardships and stories shared at the last Commission Meeting are real, but also that they are no different than the hardships of other local government agencies and departments. Commissioner Mike Mason stated that his vote tonight will continue to reinforce the message that he believes was made clear by the Board of Supervisors through the passage of the FY25 budget, a message of fairness and equity. Employees of the 9-1-1 Commission and Accomack County have received the same percentage general salary increases over the last two years and both implementing the results of one comp/class study. He then stated that he will not support any further actions that elevate one group over the other. Commissioner Charles Kolakowski stated that Northampton County is going through a very similar process of looking at compensation of all employees, that the Board has been very supportive of county employees, and that the Commission has been very supportive of the Commission employees. He then stated he also would not be able to support any changes at this point while he may have to go back to his employees of Northampton County and tell them that he's not sure what they will be able to get, if anything, as far as increases at this time. It was noted that the Commission did not ask JER HR to conduct a salary study for all Commission employees, they volunteered the recommendation information when doing a compensation/classification study on the two positions who were exempt from the Baker-Tilly study. Director Flournoy was questioned why he included the volunteered information rather than just what was requested, to which he responded that it made sense to include it as we are the lowest paying dispatch center of the folks we surveyed and the society and market stated what we should be getting paid, especially since we can afford it and it would help recruitment and retention. He acknowledged that he's heard and understands that this issue does not only fall in the 9-1-1





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Center, but the Commission hired him to advocate for the 9-1-1 Commission. Commissioner Jeff Parks added that the reality of the situation is that we have this data, it has been presented publicly, so the question is what to do with it as there seems to be a legitimate need although it does cause some issues compared across the board. He then stated that based on the comments as it is only impacting a small group of people, the he is in favor of this item as it is a vital part of our community and emergency response.

*A motion to approve this action sub-item was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Greg DeYoung. There were oppositions and the motion was carried after a seven to four vote.*

**A-2: Implement salary compression management**

This is to address compression, caused by action item A-1. The philosophy was from the Baker-Tilly study that 0.5% be added for each year in your current position. This was also included in the budget for this year, without asking for any additional funds. Chairman Kellam reiterated that we currently are in a steady place of people leaving, off and on each year and that the goal is to keep employees. It was noted by Commissioner Bobby Taylor that retention is an issue not specific to the 9-1-1 Commission, as they are having the same issue, and that it is understood. Commissioner Greg DeYoung stated that he views it as an experience increase, which does address compression, versus a 0.5% across the board, and that it is a good retention tool. It was then questioned why the Director left himself out of the non-exempt position in the calculations to which it was answered that it was a direction to include everyone who is not under a contract, which he is. After the motion was carried, Director Flournoy advised he would like to work with the Northampton County Finance and Payroll on the most appropriate time to implement this.

*A motion to approve this action sub-item was made by Commissioner Donald Hart with a second from Commissioner Greg DeYoung. There were oppositions and the motion was carried after a seven to four vote.*

**A-3: Authorization to engage a firm for professional salary/compensation study**

Director Flournoy advised that the request is to engage a firm to conduct a full salary/compensation study as it had been three years since one was requested. Historically, every five years is what has been used however, society is ever-changing and it seemed that three years seemed more appropriate. It was stated that about \$7,500 was planned to be budgeted for this. Commissioner Mike Mason stated that he believed an ad-hoc committee should be created to explore compensation in general, with a second from Commissioner Jeff Parks. Director Flournoy advised that if approved, the goal would be to have a request for the next budget cycle. He then stated that he would be okay to withdraw this recommendation, with the idea of devoting local committee resources towards evaluating. Commissioner Greg DeYoung stated that he would not be able to support this item either for several reasons, one being that although it wasn't requested, the recent salary study did compare the proposed new pay ring to the employees' current salaries. He then advised he is in support of creating the ad-hoc committee. Commissioner Donald Hart then asked if there was any objection to the Personnel Committee being the ad-hoc Committee. There were no oppositions, however it was suggested to be able to bring in other appropriate personnel to provide staff support.

A motion was made to set up the ad-hoc committee with the Personnel Committee, as long as there's representation from Accomack and Northampton County on it by Commissioner Donald Hart.



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*A motion to approve this action sub-item was not made, as the recommendation was withdrawn. A motion to approve the ad-hoc committee was made by Commissioner Donold Hart with a second from Commissioner Jeff Parks. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.*

**B. December Staff Holiday – Additional**

Authorization to make Christmas Eve (December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024) an additional holiday was requested.

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

**C. Consider Changes – November and December Meeting Dates**

The November meeting is currently scheduled for November 28<sup>th</sup> (Thanksgiving) and the December meeting is currently scheduled for December 26<sup>th</sup> (the day after Christmas). Director Flournoy suggested to combine the meetings, using the date of December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The location should be in Northampton, but that will be verified.

*A motion to approve this action item was made by Commissioner AJ Ferebee 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, he has also been involved in the ESVARRS meetings.

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

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

Vice-Chairman McCready discussed the upcoming Personnel Committee meeting. The location and date will be later determined.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Donald Hart suggested that the 9-1-1 Commission meet at the ESVA 9-1-1 Center at least once or twice a year as employees who participated in the public hearing made a good point at the last meeting about the Commissioners not coming into the center anymore. The schedule will later be determined.

*A motion to approve this request 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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**PAYABLES:**

*A motion to pay the bills was made by Chairman Donnie Kellam with a second from Commissioner Donald Hart. There were no oppositions and the motion was carried.*

**ADJOURNMENT:**

*Chairman Donnie Kellam made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second from Commissioner Bobby Taylor. There were no oppositions and the meeting was adjourned by Vice-Chairman Bil McCready at 18:50.*

Respectfully Submitted,

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