City of Evanston Emergency Telephone System Board  
Emergency 911 Committee Meeting  
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center  
Thursday, October 22, 2009  
7:00 p.m.

Board Members Present:
David Blatt, M.D., Community Representative  
9th Ward Alderman Coleen Burrus  
Police Chief Richard Eddington  
7th Ward Alderman Jane Grover  
Perry Polinski, Communications Coordinator

Staff Present:
Steven Drazner, Assistant Finance Director  
Deputy Fire Chief Samuel Hunter  
Curt Kuempel, Assistant Communications Coordinator  
Deputy Police Chief Barbara Wiedlin, Support Services Division  
Delphyne Woods, Recording Secretary

Presiding Officer:
Alderman Jane Grover, Committee Chair

Board MembersAbsent:
Fire Chief Alan Berkowsky  
Division Fire Chief Thomas Janetske, Director of Operations, Office of Emergency Preparedness

Summary of Action. Alderman Grover calls the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Approval of minutes. Alderman Grover asks for any corrections or changes to the September 24, 2009, Emergency 911 Committee meeting minutes. There being none, the minutes are approved.

2. Emergency Telephone System FY 2010-2011 Proposed Budget Review (Verbal report with spreadsheets, Mr. Polinski and Mr. Drazner). Mr. Polinski provides revised budget spreadsheets including two changes: 1) The estimate of service agreement renewal for the fire alarm system was increased since the operating panel was
expanded during wing renovations at Police Headquarters. The previously budgeted $1,000.00 was increased $1,100.00 to $2,600.00, bringing total expenditures for “Service Agreements and Contracts” from $161,200.00 to $162,300.00. 2) “Transfers to Other Funds” was reduced from $26,395.00 to $17,455.00. Mr. Drazner explains that the figure represents three amounts: Liability Insurance ($6,900.00), Worker’s Compensation ($9,600.00), and Administrative Expense related to the insurance fund ($1,000.00).

Alderman Burrus asks why Health Insurance expense went down, and IMRF payments increased substantially. Mr. Polinski indicates the number of people covered by insurance decreased from five to four (at the rate of $11,700.00 per person), and the rate of IMRF payments increased from 8.5% to 12%.

Alderman Burrus moves to approve the 2010 Budget, Dr. Blatt seconds, so moved.

3. **Digital Voice Logger Upgrade** (Memorandum and verbal report provided by Deputy Chief Wiedlin and Mr. Polinski). Mr. Polinski presented a proposal to upgrade the present Dictaphone Freedom digital voice logger (DVL) system, technical support for which ceases on March 1, 2010.

Dictaphone had been acquired by NICE Systems, Inc., which provides the next generation of internet protocol (IP) based digital voice logging equipment, the Mirra IV System. The City will deal through Word Systems, Inc. (WSI), the NICE authorized service provider in our area.

Mirra IV captures both analog and digital phone system messages, and is capable of allowing other authorized remote access sites to make their own audio inquiries rather than filtering all requests through 911 Communications Bureau personnel. Telecommunicators also have more efficient access from their individual work stations to recall and replay radio and telephone conversations, allowing them unlimited review of audio to ensure accurate information before formulating a response to calls. Also, Mirra IV can be remotely monitored by NICE, so system alarms and servicing issues are immediately forwarded to NICE’s 24 hour/365 day service center without a service request and down time. Thus, Mirra IV provides the Dictaphone Freedom DVL system’s recording capability plus more advanced applications and storage options.

The total cost, including five years technical support, is $31,346.00, which is under the planned budgeted amount of $35,000.00.
Additionally, WSI has agreed to relocate the current Dictaphone Freedom DVL system free of charge to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at 2020 Asbury Avenue, including two years free support service. The EOC is where emergency telecommunication services would relocate should the 911 Center become inoperable. This provides a major improvement to emergency service backup with no additional expense incurred.

Dr. Blatt asks for clarification about Mirra IV’s ability to immediately replay a distressed caller’s conversation should it be unintelligible at first hearing, which is a significant feature. He also asks how long the log of calls is maintained. Presently it is 60 days, with Mirra IV it increases to 90 days. Also, retrieved calls can be searched and edited which improves not only effective response to 911 calls, but compliance with Court subpoenas and FOIA requests for 911 Center records. Dr. Blatt asks if there is a charge for providing responses to Court subpoenas and FOIA requests. Yes, currently FOIA request responses are chargeable, but Court subpoena responses are not. In January 2010, the City no longer will be able to charge for FOIA request responses.

Dr. Blatt moves that the Board approve purchasing the new Mirra IV digital voice logger system, Alderman Grover seconds, so moved.

4. **Other Business.** Alderman Burrus asks if Vonage cell phone service provides access to 911. Mr. Polinski says that it does, the calls go through, but subscriber location on file with Vonage may be inaccurate. The onus of keeping one’s location updated is on the subscriber. Thus, if a Vonage subscriber travels around and fails to continuously inform Vonage of his whereabouts, misinformation can easily be transmitted in an emergency.

Mr. Polinski presents a monthly meeting schedule for 2010. Alderman Burrus proposes a “working calendar” planned around anticipated events instead of regular monthly meetings in order to decrease their number. Scheduling so many monthly meetings becomes a “scheduling nightmare.” Dr. Blatt suggests a regular bi-monthly schedule every fourth Thursday staring in January, with special meetings called in the event of emergencies. Consensus. Alderman Burrus additionally moves that the Board meet at 5:30 p.m. rather than 7:00 p.m. starting January 21, 2010. Dr. Blatt seconds, so moved.

Mr. Polinski announces that Evanston 911 Telecommunicator Lynn Fishman was nominated by Mr. Kuempel for the *Illinois APCO Telecommunicator of the Year Award* and
she won. Mr. Kuempel related a “phenomenal year” for Lynn as well as the entire 911 tactical team. Three incidents were presented including:

A rough water rescue of a lady and three men 2 and ½ miles out in Lake Michigan with no life jackets. The lady called 911 on her cell phone but could provide no idea where they were. Lynn coordinated Chicago and Evanston Fire Departments to search and locate them, organizing their communication to allow for the diminishing cell phone capability of the lady in the water. All were successfully rescued.

Also, an Officer involved shooting by an armed and distraught individual was handled from the initial call from the individual’s mother received by Lynn. She coordinated Police safe access into the house and interception of the individual with no loss of life or further injury.

Finally, while working alone on a roof in North Evanston, a roofer fell several stories to the ground and was disabled with broken bones. He was able to call 911 on his cell phone, but could not provide the building address, only the general street location. Lynn coordinated a search by Police and Fire of a twenty block area. By using the Fire rig sirens and asking via cell phone if the man could hear them, they were able to locate him.

Lynn has been serenely on the job for nearly twenty years, “a true blue career dispatcher.” Congratulations!

Mr. Polinski asks if it is the Members’ consensus to move Board meetings back to the Aldermanic Library, yes it is.

5. **Adjournment.** Alderman Burrus moves to adjourn, Dr. Blatt seconds, so moved. The meeting adjourns at 7:55 p.m.