City of Evanston Emergency Telephone System Board
Emergency 911 Committee Meeting
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center
Thursday, September 24, 2009
7:00 p.m.

Board Members Present:
  David Blatt, M.D., Community Representative
  9th Ward Alderman Coleen Burrus
  7th Ward Alderman Jane Grover
  Division Fire Chief Thomas Janetske, Director of Operations, Office of Emergency Preparedness
  Mr. Perry Polinski, Communications Coordinator

Board Member Absent:
  Fire Chief Alan Berkowsky
  Police Chief Richard Eddington

Staff Present:
  Mr. Steven Drazner, Assistant Finance Director
  Deputy Police Chief Barbara Wiedlin, Support Services Division
  Delphyne Woods, Recording Secretary

Presiding Officer:
  Alderman Jane Grover, Committee Chair

Summary of Action. Alderman Grover calls the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Approval of minutes. Alderman Burrus moves to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2009, Emergency 911 Committee meeting, Dr. Blatt seconds, so moved.

2. Emergency Telephone System FY 10-11 Proposed Budget Review (verbal, Mr. Polinski and Mr. Drazner). Mr. Polinski provides budget entry system spreadsheets and begins discussion of the first group of three items: landline surcharge revenue, wireless surcharge revenue, and interest income.

   Alderman Burrus inquires about the precipitous drop in interest income from $30,849 in 2008-2009 to the projected figure of $5,000 in 2009-2010. Mr. Drazner indicates
this decrease is due to a sharp drop in interest payments, with the current rate being .25%, down from 2.5% to 3% in the recent past. Alderman Burrus requests that, in the future, financial reports be accompanied by clear explanations rather than be presented as just a “jumble of numbers.”

Mr. Polinski remarks that, although the number of wireless 911 calls continues to inch up each year, the waning number of landline 911 calls seems to have plateaued and is no longer decreasing as rapidly as previously.

Mr. Polinski then moves to the second group of twelve budget line items having to do with salaries and various payroll deduction payments.

Alderman Burrus asks for a list of all special events requiring extra Police and Fire personnel including its date, the name of the person(s) working overtime for that event, and the number of extra hours worked. She is concerned about people being put on special event duty when it is not strictly necessary. “We’ve always done it this way” is not a valid rationale. “History means nothing to me without data.”

Division Chief Janetske explains that the history of 911 calls made on the occasion of each special event is the best criterion for planning ahead. Whether it is called “history” or “data points,” it all stems from twenty-five years experience. Detailed records of the number of 911 calls received, and Police and Fire personnel assigned to each year’s special events can be provided for inspection.

Mr. Polinski points out that those individuals working overtime on special events very often are volunteers giving up their days off in order to direct traffic, control crowds, or man the 911 Telecommunications Center.

Dr. Blatt maintains that one must err towards caution should an event “go bad,” as public safety must be maintained. Whether or not there is a fire call on a particular night, there still must be Fire personnel present at the Fire Station. The same principle applies to ensure special events are uneventful.

Mr. Polinski moves to the third group of fourteen line items including building maintenance, mobile equipment service agreements, training and travel, membership dues, books, clothing, office machines, and furniture.

Deputy Chief Wiedlin indicates that once the new system is instituted allowing Police Officers to write field reports online from their squad cars, telecommunication equipment maintenance bills will skyrocket.
Mr. Drazner explains the new account, “Transfer to General Fund,” transferring money to the City’s insurance fund for general liability and worker’s compensation claims with respect to 911 Telecommunications Center employees.

Mr. Polinski moves to the fourth item, “Furniture and Fixtures,” in conjunction with the Capital Replacement Schedule/Capital Improvement Plan. Much of the furniture and equipment presently in the Center dates from its construction in 1993-1994 and is in need of upgrade or replacement. Over the past two to three years these items have been included in the budget. It saves labor costs to have all the projects done at the same time. These projects include vacating the Center and relocating operations, HVAC reinstallation, computer radio software and digital voice logger upgrades, headset replacement, new furniture and cabinet replacement.

Dr. Blatt asked about how long the Center refurbishment would take and when it is expected to take place. Mr. Polinski estimates about two to three weeks’ duration and some time in 2010.

Division Chief Janetske reports that he just met with the EOC, and Facilities Management has finished installation of the new uninterruptible power supply, new CAD6 cabling, and other upgrades in preparation for system testing and migration.

Mr. Polinski says these upgrades make the system IP-based which interfaces with VOIP telephone service and is better preparation for future technology. It provides many possible options from which to choose.

Alderman Grover asks if outmoded CPUs, discarded equipment and furniture can be donated to the EOC training center. Division Chief Janetske says yes, he has been working on floor plans with Facilities Management to reuse some of this material.

Deputy Chief Wiedlin mentions the need for a new server for Navaline data input used by squad car mobile data browsers, dispatch, the front desk, and records. The present server just does not have the necessary capacity. Mr. Polinski says the specifications of present excess equipment is being checked out to determine if it can be pressed into use. He adds that expenditures for digital voice logger and radio software upgrades are going through the approval process for the current fiscal year.

Mr. Polinski attributes an operating increase of 11.7% to increases in regular pay, health insurance, service agreements and contracts, telecommunication carrier line and wireless charges.
Mr. Drazner presents the financial summary. With respect to projected 911 call surcharge revenue, he works on the assumption of a 2% revenue decrease in landline calls for each year 2010-2015 offset by corresponding 2% increases in wireless calls. This is significant inasmuch landline calls garner $1.50 each, while wireless calls garner 58¢.

Mr. Polinski explains that ongoing antennae and uninterrupted power supply equipment replacement is generally spread out over five year periods. Some of this vital equipment dates from 1993-1994 and, although routinely maintained, they are being proactively replaced.

Deputy Chief Wiedlin asks about the fence to be installed around the base of the new Center antenna pole. Mr. Polinski says it is being arranged through Facilities Management, coming out of the contingency or building maintenance service funds during the current fiscal year.

Alderman Grover asks about the Board’s procedure for approving the E911 budget. Mr. Polinski says the Board’s approval vote will be placed on the agenda for the October 22nd meeting. Mr. Drazner affirms that this Board’s review, adjustment, and approval finalizes the E911 budget.

3. **Other Business.** Alderman Grover announced that she will continue to Chair the E911 Board through December, 2009. She will then hand the reins over to Alderman Burrus, who will assume the Chair in January, 2010.

    Mr. Polinski will present the 2010 E911 Board meeting schedule at the October meeting. Generally it is set for every fourth Thursday in the Aldermanic Library.

    Mr. Polinski reports that the Illinois Premise Alert Program has been signed by Governor Quinn and is enacted. It has to do with gathering information on individuals in the community with disabilities and/or special medical needs, plus Police Officer safety information, and inputting it into the CAD system. Evanston has been doing this for years, the difference now being that the City must publicize that capability through the Health Department, on the website, *Highlights*, etc.

4. **Adjournment.** Alderman Burrus moves to adjourn, seconded by Dr. Blatt, so moved. The meeting adjourns at 8:00 p.m.

PP: djw