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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

9-1-1 MANAGEMENT BOARD

September 26, 2023

A regular meeting of the 9-1-1 Management Board was held in Meeting Room 1-A, Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, at 9:35 A.M. Electronic participation was permitted for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: G. O'Blenes, Durham Regional Police (Chair)
B. Garrod, Durham Regional Council
M. Simpson, Director of Risk Management, Economic Studies and Procurement, Durham Region
J. Wichman, Communications/9-1-1 Technical Manager*
*** denotes members of the Committee participating electronically**

Absent: T. Cheseboro, Region of Durham Paramedic Services
L. Kellett, Oshawa Central Ambulance Communications Centre, Ministry of Health – Emergency Health Program Management & Delivery Branch
M. Berney, Scugog Fire & Emergency Services

Staff

Present: A. Chung, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
T. Fetter, Director, Business Services, Durham Regional Police Service
N. Prasad, Assistant Secretary to Council, Legislative Services Division – Corporate Services Department
V. Walker, Committee Clerk, Legislative Services Division – Corporate Services Department

G. O'Blenes announced that there has been a change in Lisa Kellett's position. He advised that Wayne Spindler is the new representative for the Oshawa Central Ambulance Communications Centre and will be officially introduced at the November 28th meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Garrod, Seconded by M. Simpson,
(8) That the minutes of the 9-1-1 Management Board meeting held on June 27, 2023, be adopted.

CARRIED

4. 9-1-1 Call Statistics

J. Wichman provided the statistics for calls transferred January to August 2023. He advised there was a slight increase of approximately 7% with some anomalies in May and June where the numbers peaked. He advised that this was due to the Android SOS software feature which caused a significant jump in wireless hang up calls.

Discussion ensued with regards to whether the number of calls can be broken down by each municipality.

5. DRPS Update re: 9-1-1 System

A copy of the document titled, "Durham Region 9-1-1 System Complaints Report" dated September 26, 2023 was provided to Committee members in advance of the meeting.

J. Wichman advised that there was an inquiry from Bell 9-1-1 on a transfer to Ajax/Pickering Fire from a VoIP caller. He advised that the resident called 911 and asked for Ajax fire and four attempts were made to transfer the call. He stated that after an investigation of the audio and call data, it was found that there was bandwidth issues with the home internet.

J. Wichman advised that another complaint was made with regards to a 9-1-1 call that was received and it was noted that there was no proper address for the cell tower location. He advised that Bell 9-1-1 identified the tower owner as Rogers, who was notified to correct the issue.

Discussion ensued with regards to the need for education with respect to the VoIP system.

6. Regional Municipality of Durham 9-1-1 Policy and Procedure Manual – "Answering Procedure"

A copy of the 2020 9-1-1 Policy and Procedure Manual was provided to committee members in advance of the meeting.

Discussion ensued with regards to the Answering Procedure highlighted on page 6 of the Manual. G. O'Blenes stated that the wording used has sparked conversation surrounding the direction and expectations within the answering call procedure. He stated that the wording is very direct and does provide clear expectation to the people answering the 911 calls as they need to ensure that the lines aren't tied up and that the calls are answered in a timely fashion for all partners. He stated that the wording in the Answering Procedure says to answer the call with a specific "do you require police, fire, ambulance" statement and then staff is to "determine the agency required". He stated that there has to be more emphasis on determining the agency required before going to the next steps that state "do not question further, conference immediately and confirm connection" and then "clear line

disconnect". He further stated that this needs clarification on the expectations of the Board as it says that they cannot ask more questions, that the line must be cleared, and then disconnected. If the call is vague or little information is provided, the Answering Procedure says "clear line – disconnect" which can be taken too literally and it was suggested that maybe it should be changed to say "clear line, disconnect once it has been determined that police are no longer required".

Detailed discussion ensued with regards to the current wording used in the Answering Procedure of the Manual; the reasoning behind the use of the wording in past; whether the call takers are asking clarifying questions; and whether statistics are available on call taking time.

It was the consensus of the committee to allow the provisions of pages 9 and 13 in the Policy Manual to take priority over the flow chart on page 6 as a pilot and for DRPS to monitor the impact on call taking time and report back at the November meeting along with a recommendation to permanently change the Policy Manual.

7. Update on Wireless SOS Android Issue

A copy of correspondence from the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) dated July 19, 2023 and correspondence from Google LLC dated August 3, 2023 were provided to committee members in advance of the meeting.

J. Wichman stated that the software update that was released by Android affected all of Canada, North America and the United Kingdom. He advised that the update enabled new emergency SOS features which were turned on without notifying users resulting in a sharp increase in cell phone abandons when their phones accidentally called 9-1-1.

J. Wichman advised that a letter was sent to the CRTC through their Emergency Services Working Group as well as statistics collected from other PSAPs. The CRTC then sent a letter to Google who is the software manufacturer of Android who responded favourably and did a reverse on the software. He also advised that he is currently contacting the PSAPs that provided the data that was sent to the CRTC and will be forwarding the updated data to provide to the Emergency Services Working Group.

Other Departments - Comments/Concerns

a) Comments/Concerns – Regional Council

Councillor Garrod thanked DRPS staff for their hard work.

b) Comments/Concerns – Durham Police

J. Wichman stated that Toronto Fire is positioning to be the first PSAP on the NextGen 911 network. He stated that they have been working with Bell 911 to get any identified issues rectified as well as their municipal agreement and multiple codecs and technologies. He advised that Durham has the same system and vendors and that Toronto is paving the way for Durham.

c) Comments/Concerns – Fire Departments

There were no comments.

d) Comments/Concerns – Oshawa Central Ambulance Communications Centre

There were no comments.

e) Comments/Concerns – Durham Finance

M. Simpson thanked DRPS for a successful grant application to fund the NextGen 911 project. She stated that the province is requiring the expenditures to be made as well as the goods and services that are going to be contracted to be provided by mid-year.

M. Simpson also advised that she will be presenting the first draft of the budget at the November meeting as it needs to be approved by the Board and subsequently submitted to Regional Council.

f) Comments/Concerns – Region of Durham Paramedic Services

There were no comments.

8. Other Business

There was no other business.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the 9-1-1 Management Board will be held on Tuesday, November 28, 2023 at the Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, in Council Chambers.

10. Adjournment

Moved by M. Simpson, Seconded by Councillor Garrod,
(9) That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 AM

G. O'Blenes, Chair

N. Prasad, Assistant Secretary to
Council