**Emergency Communications Advisory Board**

**October 12, 2023**

**Members present:** Chief Jeff Whitfield, Chief John Turner, Director Julie Stimson, Firefighter Brian Finan, CIO Mike Elpers, Chief Lem Moore, Chief Ray Hensley, Deputy Chief Josh Pavelski, and Captain Blake Mumma.

**Also, present:** Director Elora Forshee, Assistant County Manager Rusty Leeds, Deputy Director Alayna Moreno, Tom Koob (Radio Shop).

**Meeting called to order with a quorum present.**

**Advisory Board Minutes from August 17, 2023 meeting were approved, accepted, and passed.**

1. **Director’s Report – Director Forshee**
   * **CAD –** Director Forsheediscussed more updates taking place with CAD for FIRE, EMS, WPD, and Dispatch.
     1. **FIRE –** Director Forshee discussed that since the last meeting Derby Fire and Sedgwick County Fire have begun training with their staff regarding the auditing, monitoring and modifying the response plans; similar to what Wichita Fire began working on last month. Also regarding fire for Derby Fire and County Fire is the GIS data and working on the AVL routing, particularly dirt roads, speed limit changes to those roads, turnabout streets, and entry of new construction (referred to as “paper streets” that are built into GIS but are not physically built yet). One more item for Fire is to work on notification groups.
     2. **EMS –** Director Forshee reported that they have worked with EMS to set up notification groups and for text notifications and were working on dispatching parameters for medical calls.
     3. **WPD –** Director Forsheeworked on the setup of group notifications and refined those lists, also creating group notifications for those to help streamline them.
     4. **Emergency Management –** Notification groups were cleaned up and updated for Emergency Management.
     5. **Mapping Systems** – There was a question about whether or not there were multiple options for mapping and routing and whether there was an option to change those. That will be followed up on by Director Forshee.
   * **LSSE Grant Update –** Director Forshee updated the board that the LSSE Grant funds have been awarded for the full amount that was requested, $1.6M; still working on how the funds will be invoiced/disbursed. Specs will need to be obtained on all radios in order to get all information pulled together. Therefore, no grand total is currently available but will have it at a later time.
   * **QI Review Standards –** Chief John Turner requested this topic be discussed. Director Forshee provided a handout to all attendees of the checklist for QI, the standards are developed by the Advisory Board and the National Academy of Emergency Dispatch. Calls are pulled daily by the QI Team and typically no calls pulled are more than three days old. The calls that are reviewed are fire calls, EMS calls, law enforcement calls, and then there is a review of radio traffic. The calls are randomly pulled, the same number of calls for each employee. The process of the QI had been slowed down due to the QI personnel needed in the Communications Center but QI reviews are occurring. We are also exploring costs to bring Emergency Fire Dispatching protocols/questions into the system through Priority Dispatch.
   * **Open Line Cell Phone calls** – Director Forsheeprovided all attendees a handout with information provided by NENA (National Emergency Number  
     Association) which included updated standards about how to process open line calls. The current protocol states that a non-responsive call (open line call) must be interrogated with TTY/TDD. It continues that if there is indication of an emergency through background noise then a call for response should be entered. A non-responsive call in which there are no background noises shall be treated as a silent call. Then the only guidance for silent calls is that they need to be interrogated with TTY/TDD tones. Director Forshee wanted to review the protocols for open line cell phones, where there is no indication of an emergency, as it was decided by the Advisory Board in March of 2015 to no longer call those back due to the time that it takes and the focus on answering inbound 9-1-1 calls in a timely manner. As staffing has improved, the question is whether that protocol should be modified but answer times are still not consistently meeting the standard of 90% of calls being answered in 15 seconds. There are staff calling back on open lines, regardless of indicated emergency, but there is inconsistency so the policy needs to evaluated. The Board opted to table the discusssion for the next meeting to give members some time to think about it before voting. Some board members asked for a copy of the current policy and a draft with changes that would be made.
   * **Staffing** - Director Forshee provided information on staffing. By the end of October 2023, two current employees will be leaving. We have hired eight new employees that will begin October 23, 2023. This will still leave 12 open Dispatch positions, three Supervisor positions, and one Administrative position. At the end of October 2023, we will be 89% staffed; in 2021 we were at 64% staffed. We will begin another class with new hires on November 27th. We have six call takers promoting into dispatch so that training is also occurring. Our current pay has increased Effective 11-5-2023: Call Takers = $19.14 hourly; Dispatcher I = $21.11 hourly; and Dispatcher II = $23.27 hourly. Depending on how quickly an employee catches on it takes about 18months to move up.
2. **Off the Agenda**

* **Copy of Bylaws –** Requested by Firefighter Brian Finan - Director Forshee answered – Will email a copy.
* **Civic Ready Subscription** – Requested by Julie Stimson – Asking to get people subscribed.
* **Homeland Security Webinar** – Mentioned by Julie Stimson – Stating a webinar will be provided in October 2023 on Active Shooters and Swatting, to those interested.

1. **Adjournment** 
   * Deputy Chief Ray Hensley and Firefighter Brian Finan @ 1500.