

Emergency Response Oversight Committee

May 19, 2021 (Zoom)

Meeting Minutes

Facilitator: Jessica Verfuss, Deputy Director, Department of Emergency Response

Notetaker: Geri Lockwood, Department of Emergency Response

Virtual Attendees: Brian Robison, TC Department of Emergency Response (DOER)
John Halaychik, TC Department of Emergency Response
Greg Potter, TC Information & Technology Services (IT)
Jerry Wright, Cayuga Heights Police Department (CHPD)/Village Police Chiefs
Tom Parsons, City of Ithaca FD (IFD)
Chris Jordan, Volunteer Fire/EMS
Tim Bangs, Commercial Ambulance Service, Bangs Ambulance
Henry Granison, TC Public Safety Committee
Julie Holcomb, City of Ithaca IT (CIT)
Jenn Olin, Tompkins County Sheriff's Office
Jessica Verfuss, TC Department of Emergency Response
Geoff Dunn, TC Department of Emergency Response
Justin Vann, TC Department of Emergency Response
Dan Maas, Cornell EOM
Tom Dunn, Ithaca College
Mark Bell, Volunteer Fire/EMS
Matt Van Houten, TC District Attorney
Mark Conrad, Cornell University (CU)
Rich John, TC Legislator

Call to Order: Jessica Verfuss called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Changes to Agenda (if necessary): No changes.

Old Business:

- a. Towing Policy:
 - John Halaychik stated that a couple of possible items have come up with the policy that he is following up on. A discussion was held regarding who calls the tow companies, who's authorized to tow, etc., as there's possible confusion with the tow operators.
- b. New Call Feature:
 - It's been up and running for about a month and is running smoothly.
- c. COVID-19 – Status, enforcement:
 - Jessica announced that the EOC will be transitioning to virtual on Friday, May 21st. The positive cases in Tompkins County (TC) have been around 50 or less for a couple of weeks, and we have a fairly high vaccination rate (second highest County in NYS, outranked by Hamilton County, with less than 5,000 residents).
 - Jenn Olin reported that there have been very few violation calls.
 - Henry Granison added that there was a large gathering recently that multiple law enforcement agencies responded to.
 - John H. stated that he believes there will be a transition from private citizens calling for large gatherings without masks to more calls of disputes over no masks being worn when required to. Will these calls still be concerned Public Health calls?
 - Jenn mentioned that mask-wearing is still required in airports and that guidance has been given to the TCSO airport employees, and the airport will be adding additional signage.

- Henry asked if Walmart and Wegmans are changing their policies in regards to mandatory masks, but Jessica does not know the answer at this time.
 - Further discussion regarding TC's directive, which is currently under review.
- d. Status 2:
- John H. reported that it's been added as a recorded channel. Jenn asked if P8 and P9 are encrypted, and John H. replied that there are no encrypted channels, because NY State Police would lose some radio capabilities. Jenn requested that one channel be encrypted for the TCSO, and John H. will check with Jack Crance.
- e. Reimagining Public Safety:
- Jessica stated that a meeting was recently held with Deanna Carrithers, TC's Chief Equity and Diversity Officer, regarding the Community Justice Center. There has been approval to hire a Director and a Data Analyst, and the job descriptions will be written.
 - Tom Parsons stated that the Ithaca Fire Department (IFD) does not respond to calls unless law enforcement is on scene, and he doesn't feel the IFD needs to stage for overdoes calls when there is violence/safety issue. John H. responded that it's not protocol-driven, but safety issue. A discussion took place regarding the safety of responding crews, and further discussion will be necessary in the future.

New Business:

- a. Policy Updates:
- Jessica announced that she and Kim Moore have been working on transferring LETSS Policies to EROC, which involves minor changes to them (changing the LETSS to EROC, etc.). They're hoping to distribute them early next week for review.

Standing Sub-Committee Reports (Members):

- a. Law Enforcement (LE):
- Jenn stated that the kinks have been worked out of the new call feature, the towing policy was previously discussed, some DOER policies are being reviewed, and a demonstration from Cortland County on the Domestic Incident Reporting (DIR) module in Spillman. The initial cost for the module is \$24,000, and there are annual fees associated with it.
- b. Fire and EMS:
- Jessica stated that there is nothing to report from the last meeting, and the next meeting is scheduled for May 25th. She will send a meeting reminder.
- c. Dispatch:
- John H. mentioned that there are currently policies under review. There are ongoing discussions with the Coast Guard Auxiliary (CGA) and Coast Guard (CG), as the CGA is awaiting a final decision from the CG regarding CGA permission to resume. Justin Vann stated that Fire & EMS will respond when available.
 - Jenn reported that the TCSO boat has engine problems, and they are exploring funding options to replace it. John H. added that he is awaiting State Police status.
- d. Training:
- Jessica and Jeremy Zigenfus have been discussing funding and the SHSP grant for training and exercise, a mandated funding. She will be attending an active shooter exercise (available from Texas) – more to come on this.
- e. Information Technology Administration (submitted by Greg Potter):
- f. Greg Potter announced that a core replacement for the CAD server at DOER, and he thanked everyone involved/affected for their patience.
- g. IT is currently working on technical issues between TC and Bangs for the Eventide Recorder Virtual Private Network (VPN). When this is complete, they will be doing the same with IC.
- h. Executive:
- Jessica will be sending policy updates to the Committee and will schedule a meeting for possibly the end of next month.

Announcements (Personnel, Events, Projects, etc.):

- a. Airport Drill June 5th – Jessica announced that the Airport Drill postponed from 2020 is planned for June 5th. FAA is requiring it to be held, and she, Geoff Dunn, and Justin will be participating.
- b. The Back-Up Center – spaces through CU were looked at recently, but no decision has been made.
- c. Personnel Updates – Brian Robison announced that the Professional Development Coordinator position that was cut for 2021 at DOER is being restored for the second half of the year. This will be a promotional position that handles the Dispatch Center training, quality control, etc., and may be filled around July 1st. The promotion will result in a Dispatch Supervisor vacancy, and there are two vacant Emergency Services Dispatch positions, which may be filled the first week in July.

He also announced that he will be leaving June 25th, and Jessica will be the new Interim Director until search and interviews are completed for the new Director vacancy.
- d. Dan Mass announced that CU graduation is coming up, and there will be a couple of smaller ceremonies prior to Memorial Day weekend, with graduation ceremonies split into four (4) ceremonies, two (2) each day, morning and afternoon Saturday and Sunday. Notifications will be distributed prior to the ceremonies.
- e. Tom Dunn added that IC will be holding two (2) ceremonies.

Adjourn:

- Next meeting scheduled for August 18, 2021, 10:00 a.m. (Executive Committee TBD), Department of Emergency Response Large Conference Room or Zoom – TBD. Hopefully in-person – watch for the e-mail calendar invite.
- Jessica adjourned the meeting at 10:52 a.m.