

# ***Emergency Response Oversight Committee***

*February 24, 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)  
Jeremy Zigenfus, Tompkins County Sheriff's Office (TCSO)  
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)  
Marty Kopcho, NYS Police C Zone 3 (SP)  
Jenn Olin, Tompkins County Sheriff's Office  
Jessica Verfuss, TC Department of Emergency Response  
Jason C., NYS Police C Zone 3  
David Amaro, City of Ithaca Police Department (IPD)  
Brad Marzolf, Bangs Ambulance  
Ron Flynn, Cornell University  
Geoff Dunn, TC Department of Emergency Response  
Jack Crance, TC Department of Emergency Response  
Justin Vann, TC Department of Emergency Response  
Dan Maas, Cornell EOM  
Brian Wilbur, TC Department of Emergency Response  
Josh Tagliavento, Dryden PD  
Tom Dunn, Ithaca College  
Mark Bell, Volunteer Fire/EMS  
Matt Van Houten, TC District Attorney  
Mark Conrad, Cornell University (CU)  
"6073876379" – Unknown Attendee

Virtual Guests: Chris Ellis, Cornell University  
Richard John, TC Public Safety Committee, Chair  
Marchenj

Call to Order: Jessica Verfuss called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Changes to Agenda (if necessary): Jessica reminded those who haven't completed their Oath cards to please do so (either at DOER or at the County Clerk's Office, as they are to be notarized).

## Old Business:

### a. Updates: DEK:

- Brian Wilbur reported that the DEK head project (short for Digital Entry Keyboard) was initiated to recover functionality lost when the radio system upgrade in 2014 disabled it. “It” is the ability to transmit a unit's status (en route, on scene, in service, etc.) by pushing a button on a keyboard attached to the mobile radio control head, thus saving the on-air radio and dispatcher's time for other things. After many, many months of work with Motorola design teams, the capability was restored and is in use now.
- The capability that came with this Radio-CAD integration project has enhancements for radio use that are aimed at law enforcement applications. Introducing these features to law enforcement has not yet started. Current activity includes analyzing usage by fire/ems agencies to insure technical issues are all resolved and users are using the DEK heads as intended on a regular basis. Assuming the DEK head project is validated through this testing and analysis, the next step is to brief law enforcement users on the capabilities now available that allow to determine interest, or not, in this suite of features.
- Jessica added that this will be discussed at the next Law Enforcement (LE) Sub-Committee Meeting.

### b. Towing Committee:

- John Halaychik stated that the policy was returned vetted from the County Attorney on December 24, 2020, and was then routed to LE's as final draft. There were no comments from LE's. A vote took place and was approved by majority panel, with one (1) abstain.
- John then mentioned a situation that had taken place the evening of February 23<sup>rd</sup>, where a “blocked” caller, had contacted three (3) area tow companies to respond to a scene, and the tow companies believed the caller to be a Dispatcher. Upon arrival there was actually no “scene” to respond to. If the source of the call is determined, and it's another tow operator, there will be consequences.

### c. New Call Feature:

- Jenn Olin announced that surrounding counties who use FLEX are pleased with it. TCSO has been working with IT to establish certain codes, and a test trial was set up between the TCSO and CHPD from January 25-February 24, and they had nothing negative to say about the program. She'd like to move forward in Spillman, following an Agreement with the nature codes.
- Jerry Wright added that his department found the feature to be very effective, efficient, and useful. He also stated that it is very useful for property checks with CAD and for the Dispatchers.
- A vote to move forward with this feature was approved by consensus.
- John H. mentioned that definitions would be completed by the end of next week. An e-mail will be distributed, requesting additional assistance from some agencies.

### d. COVID-19 – Status, enforcement:

- Jessica announced that vaccines are available to targeted/specific categories, and that Tompkins County Health Department has created a registry for those interested, who will be contacted as the vaccine is available, if they're eligible, but they'll still need to register on-line for an appointment.
- Quarantining, masks, and social distancing requirements are still in place.
- TCSO would like Public Health and Environmental Health Departments find a better way to respond to large gathering complaints.
- Marty Kopcho inquired about the eligibility of State Troopers, and Jess responded that they are eligible. The registry was discussed for them, and Jessica added that they must be available in a certain timeframe, as the vaccine is only good for a short period of time (once the vial is opened). She will send him an e-mail with the registry information.

### New Business:

#### a. Status 2:

- Jenn felt that the transactions should be recorded and originally thought they were.
- John H. responded that it can't be an encrypted channel, due to Motorola software. State Police have different mobiles from portables, and John will forward that information.
- Jessica added that this will be discussed at the next LE Sub-Committee Meeting.

### Standing Sub-Committee Reports (Members):

#### a. Law Enforcement (LE):

- Jenn mentioned the DIR (Domestic Incident Reporting) module in FLEX and announced that she and Kim Moore (TC ITS) will be working with Cortland County on a demo.
- She also noted that they are also working on re-imagining Public Safety, which includes the Alexis Nexus dashboard cameras. However, there are costs involved with this. Greg Potter added that the Motorola dashboard is the same, and they need to coordinate with the City.
- David Amaro stated that the City is not in consensus of adopting this.
- Jenn announced that she has a video that will be e-mailed, that grants are available, and she'll include Brian Wilbur in the next meeting. Jessica requested the video link be sent to her and Geri (which has been received).

#### b. Fire and EMS:

- Tim Bangs inquired about how the policy reforms will affect fire & EMS, as they want the scenes declared safe before walking in. Jessica responded that the draft plan is set for discussion with the public, Legislation, and Common Council upcoming meetings. The feedback survey link (provided in chat) is:  
<https://www2.tompkinscountyny.gov/ctyadmin/reimaginepublicsafety>.
- Marty asked how it will affect Dispatch. John H. shared those concerns. Jerry stated that it's a radical plan and that this group should make sure their concerns are heard. Jessica added that the feedback survey was a good place to start.
- Rich John, Chair of the Tompkins County Public Safety Committee, stated that he has read the report and feels it's separate for the County and the City. He welcomes comments to be shared at the March 18<sup>th</sup> Public Safety Committee Meeting. (His e-mail is: [rjohn@tompkins-co.org](mailto:rjohn@tompkins-co.org)).
- Tom Parsons announced that some departments have started looking into alternatives to Motorola portable radios. IFD has some Kenwood EF Johnson models that are compatible for fire functionality. He noted that the upfront costs are close to Motorola's, but replacements costs are more cost effective. IFD will be testing and will report back.

#### c. Dispatch:

- John H. stated that the 911 Communications Center was accredited with APCO in 2015 and 2018, and that the 2021 accredited is in-process.
- He also announced that "National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week" is the week of April 11<sup>th</sup> and to please feel free to acknowledge the Dispatchers that week.

#### d. Training:

- Meetings have not yet been held. However, Jenn mentioned that new officers are not familiar with Spillman and FLEX, and inquired about a virtual training or training video for onboarding. Jessica responded that this is possible (possibly with Kim Moore).

- e. Information Technology Administration (submitted by Greg Potter):
- Annually, ITS is required to update the SSL Certificate which manages the encrypted transfer of data between Tompkins County and NYS (eJustice) systems. In the past, despite lengthy coordination with NYS and Motorola, this task has gone without complications. The current SSL Certificate is set to expire on 2/27. The new SSL certificate has been configured but based on experience there may be disruption of data transfers for NYS automatic returns. If there are issues on 2/27, IT and NYS/Motorola will not be available until Monday 3/1 to troubleshoot. Each law enforcement agency can enter these queries directly into the NYS eJustice portal as an alternative.
  - ITS will be replacing the Uptown Data center core switch and two County firewalls in the future. This project will result in some outages which will be coordinated and communicated.
  - Kim Moore is directly assisting the Villages of Cayuga Heights and Trumansburg for the implantation of Axion body worn cameras.
- f. Executive
- Meeting was not held – Jessica will schedule one prior to the next EROC Meeting.

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

- Jessica announced that the search for the new DOER Director is now in process. Henry Granison added that resumes are being reviewed, and the interviews should be completed around the second week in March. Brian Robison stated that he will probably not be here for the next meeting, he thanked everyone for their participation in this meeting as it's an important Committee, "Good bye, good luck, and see ya' at the lake!". Thank you's to Brian were extended by various Committee members.
- Jerry stated that the CHPD is two (2) weeks away from active body cameras, and he extended his thanks to Jessica and Brian R.
- Jessica mentioned that our office is working with CU on a 911 back-up center, with a June 1, 2021 deadline, as it's been made a priority. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

Adjourn:

- Next meeting scheduled for May 19, 2021, 10:00 a.m. (Executive Committee at 8:30 a.m.), Department of Emergency Response Large Conference Room or Zoom – TBD.
- Jessica adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.