

MINUTES

9-1-1 MANAGEMENT BOARD

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

HONEYWELL ROOM

9 OCTOBER 1998

9:00 A.M.

PRESENT

Members: G. Kemp, D. Brousseau, R. Cantin, R. Lavictoire*, R. Maxwell
P. Moyle

Resources: R. Erfle, 9-1-1 Bureau Manager
H. Murphy, Manager, Emergency Measures Unit, E & T Dept.
L. Jenkins, Manager, 9-1-1 Emergency Services, Bell

REGRETS H. Massender

* Replacing Heather Massender during her absence.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Board noted a typographical error at page 2 and the Co-ordinator advised it would be corrected.

That the 9-1-1 Management Board approve the Minutes of the meeting of 5 June 1998.

CARRIED as amended

Note: 1. Underlining indicates a new or amended recommendation approved by the Board.
2. Reports requiring Council consideration will be presented to Council on 28 October 1998 in 9-1-1 Management Board Report 2.

1. NEW APPOINTMENT TO THE 9-1-1 ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- Co-ordinator, 9-1-1 Advisory Committee report dated 28 Sep 98

Moved by R. Cantin

That the 9-1-1 Management Board recommend Council approve the appointment of the Director of Land Ambulance Health Service for the Region of Ottawa-Carleton to the 9-1-1 Advisory Committee.

CARRIED

2. 9-1-1 ADVISORY COMMITTEE DRAFT MINUTES
- Co-ordinator, 9-1-1 Advisory Committee report dated 28 Sep 98

That the 9-1-1 Management Board receive the draft Minutes of the 9-1-1 Advisory Committee of 25 September 1998.

CARRIED

3. IMPACT OF VERTICAL TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES ON EMERGENCY SERVICES
- Co-ordinator, 9-1-1 Advisory Committee report dated 28 Sep 98

Councillor Cantin stated the Region has spent millions of dollars to make 9-1-1 a more timely response, but indicated this may be jeopardized by the recent approval of vertical traffic calming measures on some Regional roads. He believed they will create dangers for emergency people, their patients and vehicles.

D. Brousseau explained that such traffic calming initiatives were originally proposed by the community to address the problem of speeding and cut-through traffic in their neighbourhoods. Following extensive public consultation and study, the Transportation Committee and Council approved the implementation of vertical calming measures on Kirkwood, Lyon, Island Park, Scott, Churchill and Merivale. While staff endorse traffic calming measures, they do not support the use of *vertical* measures on major arterials. He admitted it was unusual to install such devices on major arterials and primary response routes and cited examples of major cities in the United States where it was recommended that such measures not be implemented on heavily-travelled roads. However, these are pilot projects and staff will be reporting back in one year on their effectiveness.

He added that staff are presently collecting "before" data such as speed, volume, noise, vibration, traffic diversion, et cetera and will be looking for input from the emergency services following the construction of these devices, in an effort to determine the impact on their response times, vehicles, et cetera. He advised that while Council was aware of the impact on emergency response time, it was believed this would be the trade-off for the

reduction in collisions resulting from excessive speeding. He advised that Council had received correspondence from police and fire services indicating that while they were not comfortable with the implementation of these pilot projects, they would be interested to see how they would work. In light of the fact these measures had only recently been approved, he suggested the Board wait until the end of the pilots and then bring forward all supporting evidence about the impact to emergency response time, et cetera.

Councillor Cantin advised that the Ottawa Fire Chief had reported major damage to their fire trucks as a result of speed humps on some local streets and opined that while Council may not reverse its decision, he strongly believed the emergency services should be on record as being opposed to vertical traffic calming measures.

D. Brousseau declared a conflict of interest in any decision taken today because he represents the Environment and Transportation Department on the Board. He indicated the desire to see strong input from police, fire and ambulance when he reports back to committee and Council in one year and he believed that having a letter from the various fire chiefs would carry some weight. He stated that if these measures do not work, staff will make a strong case as to why they were not successful in one year's time. He confirmed that if problems ensue during that time, the devices could be removed before the year is up.

Councillor Cantin suggested ambulances keep a record of their travel time from their pick-up point to the hospital. He was also interested in knowing where traffic will be displaced as a result of motorists wanting to avoid the speed humps. D. Brousseau confirmed that staff will be contacting emergency agencies with a request for input in the pilot project, with the suggestion that they keep whatever records they think will make for a strong case against the use of these measures. P. Moyle suggested the police could also keep track of collision statistics and if they were already affected by existing speed humps on local streets. D. Brousseau agreed that would be helpful because vertical measures are meant to reduce collisions. He confirmed that staff will also be monitoring traffic diversion.

Chair Kemp reiterated the fact that the Board definitely has concerns about lengthening emergency response time and stressed that such concern must be documented with Regional Council. He believed Council should also be made aware of the fact that the Board will instruct emergency agencies to collect data on their before and after response time levels so an informed decision can be made at the end of the one year period.

D. Brousseau did not take part in the following vote:

Moved by R. Cantin

That the 9-1-1 Management Board forward to Regional Council and all local municipal councils, the serious concerns emergency services (police, fire and ambulance) have in regards to the installation of vertical traffic calming measures on arterial roads.

CARRIED

D. Brousseau suggested the representatives of emergency services on the Board give thought to how they will provide the data as a result of monitoring these traffic calming devices. He suggested the use of alternative routes would be an important part of that information.

4. 9-1-1 SERVICE INTERRUPTION

- Co-ordinator, 9-1-1 Management Board report dated 28 Sep 98

L. Jenkins provided a brief summary of this issue. She noted that the caller during that emergency did not know which municipality they lived in and this contributed to the delay in response. Since that time, she has met with area residents to explain how 9-1-1 works geographically and Bell has made the necessary changes to ensure calls go directly to the Bureau.

5. RENAMING OF FRANKTOWN ROAD IN THE TOWNSHIP OF BECKWITH - UPDATE

- Co-ordinator, 9-1-1 Management Board report dated 29 Sep 98

Chair Kemp referred to the letter from the Reeve of Beckwith Township to the Regional Chair on this matter and indicated that as a result of discussion and direction by the Advisory Committee last month, he had spoken with a representative at the County of Lanark about this issue. He related that their Public Works Committee had received the Chair's letter for information at a recent meeting, but believed it might become an item for discussion at an upcoming meeting of the same committee. As outlined in the Beckwith letter, the County says there will be no change and the addressing matter has since been completed. The Mayor of Beckwith Township believed that the house numbers were so wide-spread between the Region and the county, he could not see how anyone could get the two mixed up. With respect to the latter point, the Board Chair suggested that the only time this might occur is with a call made from a cell phone, which is a cause for concern. While he was willing to meet with the Reeve of Lanark County to discuss this matter further, he did not believe there would be any change. The Township has taken additional steps and included the Township name on its road signs to clearly distinguish in which township the road is located.

L. Aprile from the Planning and Development Approvals Department advised that both Regional and Township staff will monitor the situation. Chair Kemp suggested that both levels gather data so if it does become a problem, that information will be readily available.

L. Jenkins indicated that other municipalities are also including their township names on road signs and suggested it might be something for the Region to consider. She indicated that at intersecting streets the road name sign also has the address range listed to assist motorists.

D. Brousseau believed there was some merit in asking area municipalities to look into the possibility of including number ranges on the road signs at intersections and suggested this may be something staff could write to the municipalities about.

That the 9-1-1 Management Board receive this report for information.

CARRIED

6. USE OF 3-1-1 NUMBER FOR NON-EMERGENCY CALLS

- Co-ordinator, 9-1-1 Management Board report dated 28 Sep 98

The Bureau Manager provided a brief overview of this matter. Councillor Cantin indicated that at the National Emergency Number Association Conference (NENA) in June, it was agreed that the use of this number should be avoided because it is more trouble than its worth. The Manager, EMU advised there is also a significant budget impact in terms of police resources involved.

R. Maxwell explained that he had originally raised a question about a 3-1-1 number in June because he wanted to see if there was a way to report a dangerous, but not life-threatening, situation quickly. Inspector Erfle acknowledged the Bureau would have no problem handling those calls if it could aggressively deal with the thousand other police-related non-emergency calls they receive. R. Maxwell stated it was that abuse that initially prompted him to examine the option of a 3-1-1 number.

L. Jenkins believed the public should understand that abusing the 9-1-1 system can slow the process and suggested an education program could assist so people do not call that number when it is not an emergency. Inspector Erfle agreed there is a significant impact and related the fact that some cities eliminated their 7-digit non-emergency number in favour of the 3-1-1 number.

That the 9-1-1 Management Board receive this report for information.

CARRIED

7. 9-1-1 BUREAU QUARTERLY REPORT

- Co-ordinator, 9-1-1 Management Board report dated 28 Sep 98

Inspector Erfle indicated that since the amalgamation of police services, the Bureau has had to verify the ANI/ALI for the East, West and Central Divisions, which they did not originally have to do. He explained it is necessary to verify the ANI/ALI in relation to the type of police response necessary and for which Division within the communication centre the call should be routed. As a result of this verification process, the caller is being held on the line longer than necessary. To address this, he intends to re-educate his staff on the objective of the efficiency ratio and therefore decided to implement a script for police-related, non-emergency calls which are intended to warn the caller that they have called an emergency number and the call will be terminated. The call-takers will be instructed to tell callers to refer to the "red" pages at the front of the telephone book for the correct number.

The Inspector further explained that a police emergency includes a crime in progress and danger to people or property. He indicated this is more than what the recent 9-1-1 pamphlet states and perhaps when it is reprinted, the Board can examine the definition to ensure it provides the correct information.

R. Maxwell questioned whether the operator could not tell the caller which number to call instead and the Inspector advised that the call has to be as quick as possible; the caller may not have a paper and pen handy and then the call drags on. R. Maxwell believed there was a need to educate people more to ensure they know what constitutes an emergency and who they should call.

Chair Kemp indicated that in the script to be used by the 9-1-1 operators, there should be something they can say to tell the caller they have reached an emergency number and rather than saying the call will be terminated, they can direct them to the appropriate location in the phone book. The Inspector agreed with this suggestion.

L. Jenkins added that many 9-1-1 agencies include that information as a recorded announcement and the call taker sends the call to the automatic recording if it a non-emergency call. The Inspector advised that having a recorded message only serves to tie up the trunks and therefore does not improve the efficiency ratio. L. Jenkins believed it is a trade-off: either have the call-taker give the information, or put the caller onto a recording.

Councillor Cantin believed that since it is only the calls to police that have been causing delays, the call takers should ensure they do not specifically say the "9-1-1" call.

Chair Kemp stressed the importance of getting feedback and agreed the caller has to realize it is the police that is dealing with it. The Inspector agreed, adding the Bureau would do some follow-up from the calls to ensure the caller found the correct number they were directed to.

The Inspector agreed to report back to the Board on the progress of this initiative.

That the 9-1-1 Management Board receive this report for information.

CARRIED

OTHER BUSINESS

Year 2000 Compliance

Greg Geddes, Program Director and Carole Lavigne, Manager of Communications from the Year 2000 office spoke to the Board about year 2000 compliance. G. Geddes provided the Board with an excerpt from the Year 2000 Program report for the Third Quarter of 1998, which will be presented to Regional Council on 28 October. The document contains details of the impact of the new millennium on the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Service, including 9-1-1. He advised that the new Computer Aided Dispatch system (CAD) is year-2000 compliant and will be installed by mid-October. He indicated they would like to be compliant early in 1999 for the core components of 9-1-1. They are in the process of developing a communication strategy to ensure the public is aware that the Region is progressing and while the 9-1-1 service has not been an area people seem to be concerned about, staff will continue to monitor it.

D. Brousseau indicated his staff have been making strides to ensure 9-1-1 is *the* priority and suggested emergency agencies that might not be covered by what G. Geddes and his team are doing, should ensure they will be compliant. He added that the radio system referred to is the Region's radio system and all emergency services should be concerned about their own radio systems and determine whether there are any imbedded systems that are not really identified.

Chair Kemp was concerned about a downstreamed agency not being compliant when a call is routed to them from the Bureau. He therefore questioned whether the Board should be polling those agencies with a view to bringing them up-to-date with respect to how compliant 9-1-1 will be and the fact that they will have a responsibility to accept those calls into compliant systems.

D. Brousseau strongly endorsed that approach and suggested sending a letter to all fire departments or area municipalities who get downstreamed calls, stating the Region is doing everything it can to ensure the 9-1-1 system will be in order by 2000 and to ensure they do the same.

G. Geddes advised there is an intermunicipal Year 2000 working group which has had some informal discussions on this issue, although at this point, they have not had a formal discussion on 9-1-1 and it was for this reason they felt it important to bring this matter to the Board's attention.

R. Maxwell questioned how the public can be updated on this issue and G. Geddes advised that such information can be transmitted to them through water billing inserts. There is also a possibility of adding this information to the Region's website.

Chair Kemp believed it would be beneficial for the Board to have regular updates at its meetings.

Communications

The Board Chair made reference to the "Yield to Emergency Vehicles" campaign which had been discussed and questioned whether this will be the next campaign for 9-1-1.

D. Brousseau advised that with the vacancy in the Communications Co-ordinator position, Deirdre Luseby of Information and Public Affairs will be reporting to the Board in future. He indicated that staff were to meet with emergency agencies to discuss what issues they wanted to bring to the public's attention and Ms. Luseby will re-initiate that process. He indicated the Department will be re-running the "Hard to Find is Hard to Help" campaign again this year. He suggested a 9-1-1 message should be prepared at least once a year to maintain the service profile.

Councillor Cantin suggested the Region should not have to wait until next year to have a major kick-off of the wise use of 9-1-1. D. Brousseau advised there is a working group which can discuss the issues. He agreed to send a list of that group to Board members.

NEXT MEETING

5 February 1999 9:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

CO-ORDINATOR

CHAIR