

**ARKANSAS BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE ON LOCAL 911 SYSTEMS
(ACT 1171 OF 2013)
SENATE & HOUSE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

**AUGUST 14, 2014
MINUTES**

The Arkansas Blue Ribbon Committee on Local 911 Systems met with the Senate and House Committees on Agriculture, Forestry and Economic Development on Thursday, August 14, at 9:30 a.m. at the Delta Center on the ASU Campus, Jonesboro, Arkansas.

Legislative committee members present were Senator Jonathan Dismang, and Representatives Joe Jett, Kelley Linck, Stephen Meeks, James Ratliff, and Blue Ribbon Committee on Local 911 Systems House Chair Tommy Wren, and Harold Copenhaver, House Vice Chair.

Other Legislators present were Senator Robert Thompson, and Representatives Mary Broadaway, David Hillman, Sue Scott, and Wes Wagner.

Non-Legislative members of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Local 911 Systems Committee present were Yell County Judge Mark Thone, Cabot Mayor Bill Cypert, David Maxwell, Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM), Mark Whitmore, Association of Arkansas Counties designee, Consumer members Todd Woerpel and Joel Hoggard.

Call to Order

Representative Tommy Wren called the meeting to order.

Opening Remarks

Representative Tommy Wren, House Chair, Blue Ribbon Committee on Local 911 Systems asked the legislators and attendees to introduce themselves.

Roundtable Discussion

Legislative and non-legislative members of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Local 911 Systems discussed emergency response issues and preliminary recommendations.

Gary Gray, Chairman, Emergency Telephone Services Board (ETSB) was recognized. He explained that a work group including himself, Director David Maxwell, Arkansas Department of Emergency Services (ADEM), Shelby Johnson, Geographic Information Office (GIS), and others recently met and discussed recommendations they could offer to the Committee.

Mr. Gray was asked to describe the current ETSB Board membership. Membership currently consists of the following:

- The Auditor of the State or his or her designated representative
- Two representatives selected by a majority of the commercial mobile radio service providers licensed to do business in the state
- Two 911 system employees selected by a majority of the Public Safety Answering Point administrators in the state
- The Director of the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management or the director's designee
- One consumer member to be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate
- One consumer member to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives

The Committee discussed the possibility of adding members to the ETSB Board. The concern was raised that a larger number of members may hinder the ability to obtain a quorum and/or reach a consensus. David Maxwell suggested consideration be given to making changes to the authority of the existing Board membership rather than adding members.

Committee members discussed the need to establish standards for all the PSAPs statewide, which should include standards for dispatcher training, equipment upgrades, and equipment purchases. Shelby Johnson suggested that bulk procurement of equipment for all 911 Centers would improve and standardize dispatcher training. Currently, most dispatcher training takes place at the Law Enforcement Academy in Camden, Arkansas. The dispatcher training does not include physically sitting at a 911 console equipped with current software technology. The reason the training excludes real world training is there are different versions of technology and equipment used at the various 911 Centers. He believes standardized procurement of the identical equipment for all Centers will provide a higher degree of interoperability for personnel as well as hardware.

Following the discussion, Senator Dismang requested a list be made of all funding sources for every 911 Center. He stressed the importance of having all funding revenue streams identified before any legislative changes are drafted.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.