

**Minutes of the DeSoto Parish EMS Board of Commissioners
Tuesday, January 8, 2019**

The DeSoto EMS Board of Commissioners held a regular Board meeting on Tuesday, January 8, 2019, at DeSoto EMS Central Station at 5:00 p.m.

Members present were Chairman LaTarsha Shelton, Vice-Chairman Rusty Canton, and Board Members: David Caston, Brent Ingvaridsen, Tim Thames, Dennis Reed, and KaTina Lane.

Many guests attending the meeting. They are listed below:

- DeSoto Parish EMS: Administrator Joe Magee, Assistant Administrator Karl Mann, Administrative Assistant Jane Manning, Office Assistant & Billing Specialist Melonie Confair, Supervisors Mike Williams and Steve Confair, Dispatch Supervisor Tabitha Tucker, Attorney Rhys Burgess, Medical Director Dr. Pat McGauly
- DeSoto Parish Police Jury: Jeri Burrell, Thomas Jones, Ernel Jones, and Richard Fuller. Keith Parker came as a private citizen.
- DeSoto Parish 911: Board members Dewayne Spillman, John Bedsole, and Samuel Johnson; Administrator Bruce Vanderhoven and GIS/Operations Supervisor Shade Adams
- DeSoto Parish Sheriff's Office: Sheriff Jayson Richardson and Dispatch Supervisor Captain Phillip Daniels
- DeSoto Parish Fire Districts: Noel Tucker – Chief DFD2, Bill DeLoach – Chief DFD8, Brian Williams – DFD8 Assistant Chief and Training Officer
- Dees Gardner, CPA's Maura Dees Gardner and Deborah Dees

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Shelton at 5:00 p.m. Dr. McGauly gave the invocation, and Shelton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Shelton welcomed the guests who introduced themselves. Shelton commented that she asked the 911 Board and Administrator Vanderhoven to attend.

A motion to approve the minutes from the October 8, 2018, Board meeting with no corrections was made by Canton. Ingvaridsen seconded the motion. All ayes carried the motion.

The financial reports: current bank balances, income and expenses, and budget vs. actual were presented by Magee. A motion to accept them was made by Thames. Reed seconded the motion. Motion carried by all ayes.

A motion to pay the bills was made by Thames with Ingvaridsen seconding the motion. All ayes carried the motion.

Old Business:

An update was given on delivery of the new medic unit – Medic 14. Rescue Truck 705 will have the supplies and tools apparatus box installed in Dallas in mid-February. Medic 12, which is at Excellence in Alabama, is undergoing a quote for repairs after hydroplaning caused it to roll over in November.

New Business:

Auditors, Maura Gardner and Deborah Dees, presented the fiscal year 2017-2018 audit. No findings were reported. The AUP's were also discussed with only a couple of minor adjustments mentioned – which have already been implemented. Canton made the motion to approve the 2017-2018 audit as presented. Thames seconded it. Motion carried by all ayes.

The signature cards for Community Bank were re-signed to add new Board member David Caston. Community Bank is used for payroll direct deposit.

Supervisor Mike Williams commented on the need for a mechanic. Mr. Lee has been our mechanic for many years and having sold his business, is willing to work solely for DeSoto EMS. 13 ambulances (medic units), 3 pick-up trucks, 2 side-by-side mules, and 3 SUV's compose the EMS fleet for a total of 22. He can also work on generators and other equipment as needed. Mr. Lee will supply a multitude of tools, but more tools and equipment will have to be purchased – including computers with diagnostic software.

The motion to hire Ronald Lee as a full-time mechanic for DeSoto Parish EMS with an annual salary of \$60,000, four weeks of vacation time, and \$40,000 to purchase tools, equipment, computers, software and other related items to set-up a shop at Station 4 in Carmel. Caston seconded the motion. Motion carried by all ayes. He will begin work as soon as possible.

Thames made the motion for a letter of engagement from Attorney Rhys Burgess to be brought back before the Board for the next Board meeting. Burgess is one of four attorneys that DeSoto EMS pays on an as needed basis for legal work. The second was made by Lane. All ayes carried the motion.

DeSoto EMS received a letter from DFD3 Chief David Jenkins in December. He requested that the matter be brought before the EMS Board. A copy of his letter was given to each Board member. The issues have to do with radio frequencies that allow calls to be dispatched to them. EMS Dispatch Supervisor Tabitha Tucker reported that DFD3 needs a separate frequency for radio traffic. Bruce Vanderhoeven said that 911 is aware of the issue and that Shreveport Communications' John Hicks is assisting DFD3 to correct the problems.

An update was given on the DeSoto EMS dispatchers' move to being employed by the DeSoto Parish Sheriff's Office (DPSO). Sheriff Jayson Richardson stated that this merger will be the first step to improving communications during calls to 911. Eventually, a long-term solution would have all dispatchers located in the 911 Communications District – working together to initiate a quick response to all needed agencies. Richardson also stated that DPSO has acquired land for another tower that will enable even better communications in the Pelican area. DPSO will have 3 or 4 dispatchers on duty at one time and there will soon be a parish-wide radio system to facilitate improved radio traffic.

DeSoto EMS has been providing dispatchers to all the fire districts for free since EMS' inception. Currently, one EMS dispatcher is on duty at 911 to dispatch calls to ambulances and fire departments. One dispatcher cannot handle multiple calls all at one time efficiently. Much discussion ensued about the EMS/DPSO merger. The former EMS dispatchers will continue to work at their same desk in the 911 building wearing a different uniform.

Some comments were: EMS Board member stated that we need action to create progress for better service to those who call 911 for help. 911 Board member Samuel Johnson commented that citizen would get faster service. 911 Administrator Bruce Vanderhoeven said it was no problem with DeSoto Parish Sheriff's Office/DeSoto EMS dispatchers being in the 911 building and invited all at the meeting to come to the 911 Board meeting on Tuesday, January 15, 2018, at 4:00 p.m.

After much discussion, Canton made the motion to sign a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) with the DeSoto Parish Sheriff's Office for the 4 full-time DeSoto EMS dispatchers to be hired by the DeSoto Parish Sheriff's Office. The Board also authorized EMS Administrator Joe Magee to sign the CEA before a notary for DeSoto Parish EMS. The motion was seconded by Ingvarlsen. Motion carried by all ayes. CPA Deborah Dees was asked to review the CEA before it is signed – making clarifications as needed.

Funding the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement was the next item discussed. At the October 8, 2018, EMS Board meeting, the Board authorized Administrator Magee and Assistant Administrator Mann to negotiate the CEA for the Board. Sheriff Richardson presented the EMS Board with the financial documentation regarding the cost for DPSO to dispatch the ambulances and fire departments annually. Canton made the motion to fund the CEA for a cost of \$275,000 annually for 4 former EMS dispatchers. Reed seconded the motion. Motion carried by all ayes.

The EMS dispatchers will begin the DPSO hiring process once the CEA has been signed and notarized. The former EMS dispatchers' benefits transition will be coordinated among the two agencies.

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Ingvarlsen made the motion to adjourn at 6:45 p.m. Thames seconded, and the motion was carried by all ayes.

KaTina Lane
Board Member

Brent Ingvarlsen
Board Member