

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
BOARD ACTION SUMMARY

DEPT: Stanislaus Regional 911

BOARD AGENDA #: *B-7

AGENDA DATE: December 20, 2016

SUBJECT:

Approval to Temporarily Double-Fill Four Emergency Dispatcher and/or Emergency Call Taker Positions

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2016-651

On motion of Supervisor O'Brien, Seconded by Supervisor Withrow
and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Chiesa, Withrow, DeMartini, and Chairman Monteith

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None

Abstaining: Supervisor: None

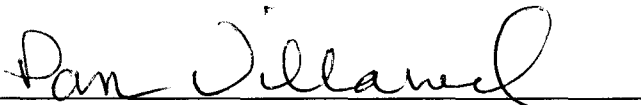
1) Approved as recommended

2) Denied

3) Approved as amended

4) Other:

MOTION:



ATTEST: PAM VILLARREAL, Assistant Clerk

File No.

**THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
AGENDA ITEM**

DEPT: Stanislaus Regional 911
Urgent Routine

BOARD AGENDA #: *B-7

AGENDA DATE: December 20, 2016



CEO CONCURRENCE:

4/5 Vote Required: Yes No

SUBJECT:

Approval to Temporarily Double-Fill Four Emergency Dispatcher and/or Emergency Call Taker Positions

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Approve the temporary double-fill of up to four Emergency Dispatchers and/or Call Takers through the end of Fiscal Year 2016-2017 as part of an accelerated staffing strategy.

DISCUSSION:

Stanislaus Regional 911 (SR 911) is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) and serves as the emergency dispatch agency for Stanislaus County, the City of Modesto, and several other cities within the County. Maintaining functional staffing levels is a critical component of emergency dispatch operations and ensures services are readily provided to partner agencies. As the employer of record for the staff at SR 911, the County has supported the agency in recently implementing continuous recruitment for the Emergency Dispatcher classification. This has had a positive impact on filling positions; however, additional adjustments to the recruitment process have been considered as part of a strategy that would further improve staffing levels for these unique positions.

The recruitment process for Emergency Dispatchers and Call Takers is more extensive than most County classifications. In addition to the standard vetting process involving online application and interviews, mandatory skill-specific testing and training activities identify the relatively few applicants armed with the aptitude for the specific pressures and tasks associated with the job. Attrition occurs at each step in the process, often at high rates.

SR 911 has counted a total of 1,160 applicants for the Emergency Dispatch and/or Call Taker positions over the past two years. In that time, 471 candidates agreed to sit for testing (689 applicants were disqualified during the application review process for not meeting the minimum qualifications or for submitting incomplete applications). Of those, only 112, or 23.8%, continued past the first step in the process, passing the Criti-Call test, a job-specific aptitude test utilized in the industry (39.3% eventually opted out of the test; of those remaining, only 39.2% passed the exam). Oral interviews were held for 88 applicants, meaning attrition at a rate of 21.4% occurred between the Criti-Call test and interview steps. Another 21.6% were no-shows for the panel interview. Of those remaining, only 52.2% passed the oral review.

Between the oral interview and the acceptance of a job offer, an additional 27.8% of job applicants were lost to attrition. Even once selected candidates are hired, permanency is not assured. New hires go through extensive training before they are fully deployable to work a

Approval to Temporarily Double-Fill Four Emergency Dispatcher and/or Emergency Call Taker Positions

post without a trainer. An additional 50% were lost within the probationary term, the same attrition rate experienced industry-wide during this first-year period. By the time an Emergency Dispatcher or Call Taker makes it through probation, he or she represents a small percentage of those who initially applied and agreed to sit for the Criti-Call test. Of the 471 applicants noted above, only 13 dispatchers were ultimately retained, two of whom are working part-time. This represents a 2.8% success rate in recruiting viable candidates.

Due to the excessive attrition rate experienced throughout the recruitment process for Emergency Dispatchers and Call Takers, SR 911 has developed an accelerated staffing strategy to bring the agency to full staffing levels by year-end. In addition to the continuous recruitment efforts, SR 911 has held an open house event to stimulate interest. A new Dispatcher Recruitment, Training and Retention Plan has been developed in-house with the goal of retaining staff long-term.

On September 21, 2016, the Executive Director of SR 911 asked the Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commission (Commission), the governing body over the JPA, to approve a temporary double-fill approach to staffing Emergency Dispatchers and Call Takers (Attachment A). The agency has developed plans to double-fill up to four Emergency Dispatcher and/or Call Taker positions through the end of Fiscal Year 2016-2017. This would allow SR 911 to increase the level of fully deployable staff by year-end and absorb the expected attrition that commonly occurs within the first year of training.

As of December 1, 2016, SR 911 has one vacant Call Taker position and nine Emergency Dispatchers are currently in training. The agency's plan provides the ability to double-fill these positions for a limited time and allows flexibility for attrition. The strategy was approved by the Commission and the Executive Director has been authorized to seek approval for the temporary double-fill from the Board of Supervisors (Attachment B).

POLICY ISSUE:

Board of Supervisors' approval is required to change the position allocation to temporarily allow the double-fill of up to four dispatch positions for Stanislaus Regional 911, wherein Stanislaus County serves as the employer of record.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The cost to double-fill up to four dispatch positions on an as-needed basis through June 30, 2016 is estimated at \$77,000. The agency has experienced multiple vacancies early in the fiscal year and expects that salary savings will absorb this additional cost without impacting the existing budget.

Stanislaus Regional 911 (SR 911) is a Joint Powers Authority governed by the Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commission (Commission). SR 911 has assured the Commission that the costs associated with the double-fill will be closely monitored. If any concerns arise regarding the budget and the ability to absorb these additional costs, the agency will report back to the Commission with a recommendation to resolve any issues.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' PRIORITY:

Stanislaus Regional 911 supports the Board of Supervisors' priority of a Safe Community by providing emergency dispatch services for the County.

Approval to Temporarily Double-Fill Four Emergency Dispatcher and/or Emergency Call Taker Positions

STAFFING IMPACT:

The recommended action will allow Stanislaus Regional 911 to temporarily double-fill up to four Emergency Dispatcher and Call Taker positions through the end of Fiscal Year 2016-2017 in an effort to maintain staffing at a functional level for the benefit of the agencies with which it partners.

CONTACT PERSON:

Scotty Douglass, Executive Director, Stanislaus Regional 911 (209) 552-3900

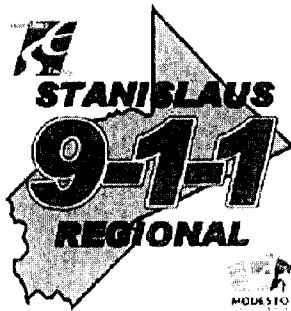
ATTACHMENT(S):

Attachment A: Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commission Agenda Item 5.3

Attachment B: Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commission Minutes for September 21, 2016

Attachment A

Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commission Agenda Item 5.3



The professional connection between the community and public safety.

Scotty Douglass, Executive Director

September 21, 2016

To: Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commission Members

From: Scotty Douglass, Executive Director, SR911

Re: Item 5.3 – Dispatcher/Call-taker Over-hire to Support Accelerated Staffing

RECOMMENDATION

Consider a temporary combined over-hire allotment of 4.0 FTE Emergency Dispatchers and/or Emergency Call Taker classifications in support of accelerated staffing and authorize the Executive Director to present a formal request to the Board of Supervisors as supported by the Dispatch Advisory Board and Recommended by the Executive Director

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned in Item 4.3 of your Commission's Agenda, the Authority is now near capacity of the hiring allotment of Emergency Dispatchers (37.0 of 39.0 FTE). While it is encouraging to be near "fully-staffed", it is important to note that 5.0 are on a leave of absence and 8.0 are in training. Further, there are 28.0 deployable Emergency Dispatchers and 2.0 Call-takers. This places the Authority at **70% deployable capacity**.

Given that 19% (8.0 FTE) of our deployable staffing is filled with personnel in training, coupled with the industry-wide attrition rate of 50% within the first year of training, it is expected that the current staffing occupied by trainees could be reduced to that rate within a matter of months. Further, staffing is at critical levels, with the potential for further attrition by tenured staff. For this reason, it is important to keep a steady flow of trainee dispatchers and call-takers in the training program until the workforce at SR911 stabilizes.

As noted, most all of the open positions have been filled, and it is expected that the remaining positions will be filled with trainee dispatchers/call-takers within the next four (4) weeks. For this reason and those stated above, it is **RECOMMENDED** that your Commission **authorize the Executive Director to pursue a temporary over-hire approval by the Board of Supervisors through the end of the current Fiscal Year as supported by the Dispatch Advisory Board.**

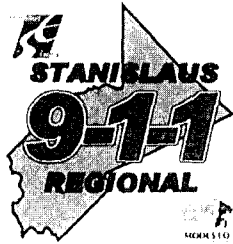
Item 5.3 – Dispatcher/Call-taker Over-hire to Support Accelerated Staffing
September 21, 2016

FISCAL IMPACT

NONE. Because the workforce has run the first two (2) months significantly understaffed, it is anticipated that there will be no fiscal impact to the current operating budget. The Executive Director will monitor the budget as over-hire positions are staffed, and report any variance to the Dispatch Advisory Board and Commission.

Attachment B

Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commission Minutes for September 21, 2016



Commission Board
Doug Ridenour, Sr., President
Bill O'Brien, Vice-President
Jim Holgersson, City Manager, City of Modesto
Stan Risen, Stanislaus County CEO
Raul Mendez, City Manager, City of Hughson
Galen Carroll, Police Chief, City of Modesto
Dale Skiles, Stanislaus County Fire Warden

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Modesto, CA 95357
Phone: 209.552.3900 Fax: 209.552.3950

CONSOLIDATED EMERGENCY DISPATCH AGENCY COMMISSION
MINUTES

September 21, 2016

Regular Meeting Minutes
1:00 p.m.

City-County Administration Building
1010 10th Street, Board Chambers – Basement Level
Modesto, CA 95354
www.stan911.com/consolidated.shtm

1.0 Open and Welcome

Meeting called to order at 1:03 p.m. by President, Doug Ridenour, Sr.

Commission Members Present: President, Doug Ridenour, Sr.; Vice President, Supervisor Bill O'Brien; Modesto City Manager: Jim Holgersson; Stanislaus County CEO, Stan Risen; Hughson City Manager, Raul Mendez; City of Modesto City Assistant Police Chief, Rick Armendariz (for City of Modesto Police Chief Galen Carroll); and Stanislaus County Fire Warden, Dale Skiles

2.0 Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

3.0 Public Comment Period

Tamara Carmelich asked the Commission to increase minimum staffing to 8 dispatchers. Currently minimum staffing is 6 and on recent occasions that has dropped to 5 by closing down one fire station. Tamara stated that in the event of a major emergency, such as a structure fire, 5 dispatchers would not be able to handle the call volume.

4.0 Consent Calendar

- 4.1 Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, August 17, 2016
- 4.2 Accept and File Status Report Regarding Dispatcher Staffing
- 4.3 Accept and File Year-End Budget Accounting for Fiscal Year 2015/16

Motion to approve consent calendar made by O'Brien, seconded by Holgersson. Approved. 7-0 unan.

5.0 Regular Agenda

5.1 Presentation by Executive Director to Commission Regarding 3-Year Capital Equipment Replacement Plan; Fiscal Year 2016/17

Scotty Douglass referred to projects that need to be completed in the next two years as the Radio System Console, Remote Mount Radios, Mt. Oso microwave upgrade and replacement to support County-wide communications systems, and the Uninterrupted Power Supply System (UPS). The Agency will address Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and computer related hardware at a later date. The first two radio projects would cost \$ 659,000. The microwave upgrade would cost \$ 100,000. The UPS system would cost \$ 65,000. Some of these projects may contain the opportunity for grant funding. Bill O'Brien asked if the building still has generator power. He also asked if the Dispatch Advisory Board took an action in the way of a recommendation on this Agenda item. Bill O'Brien also asked how much funding the Agency budgeted for Capital in the current fiscal year. Douglass advised that a Capital Equipment Replacement Budget has not yet been created, and that in Item 5.2, a recommendation will be made. Rick Armendariz asked about the compatibility of the new radio systems with the City's existing systems. Douglass advised that using the dispatch console, both VHF simulcast and 800 MHz systems can be patched. Legal Counsel asked for clarification that this Agenda item was just for acceptance of the report.

Motion to accept the report with the expectation that the Capital Plan will be brought back for approval made by Holgersson, seconded by Risen. Approved. 7-0 unan.

5.2 Approve Allocation of Surplus Fiscal Year 2015/16 Funds to Replace the Dispatch Radio Console in Fiscal Year 2016/17 and Begin a 4% Contingency Reserve Fund as Recommended by the Executive Director and Dispatch Advisory Board.

At the advice of Counsel, this item will be brought back at the next Commission meeting as an actionable item contingent upon the Commission's adoption of a Capital Equipment Replacement Plan. Public comment: Ronda Bell informed the Commission that in the Capital Plan the request for Remote Mount Radios included a request for 6 radios. The dispatcher center would need 8 radios.

5.3 Consider a Temporary Combined Over-hire Allotment of 4.0 FTE Emergency Dispatcher and/or Emergency Call Taker Classifications in Support of Accelerated Staffing and Authorize the Executive Director to Present a Formal Request to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors as Supported by the Dispatch Advisory Board and Recommended by the Executive Director

Scotty Douglass discussed the benefits of having an over-hire due to staffing turnover. It will be funded by the current budget based on salary savings. This is recommended by staff and the Dispatch Advisory Board. Staff requests that

the over-hire extend through June 30, 2017. Bill O'Brien gave his full support. Jim Holgersson expressed his concern that the over-hire may cause the Agency to exceed its budget. Douglass advised the Commission that close watch will be upon the budget and if/when the over-hire is in use, staff will provide regular updates to the Commission regarding the budget item. Public Comment: Union President Ronda Bell stated that the SCED Union supports this action.

Motion to approve the recommendation made by O'Brien seconded by Mendez. Approved. 7-0 unan.

6.0 Report from Executive Director

6.1 Recruitment, Training, and Retention Plan - Wendy Silva: Coming Soon

6.2 Applicant Open House – Scotty Douglass discussed details of the September 15 event.

7.0 Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commissioner Reports

None Presented

8.0 Reports from the Controller for the Authority

8.1 Accept and File Revenue and Expense Reports from the Controller as of June 30, 2016

8.2 Accept and File Revenue and Expense Reports from the Controller as of August 31, 2016

Scotty Douglass confirmed from Legal Counsel that no action was necessary.

9.0 Correspondence

9.1 Email Correspondence from CA 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Wireless E9-1-1 and Emergency Technologies Manager, CalOES, Regarding ATT Phase2 Wireless Deployment – ATT Direct Routing Scheduled for 9/16/2016 Re-scheduled to January, 2017

9.2 Letter from Armanino Regarding their Audit Engagement with the Authority

Public Comment: Tamara Carmelich thanked the Commission for hiring Scotty Douglass as Executive Director, and noted a positive climate change due to Wendy Silva's focus toward Operations Management.

10.0 Adjournment

Regular meeting adjourned at 1:54 p.m.

ATTESTED: John Bettencourt
Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commission Clerk

The above is a summary of the minutes of the governing board of the Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commission. Complete audio minutes are available from the Stanislaus Regional 9-1-1 Administrative Office.