



STATE OF TENNESSEE
TENNESSEE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS BOARD
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE & INSURANCE
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RANDY PORTER
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LYNN QUESTELL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Directors and Boards of Directors of Tennessee Emergency Communications Districts

FROM: Curtis S. Sutton

DATE: October 26, 2009

RE: Summary of October 20, 2009 Policy Advisory Meeting of the Tennessee Emergency Communications Board

The Policy Committee of the Tennessee Emergency Communications Board ("Board" or "TECB") convened a meeting on October 20, 2009, with Lynn Questell presiding. John Lowry (Chief of Police, Johnson City), Raymond Chiozza (Shelby Co. ECD), Chris Masiongale (Director, Overton-Pickett ECD), Kim Augustine (Director, Madison Co. ECD), Jennifer Estes (Director, Loudon County ECD), and Mark Blackwood (Director, Maury Co. EMA) were in attendance.

The meeting was convened for the sole purpose of discussing dispatcher training funding. Ms. Questell began the meeting by noting there seemed to be dissatisfaction after the Committee's prior deliberations regarding dispatcher training funding. As a result, staff sent out a request for alternative proposals. Mr. Chiozza provided a proposal.

Ms. Questell noted the issue of administering dispatcher training funding is complicated by the fact that not all districts dispatch. Additionally, in order for the TECB to avoid audit findings, the fund be administered so that there is a structure for distribution that allows for assurances that the fund is being spent as intended, and reimbursement is the best way to do so. The Board has clear legal authority to reimburse; and since the program is based on unspent budgeted funds, a reimbursement program gives the Board the flexibility to change amounts each year.

Mr. Chiozza presented his proposal, noting it was not a grant or reimbursement; rather his proposal is based on an amount to be set by the Board. Under this proposal, the Board would notify ECDs of the availability of funds and ECDs would apply for the funds. The ECD or the PSAP using the funds would

document use of the funds by filling out an invoice. Unused funds would be rolled over to the next fiscal year.

Ms. Questell and Jim Barnes noted that staff's revised proposal had greatly benefited from the many good ideas included in Mr. Choizza's proposal and expressed appreciation for his ideas and his leadership. Ms. Questell noted that the staff's proposal was framed to assure that the TECB avoids audit findings and to cut down on paperwork. She explained under most circumstances to obtain dispatcher training funds, ECDs would send in only two pieces of paper: a request for funds and a copy of a page from the ECD's audit report from the previous year. Mr. Barnes explained this would require the addition of three new account codes, conditioned on the Comptroller's approval. If the Comptroller's Office agrees, Training Expenses (account code 4418) would be redefined to include calltaker/dispatcher training associated costs of travel, registration fees, supplies, equipment, etc. The new account codes would be:

- Salaries Related to Training (this could include actual salaries of persons conducting and attending a training event, backfill for employees attending training events, and salaries for training coordination and administration)
- Training Subsidies to Other Local Governments (for support of eligible training costs for non-ECD employees where appropriate interlocal agreements are on file with the TECB)
- Revenue for Dispatcher Training

ECDs would be reimbursed based on the expenditures reflected in the audit report. In the first year of the program ECDs would need to amend their current budget to reflect the new account codes and submit a request for funds based on the amended budget.

The Policy Committee amended the staff's proposal to eliminate the restriction on premium overtime pay and to permit reimbursable travel to states bordering Tennessee. The Committee also amended the staff's proposal to add an account code for non-dispatcher training, such as training for ECD board members, which would not be eligible for dispatcher training funding. The Committee subsequently voted to recommend the staff's proposal to the Board for adoption. Mr. Barnes agreed to send the Committee members a detailed explanation of how the dispatcher training program will be administered.