

BEFORE

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Filing of Amended )  
Countywide 9-1-1 Plans and for the )  
Approval of Disbursements from the ) Case No. 05-1114-TP-EMG  
Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance )  
Fund. )

ENTRY

The Commission finds:

- (1) On February 1, 2005, House Bill 361 (H.B. 361) was signed into law. This legislation provides for the provision of wireless enhanced 9-1-1 service in Ohio. To aid in the establishment of this service, a \$.32 surcharge was added to the monthly bill of each wireless phone number in the state. On October 1, 2005, wireless service providers began remitting these funds to the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO), where they are being deposited into the Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund. According to H.B. 361, these funds may be utilized to cover any costs of designing, upgrading, purchasing, leasing, programming, installing, testing, or maintaining the necessary data, hardware, software, trunking, and training required for the public safety answering point or points of the 9-1-1 system to provide wireless enhanced 9-1-1.
- (2) To facilitate the administration of this funding mechanism, the legislation created the 9-1-1 Service Program within the PUCO, headed by the Ohio 9-1-1 Coordinator. This individual is charged with administering both the Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund and Sections 4931.60 through 4931.70, Revised Code.
- (3) On September 21, 2005, the Commission established Case No. 05-1114-TP-EMG as the individual docket for the filing of all amended plans by the counties. Within these amended plans, counties have addressed how disbursements from the Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund will be administered.

Based upon numerous informal inquiries regarding what is and what is not an appropriate use of the funds, the Commission believes we should offer guidance regarding

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appropriate use of the funds permitted under Section 4931.65, Revised Code, and establish a process for counties to seek clarification on a cost not included within this order.

The items addressed within this entry are not meant to be all-inclusive. There are other types of costs which may be covered and are not listed here. Should a county or public safety answering point (PSAP) encounter a cost which is not discussed below, but feels that it should be recovered from the Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund, the county or PSAP should contact the Ohio 9-1-1 Coordinator to discuss the appropriateness of the expenditure. If the Ohio 9-1-1 Coordinator and the county or PSAP are unable to reach an agreement, the county or PSAP may file a request within this docket to seek a ruling on the matter.

- (4) A PSAP may utilize disbursements from the Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund to cover either current or previously incurred costs described in Section 4931.65(A)(1) or (2), Revised Code. Therefore, a county that has expended funds toward wireless E9-1-1 equipment and service, prior to receiving wireless fund disbursements, may repay any county fund from which the county expended funds in order to implement wireless enhanced 9-1-1 service.

#### Data

- (5) There are two major cost components that fall under the data provision of the statute. The first cost component is related to the 9-1-1 service offering provided by the Enhanced 9-1-1 System Service Provider (SSP) within the county. Each of the 9-1-1 SSPs in Ohio are incumbent local exchange carriers who provide wireless E9-1-1 service to the PSAPs through approved tariffs. This service permits not only the wireless caller's voice to be transmitted to the correct PSAP, but also the caller's information (callback number and location information). The callback number and location information data, in addition to allowing the dispatcher to call the individual back, assists the dispatcher in plotting the caller's location information to a map for location identification.

The SSP's recurring and nonrecurring tariffed charges associated with wireless E9-1-1 are one of the primary costs incurred by a PSAP in providing wireless E9-1-1 and are an appropriate cost, recoverable pursuant to Section 4931.65, Revised Code. It is important to note that the wireline tariff costs will continue to be incurred by the PSAPs as long as they continue to provide wireless E9-1-1 service. PSAPs should consider those SSP charges in the planning stages of E9-1-1 implementation and take them into account when considering other expenditures.

The second cost category under data provision is mapping. Under Phase II wireless service, mapping systems are utilized by 9-1-1 dispatchers to process the wireless caller's X-Y coordinates. A valid map will provide the 9-1-1 dispatcher with a geographical location to send emergency responders to assist the wireless 9-1-1 caller. Without a mapping system, the X-Y coordinates are virtually useless. A Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) integrated computerized mapping system (if the agency employs a CAD system) can be one of the largest expenses that a PSAP may incur. It is vital that a PSAP review its disbursement received from the Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund and determine what type of mapping system the PSAP can afford, considering the other costs it will incur. Regardless of the system chosen, the mapping system used must be able to plot the coordinate information supplied through the 9-1-1 call in a reasonably accurate manner.

A state-administered grant program, known as the Location Based Response System (LBRS), through the Ohio Geographically Referenced Information Program (OGRIP), can provide some fiscal relief to a county who wishes to utilize a computerized mapping system. The LBRS is a program that establishes partnerships between state and county government for the creation of spatially accurate street centerlines with address ranges and field-verified site-specific address locations.

Funding to support the development of LBRS-compliant systems is available to counties through a memorandum of

agreement that establishes roles and responsibilities for program participation.

Should it be determined that sufficient funds exist for the creation of an independent mapping solution, there are certain cost considerations. As a standard, OGRIP recommends a mapping system which is centerlined, verified, and addressed via the center of the driveway. In addition, the Ohio Statewide Imagery Program offers one-foot pixel resolution color digital aerial imagery and one-meter color infrared imagery at no cost to the counties. E9-1-1 funds may be used to pay the costs associated with obtaining a mapping system meeting OGRIP's minimum standards.

The geospatial metadata contained within the mapping system will also need to be maintained and updated to ensure that the 9-1-1 dispatcher has access to accurate location information. Any costs of ensuring that the mapping system's data is maintained are recoverable under Section 4931.65, Revised Code.

#### Hardware

- (6) E9-1-1 funds may also be used to pay the costs of certain hardware associated with wireless E9-1-1. One primary example is additional computer monitors. It is a common practice to add dual monitors to a 9-1-1 dispatcher's workstation because wireless E9-1-1 adds additional functions and information processing to a 9-1-1 dispatcher's duties. For example, one monitor may display the 9-1-1 caller's information, while a second monitor displays the mapping information. Any additional monitors added to a workstation to process the information associated with wireless E9-1-1 may be recovered through the Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund.

Additionally, there may be other hardware, such as in-house customer premises equipment, which may be directly or indirectly associated with the displaying, processing, or interfacing of wireless E9-1-1 systems or information. Any such hardware costs associated with upgrading the PSAP's

equipment, so as to assist in the processing of wireless E9-1-1, is appropriate under Section 4931.65, Revised Code.

Another acceptable use of E9-1-1 funds involves the costs of redesigning or replacing a call processing position station to accommodate new or additional hardware associated with wireless E9-1-1.

Section 4931.65, Revised Code, permits recovery of expenses that are over and above the costs of taking wireline calls. Thus, for example, a PSAP may reach a point in which its call volumes have increased due to wireless calls, so that it must add additional call processing workstations. If those new call-processing workstations will be dedicated to answering and processing only wireless E9-1-1 calls, then E9-1-1 funds may be used to pay the costs of the additional workstations.

#### Software

- (7) A county utilizing an older software system may find that its system needs updated in order to process wireless E9-1-1 calls. For example, the existing software may not be able to process a call with a 10/20 digit automatic number identification (ANI) format, integrate with the mapping system, process longitude/latitude, etc. Disbursements from the Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund may be utilized to cover any initial PSAP software upgrades required to process wireless E9-1-1 calls.

#### Trunking

- (8) PSAPs may elect to install additional trunking beyond their current wireline trunks to process E-9-1-1 calls. Dedicating additional trunks to wireless E9-1-1 calls allows the PSAP to ensure that the 9-1-1 system is not overloaded by multiple wireless calls being made in response to the same incident. Adding dedicated E9-1-1 trunks will ensure that wireless calls are routed separately from wireline calls, decreasing the occurrence of a 9-1-1 caller experiencing a busy signal. A county that adds additional trunks for E9-1-1 traffic will experience additional recurring monthly charges, as the cost for these trunks is not recoverable under the wireline

surcharge authorized by Section 4931.47, Revised Code. The Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund disbursements can be used for additional trunks for wireless E9-1-1. The cost of adding the additional dedicated trunks for E9-1-1 calls should be evaluated carefully by the county, however, since the cost of the additional trunk(s) will be a recurring expense even after the Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund sunsets.

### Training

- (9) Section 4931.65, Revised Code, states that disbursements from the Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund may be utilized to pay for certain training costs. According to the statute, covered training costs are those costs which facilitate training "over and above any costs incurred to provide wireline 9-1-1." Generally, this type of training would cover how to process a wireless 9-1-1 call, coordinate mapping, conducting automatic location identification (ALI) rebids, etc. Training sessions which directly relate to processing a wireless E9-1-1 call and cover material over and above the general training required of any dispatcher are an appropriate use of E9-1-1 funds.

The statutory language providing for training costs states that any appropriate training costs may be recovered. Therefore, if overtime, travel, lodging, or meals are normally a reimbursable expense under the county's policies for training, then the costs are appropriate and recoverable. In addition, under the statute, it is permissible for the county to recover costs incurred in the past for such E9-1-1 training.

### Personnel Costs

- (10) A subdivision that certifies to the Ohio 9-1-1 Coordinator that it has expended all other appropriate implementation costs and is currently providing countywide wireless E9-1-1 may utilize its wireless funds to cover personnel costs for a PSAP taking wireless E9-1-1 calls. Section 4931.40, Revised Code, defines "wireless enhanced 9-1-1" as, "a 9-1-1 system that, in providing wireless 9-1-1, has the capabilities of Phase I and, to the extent available, Phase II enhanced 9-1-1 services."

Therefore, according to the statute, a county must complete Phase II implementation prior to being approved for personnel expenditures.

The 9-1-1 Service Program has created a Personnel Cost Form for individual subdivisions to complete this certification process. The form is available on the PUCO's website. Personnel costs are recoverable from the certification completion date forward.

It is, therefore,

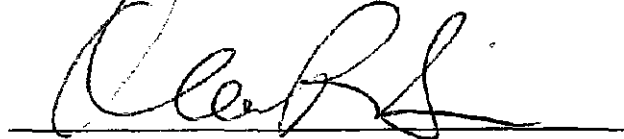
ORDERED, That the guidelines described within this document be considered appropriate for use regarding disbursements from the Wireless 9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund. It is, further,

ORDERED, That the Ohio 9-1-1 Coordinator work in good faith with any PSAP or county to review any cost not described within this document which the PSAP or county feels is an appropriate use of E9-1-1 funding. It is, further,

ORDERED, That, should the Ohio 9-1-1 Coordinator and the requesting PSAP or county not be able to reach an agreement regarding the appropriateness of an expense, the PSAP or county may file a request within this docket to obtain a ruling on the matter. It is, further,

ORDERED, That a copy of this entry be served upon the County Treasurer, the County Auditor, the County Commissioners, and the County 9-1-1 Coordinator in every county in Ohio.

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO



Alan R. Schriber, Chairman

Ronda Hartman Fergus



Judith A. Jones



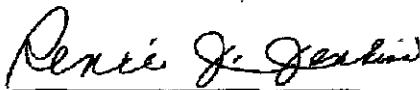
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Entered in the Journal

MAR 21 2007



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Secretary