

Wireless 9-1-1 Bill Signed; Vote Goes to People

Governor Brad Henry signed HB1751 in June, allowing counties throughout the state to hold elections for voter approval of service fees that would pay for improvements to enable 9-1-1 systems to respond better to calls from wireless phones.

If approved by voters in countywide elections, the 50-cent service fees on wireless phone bills would pay for necessary system improvements for locating where wireless callers are when they call 9-1-1 in an emergency situation. Today, enhanced 9-1-1 systems are able to locate callers using land-line phones, but nearly half of 9-1-1 calls are now made from wireless phones, and the public safety agencies are given no information about the location of the caller, a condition that can mean the difference between life and death in some emergency situations.

Since enhanced 9-1-1 (E9-1-1) systems were first implemented in Central Oklahoma in 1989, nearly 14 million callers have accessed 9-1-1 for police, fire or ambulance services in crisis situations. The advantage of the E9-1-1 system over the more than 120 emergency phone numbers used in the past



Governor Brad Henry, flanked by public safety officials from around the Central Oklahoma region, signs HB 1751 into law at a ceremonial bill signing. The bill will allow for the public to vote on service fees that will enable cell phones to be more effective with the emergency 9-1-1 system.

is that it is an easy number to remember, the calls route to the right agency and the emergency call-taker knows where the caller is and how to call back if disconnected.

While wireless phones were not a common reality when the local system was installed in 1989, today nearly 78 percent of the Central Oklahoma region's

population has a cell phone. Last year, there were 338,423 emergency calls in Central Oklahoma made from wireless phones. 9-1-1 systems were not designed to handle this emerging shift in technology, nor was the wireless industry prepared to make their phones work efficiently with E9-1-1 systems.

...See "Wireless 9-1-1" on page three.

Inside Perspective:

New Officers Named to ACOG Boards and Committees	2
Region Facing Elevated Ozone Readings	2
What's New Around the Region	3
ACOG Calendar	4

Transportation Draft Plan Available

A draft of the future regional transportation plan for the Oklahoma City metropolitan area is now available for review and comment. The proposed plan, known as the 2030 Oklahoma City Area Regional Transportation Study (OCARTS) plan, provides a "blueprint" for transportation in the Central Oklahoma region, which includes Oklahoma and Cleveland Counties and portions of Canadian, Grady, McClain and Logan Counties.

The 2030 OCARTS Plan provides recommendations for maintaining and improving Central Oklahoma's regional transportation system to ensure that it is safe, accessible and reliable for travelers over the coming decades. Between 2000 and 2030, the OCARTS area population is estimated to grow by 34.7 percent to 1.4 million, and employment is expected to increase nearly 35 percent to 728,000. ...See "2030 Plan" on page three.

New Officers Named to ACOG Boards and Committees

The changing face of local public leadership brings ACOG new members to the board of directors and new officers to ACOG's governing boards and committees.

Officers for the 2006 fiscal year have been named and will lead the Association for coming months with its considerations on policy issues regarding transportation, air and water quality, census and data activities, federal grants, and state and federal legislation, regulations and programs that affect the Central Oklahoma region. Eddie Reed, Mayor of Midwest City has been named Chairman of the ACOG Board of Directors. Logan County Commissioner Mark Sharpton serves as Vice-Chair and Willa Johnson, Oklahoma City Councilmember, is Secretary-Treasurer.

The 9-1-1 Association of Central Oklahoma Governments has also confirmed new officers. Grant Hedrick, Canadian County Commissioner will serve as Chairman, while David Hopper, Norman Councilmember, serves as Vice-Chair. Dave Howe, Choctaw Vice Mayor, is now Secretary-Treasurer. The 9-1-1 Association was formed to implement and manage the emergency telephone system for suburban communities within the Central Oklahoma region.

Finally, the Garber-Wellington Policy Committee nominated officers last month, including Chairman John Brown, Piedmont Councilmember, Jim Pumphrey, Councilmember, Nicoma Park as Vice-Chair and Marsha Jefferson, Mayor, Spencer to Secretary-Treasurer. The Garber-Wellington

Policy Committee works on issues relating to the Central Oklahoma region's ground water supply.

Aside from the new officers, spring elections have led to new members joining the ACOG board. Several new public officials and staff spent a day in Bricktown learning about public service and ACOG's programming and services. Kathy McMillan, Moore Councilmember; Doug Haney, Guthrie Councilmember; Gordon Jeney, Harrah Councilmember; Keith Bryan, Mustang Councilmember; Tracy Pappé and Janice Monroe, Union City Councilmembers; Gina Dickerson, Union City Clerk; Ken Leach, Logan County Commissioner; Alma Pringle, Forest Park Clerk and Evelyn Nephew, Guthrie Councilmember attended.

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Association of Central Oklahoma Governments

"Providing Regional Leadership in Central Oklahoma Since 1966"

Established in 1966, the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) is a voluntary association of cities, towns and counties. ACOG helps member governments plan for common needs, cooperate for mutual benefit and coordinate for sound regional development.

Chairman:

Mayor Eddie Reed, *Midwest City*

Vice Chairman:

Commissioner Mark Sharpton, *Logan County*

Secretary-Treasurer:

Councilmember Willa Johnson, *Oklahoma City*

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Regional elected officials and staff recently attended an orientation workshop at ACOG. Top row, from left to right, are Janice Monroe, Evelyn Nephew, Gina Dickerson, Doug Haney, Ken Leach. Bottom row, from left, are Keith Bryan, Kathy McMillan, Tracy Pappé and Gordon Jeney. Not pictured is Alma Pringle.

Region Facing Elevated Ozone Readings

While it is too early to summarize the 2005 ozone season, five Clean Air Alert Days for ozone in late June showcase that the Central Oklahoma region can't sit idly by when it comes to air pollution.

Last year, there were only two Alert Days issued. This year, in just the month of June, there were five, with some days experiencing exceedances in the federal clean air standard.

ACOG's public education program is currently being implemented, and will run through the end of September. A television public service announcement, and two new radio spots have been produced and are currently running on local outlets. Four new billboards are also up.

The spring electric lawnmower promotion with OG&E, Citadel Radio group, and Black and Decker recently wrapped up with a contest giveaway that awarded seven electric lawnmowers to Central Oklahoma winners. Confirmed winners announced so far include Kimberly Sikes, for BOB-FM; Raquel Carranco for La Indomobile; Jason Siniard for KYIS-FM, John Fuechsel for KATT-FM, Delores Nicar for Wild 97.9 FM. A grand prize winner of landscaping from Marcum's Nursery and electric lawn tools courtesy of Black and Decker and OGE will also be awarded later this summer.

For more information on air quality in the region, visit www.letscleartheair.org.

“Wireless 9-1-1”

...Continued from page one.

Today, half of the wireless 9-1-1 calls go to the wrong responder, while only 20 percent have a callback phone number and **none** provide the location of the caller, a fact that can literally mean the difference between life and death. This lack of information is unnecessary and places Oklahoma’s citizens at an unacceptable risk, according to Zach D. Taylor, Executive Director of the 9-1-1 Association of Central Oklahoma Governments.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has required that all wireless companies equip their phones with the technology for E9-1-1 services by this December. However, the FCC also requires that in order for public safety agencies to be able to order the advanced service, they must have the ability to pay for the multiple upgrades necessary to receive the more sophisticated stream of information (including call-back number and latitude/longitude of the caller), and associated mapping and equipment expenses.

Public safety agencies in the state have agreed that they need 50 cents per month, per wireless customer, to secure the technological improvements necessary to make wireless 9-1-1 services mirror those provided to land-line customers today.

9-1-1 organizers in Central Oklahoma hope to schedule countywide elections throughout the metropolitan area sometime in late 2005. Following successful elections, system improvements are expected to be complete within a year’s time.

“2030 Plan”

...Continued from page one.

Daily vehicle miles of travel within the region are expected to increase from 26.7 million to 40.9 million by the year 2030, for a 54 percent increase.

The plan was prepared by the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), its partners and stakeholders, which includes elected officials and staff from communities throughout Central Oklahoma, state and local transportation agencies, and a Citizens Advisory Committee consisting of citizen, neighborhood and special interest groups, and business ...See “OCARTS Plan” on page four.



Around the Region

- A national strategic stockpile exercise, designed to test the region’s ability to react to a public health scare was conducted successfully last month. **Dr. Paul Dungan**, director of the **Oklahoma City-County Health Department**, reported that the full-scale exercise proved that state public health officials were prepared to handle a large scale bioterrorism attack and provide medication on a large scale to the **Oklahoma County** population should an event occur. Thousands of volunteers from local communities, medical centers and businesses helped to make the exercise a success.
- The **El Reno Chamber of Commerce** names its 2005 honorees at a recent banquet. **Doug Henley**, El Reno City Manager was named Public Official of the Year. **Robert Coleman**, Community Development Director, was named City Employee of the Year.
- A public and private partnership has resulted in the implementation of a highly visible community service project. The **OKC Ambassadors** “rolled out” this summer, adding extra eyes and ears in the downtown area, as well as a hospitality presence to tourists and visitors. The group is a collaboration of the **Oklahoma City Police Department, Downtown OKC Inc.**, and U.S. Cellular. The team is outfitted with new uniforms, hi-tech communications equipment and Segway transport units.
- The **Nichols Hills** City Council recently approved the purchase of a new 800 MHz radio system that will assist the city and the City of **The Village** with intergovernmental emergency communications. Both communities will utilize the system and contribute local matching funds. A

\$135,000 Homeland Security Assistance to Firefighters Grant primarily funds the communications system.

- The towns of **Orlando, Marshall** and **Mulhall** recently received grant funding through the **Oklahoma Department of Commerce** to update their Capital Improvement Plans through ACOG. Updated every two or three years, these plans help smaller low-income communities inventory and map the town’s assets and plan for meeting projected needs and goals over the next six years.

- **ACOG** has added a new Associate Planner to the Transportation Planning and Data Services Division. Enid native **Darla Hugaboom**, who formerly worked for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, has returned to her roots in Oklahoma. Hugaboom has a bachelor’s degree in geography and political science and a master’s degree in geography from Oklahoma State University. She will work on congestion management, accident and safety issues, travel data and roadway classifications.



Darla Hugaboom, ACOG Associate Planner

“OCARTS Plan”

...Continued from page three.
and transportation industry representa-
tives.

The 2030 Draft Plan was prepared in accordance with federal guidelines, which will allow federal transportation dollars to flow to the region for all types of surface transportation, including major streets and highways, transit, bicycle and pedestrian improvements. It is estimated that it will require nearly \$5.6 billion dollars between now and 2030 to address all of the multi-modal transportation needs identified by the proposed plan. ACOG has identified adequate revenues, assuming the continuation of transportation funding sources historically available to the region, for a financially realistic plan.

In addition, the draft plan identifies the adopted goals and policies, public input and federal requirements that guide the transportation planning process, urban growth and transportation trends challenging the region over the next 25 years, major investments and congestion issues critical to implementing the proposed plan, and the plan recommendations for all transportation modes. A total of five street and highway alternatives were evaluated and are described in the 2030 Draft Plan.

The 2030 Draft Plan Summary is currently available for review on ACOG’s Web site at www.acogok.org and at all metro area public libraries. Comments

August

- 9th Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 18th 9-1-1 Board of Directors, 1 p.m.
Intermodal Transportation Policy Committee, 1:20 p.m.
ACOG Board of Directors, 1:45 p.m.
Garber-Wellington Policy Committee, 2:30 p.m.

September

- 5th ACOG Offices Closed for Labor Day
- 8th Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 13th 9-1-1 Technical Committee, 9:30 a.m.
- 20th Central Oklahoma Clean Cities Stakeholders, 1:30 p.m.
Operation FireSAFE, 10 a.m.
- 29th 9-1-1 Board of Directors, 1 p.m.
Intermodal Transportation Policy Committee, 1:20 p.m.
ACOG Board of Directors, 1:45 p.m.
Garber-Wellington Policy Committee, 2:30 p.m.

can also be made online. Anyone wishing to receive a paper copy may contact Holly Massie at (405) 234-2264.

Written comments on the 2030 Draft Plan Summary will be accepted through August 12. Comments received will be provided to the Intermodal Transportation Policy Committee (ITPC), which will be asked to consider adoption of the 2030 OCARTS Plan during its regular meeting

on August 18. Anyone wishing to attend the ITPC meeting is welcome. The meeting agenda will be posted on ACOG’s Web site or you may contact ACOG for further information.

Comments should be sent to the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments, 21 E. Main Street, Suite 100, Oklahoma City, OK 73104, or may be emailed to hmassie@acogok.org.

Central Oklahoma

Perspective

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