

St. Clair County to go on line with 911 now, E-911 later

By Cindy Warner
Home staff writer

St. Clair County residents may be able to pick up a phone and dial 911 as soon as three weeks.

County Commission Chairman Donnie Todd Jr. said Wednesday plans are currently under way to have the number operational in about three to four weeks.

Although the number will be in service, the enhanced part of the emergency service, known as E-911, will not be.

Basically, what that means is that residents can call the number and get help for their emergency problem, but the computer enhanced features will not be working yet.

Those enhanced features are the ones that will enable the dispatchers to locate where the call is coming from.

E-911 employees are starting to complete the last phases of the addressing portion that are needed for the computer database.

The information that is being collected is crucial for the enhanced part of the service, and the County Commission a few weeks ago took over that aspect to hurry things along.

Todd said the addressing is basically completed in the unincorporated areas of the county, except for a few areas that were accidentally skipped.

"We did find a few areas that had been skipped, and we are going into those areas and getting that information now," he said. "The only other areas that aren't complete are a few areas around Cropwell and some in Moody."

Everyone that lives in the rural areas of the county should know what their new address is for E-911, Todd said. Anyone who doesn't know needs to contact the E-911 office immediately so an address can be assigned and the information can be processed into the E-911 database.

The equipment needed to complete the enhanced service has been ordered and should be in soon, Todd

said.

Once the equipment comes in, the database will be able to run programs such as ANI, automatic number identification, and ALI, automatic location identification, he said.

The enhanced service will also provide the dispatchers with emergency service numbers that will help them get the nearest help that is available.

"Those numbers will tell the dispatchers what ambulance companies and fire departments provide service to the area that the call is coming from," he said. "They will also be able to determine whether the call is in the jurisdiction of a city police department or if the Sheriff's Department should handle the call."

For now, however, the 911 number is being put on line to see what kinks might need to be ironed out to get it ready for the enhanced service.

"This will give us the opportunity to test the circuits and to evaluate any

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problems that might come up," Todd said.

Putting the number on line will give people the chance to start getting used to it.

"I would rather see it put on line now without the enhanced service so people can start using it than not being able to use it at all," he said.

The calls to 911 will be answered at the County Operations Center and then dispatched from there.

Todd added that the county's centralized dispatch plan took another step forward with a vote from the Moody City Council to join the plan.

That move means that all areas of the county, with the exception of Ragland, have now joined the plan, he said.

The target date to start dispatching for Moody has been set at Dec. 1.

Previously the county Sheriff's Department was dispatching for several municipalities from the

county jails.

The new plan calls for all the dispatching to be done from the county building on Cogswell Avenue in downtown Pell City.

Pell City not only joined the plan but also leased its equipment to the project.

Todd said the Pell City equipment, which is being used to operate the system, will be used as a back-up system once the county's new equip-

St. Clair Commission takes over E-911 to speed up things

By **Cindy Warner**
Home staff writer

The St. Clair County Commission will now be serving as the governing body for the Emergency Communications District after it abolished the agency's board of directors Tuesday.

Commission Chairman Donnie Todd Jr. said the decision to abolish the board resulted from several of the positions coming open.

"The board is made up of seven members," Todd said. "About a week ago, we had one person resign, and we have three positions that are about to expire."

Todd said two of the three remaining positions are about to expire, so that only left one member to serve on the board.

The project is pushed for time on getting E-911 on line, and the com-

missioners felt they could solve some problems and help get the system operational sooner by being the governing body, Todd said.

"There are some problems that we feel like we have the resources and the people on hand to resolve," he said. "One of these problems is with getting the rest of the streets named."

Todd said the county already has an excellent mapping system and other resources on hand to help speed up that process.

Getting the system on line as quickly as possible is important for two reasons, he said.

The first reason is for the health and safety of all the county residents that E-911 will help provide.

The other is because St. Clair residents have been paying a tax since

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St. Clair's E-911 needs help

By Cindy Warner
Home staff writer

St. Clair's E-911 is approaching a critical time factor of coming on line, and the operation needs everyone's cooperation in the addressing process.

Terri Lynn Barnett, data base manager for the St. Clair County Commission District E-911, said there are still some areas that have not received their street addresses yet. These houses will receive yellow cards soon from E-911 notifying them of their new address.

"It is very important that they fill out the information on those cards and get them back to us immediately," Ms. Barnett said.

The cards will have the new address, but there will be a spot for homeowners to put their names and old addresses as well.

"That is the information we need to put into the data base to get this addressing completed," she said. "In order for the people to be put into the computer system, they must fill out the cards and get them back to us."

Local fire departments are the ones who are actually naming the roads. If a resident doesn't think a road has been named yet, it probably wouldn't be a bad idea to go ahead and call the fire department to check.

"There are a lot of county roads that might have a few houses on them

that we might not know about," she said.

Residents who received blue cards early this year should not worry about the yellow cards because they are already in the system, Ms. Barnett said.

"The blue cards were done by the Lambert Group out of Georgia, who came in to help us get E-911 started," she said. "We are finishing up now and plugging the data into the data base that they started for us."

ONLY THOSE WHO don't already have an E-911 street address will receive yellow cards. Residents that live inside the city limits of Pell City and Moody will not get one.

There are some houses in the Cropwell area and out near Mays Bend that still have to be addressed, said Debbi McKinney, who is helping with the addressing.

"We will be delivering the yellow cards while we are out addressing," Ms. McKinney said. "And we don't care how they come back to us as long as they do. If the homeowner doesn't want to spend the money for a stamp, then they can bring it by our office in the County Operations Center in the old GTE building on Cogswell Avenue."

Ms. Barnett said those who live in the city limits of Pell City or Moody and don't know their street address can call their local fire department

for that information.

"A lot of people that have rural route or post office mailing addresses don't really know what their street address is, and that is what we will have to know once we go on line and they call us for an emergency," Ms. Barnett said.

Another important step that people need to do to get ready for E-911 concerns the numbers on their mailboxes and houses.

"On the mailboxes we need the number placed horizontally in four inch numbers or bigger," Ms. Barnett said. "On the houses, the numbers need to be five inches or bigger."

For anyone that doesn't have a mailbox on the road, Ms. Barnett said, the resident will need to get a post and bury it in the ground. The four inch number then needs to be placed vertically on the post.

The numbers on the mailboxes need to be placed so that the flag will not fall and get in the way, and numbers on the houses should be placed on the part of the house that will be the most visibly seen from the driveway.

"For example, if your house has a driveway that pulls up to the front, then the number needs to be placed on the front," she said "But if the driveway pulls around to the back of the house, then place the numbers back there. We want them in the place where we will see them first."

E-911

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the vote to bring E-911 on line in 1990. Many of the residents are starting to get anxious about E-911 being started, and he feels the commission can get it started a little quicker.

The commission had the full authority to dissolve the E-911 board because of the law that it was created under.

"The law that created the district gives the governing body, in this case the County Commission, the option of creating a board of direc-

tors or managing the district itself," Todd said.

That case does not apply to other boards or authorities in the county, such as local water boards or the Hospital Authority, because they aren't set up under the same kind of law.

"We don't have the authority to start abolishing boards at random, so people shouldn't start to fear that we are going to do that," Todd explained. "But in this case, we do have the authority and we (the commission) feel that it is for the best of the

county."

The centralized dispatching operation will be ready in a couple of weeks, Todd said. Pell City's police dispatching equipment is being moved this week and next week, and then the county will be adding its equipment soon after that, Todd said.

He said the E-911 part of the operation should be ready by the first of the year, as opposed to the first of October, which was the original date to have the system on line.

The difference between the centralized dispatch and E-911 is the telephone numbers that will be used.

The centralized dispatchers will answer the phone for both numbers, but one number will be a regular

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The difference between the centralized dispatch and E-911 is the telephone numbers that will be used.

The centralized dispatchers will answer the phone for both numbers, but one number will be a regular seven digit number and the other will be the 911 number, he said.

"The centralized dispatch is going to be like what we are already doing, it will just be from one location instead of spread out all over the county," Todd said. "The E-911 will actually be the 911 number being used for emergencies."

Todd said he hopes the change of who will be governing the communications district will help speed everything up so the county can go on line with E-911 as soon as possible.

Education task force set to determine cost of plan

By The Associated Press

TUSCALOOSA — The governor's education task force this week hopes to put a price tag on its blueprint for revamping Alabama's schools, the chairman said Tuesday.

Charlie Waldrep did not speculate on what cost might be arrived at during a meeting Thursday. Initial estimates have ranged from \$500 million to more than \$1 billion.

But Waldrep said Alabama will miss a great opportunity for im-

man of the A Plus citizens group, also spoke.

The task force appointed by Gov. Jim Folsom has until Oct. 1 to submit a court-ordered plan for revamping Alabama's public school systems, which Circuit Judge Gene Reese of Montgomery ruled were inadequately and unfairly funded.

Some of the task force's 37 major recommendations include:

—Giving individual schools more power to govern themselves.

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Bob Crisp/Home staff photo

Debbie McKinney, addressing clerk for St. Clair County E-911, shows the size and proper way street numbers should be displayed on a mailbox or home. To make it easy for an emer-

gency vehicle to find your home they suggest large four-inch numbers for your mailbox or five-inch numbers for your home.

EMA to test sirens in Lincoln

The Talladega County EMA (Emergency Management Agency) will test its sirens in the Lincoln area this weekend.

The agency will conduct the test of the sirens around 10 a.m. Saturday to determine if tone and voice messages broadcast over the system are working properly, according to an EMA press release.

The tones area residents will hear over the system, according to information from EMA, are:

□ A long, high pitch indicates severe weather approaching.

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St. Clair officials work bugs out of 911

2-12-94 Daily Home

By Cindy Warner
Home staff writer

St. Clair residents can pick up the phone and dial 911 for an emergency now, but it will probably be August before all of the enhanced services go on line.

County officials and representatives from the four telephone companies met Friday to determine how much work was left to be done on the project and what kind of timetable residents could expect.

The basic 911 service was turned on last week, but without the computer enhanced services.

Steve Craig, GTE 911 Administrator from the Durham, N.C., office, said there will be a big push to try to get the Automatic Number Identification (ANI) service on line within the next two weeks in order to cut down on prank phone calls.

"I understand they had a whole pile off them just last night," Craig said. "The ANI service will help put an end to that. But I would guess it will probably be August before ALI (Automatic Location Identification) is ready."

With both ANI and ALI the emergency dispatcher will have the caller's number and address on the screen as soon as the call come in.

The problem with getting ALI on line is that it requires addressing for the entire County, telephone company officials said.

The County ran into a problem earlier in the year when Lambert Company, a professional addressing service that was contracted to do the addressing, went out of business.

That left local 911 officials to do the addressing themselves.

"But compared to other counties in Alabama that were left hanging also, you are in much better shape. You have done a great job," Craig told County and 911 officials during the meeting.

Craig said St. Clair is ahead of the national average timetable for getting an enhanced 911 service on line.

"And if you hadn't been left holding the bag you would be well ahead of the national average," Craig added.

Another holdup with the addressing has been residents not cooperating with their new 911 street addresses, said St. Clair County Chairman Donnie Todd Jr.

"People are going to have to cooperate with us on these addresses," Todd said. "We will not be changing street names anymore, because every time we have to it throws these people behind. The local fire departments named these roads and the community had input then, and that is when they should have said something."

Todd said the only way a street name would be changed now would be if it didn't fit into the database and the telephone company requested the change.

"It's like trying to change the name of a baby the year after it is born," Todd said.

Another way telephone officials said the process could be sped up is for local 911 officials to send the emergency service numbers at the same time they send the

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information on new street names.

"That will save us a lot of backtracking and time," said GTE 911 Database representative Brenda Lawrence.

St. Clair 911 Director J.B. Martin said that would be no problem and he would see to it that it was done.

Craig said GTE and South Central Bell are both plugging in database information.

GTE is serving the Pell City area, while South Bell is taking care of plugging in information for Ragland Telephone Company and Alltel, as well as their other customers in the County.

Eventually the two databases will work as one unit, Craig said.

According to Richard Almond, E-911 project manager for South Central Bell, the database operation will be moved to Nashville, Tenn., which will result in a two-month blackout during the months of May and June.

Getting that database moved and set up again is another reason for the August target date.

But Craig asked County officials to be patient for the sake of accuracy.

"Please don't put the quality of the database in jeopardy because you want to jump ahead on getting the system on line," he advised. "The public doesn't understand the magnitude of this project and how complex it is. But it will show the first time someone calls in with an emergency situation."

Craig said there are other counties that rushed the database process and they are paying for it now with inaccurate information that puts peoples lives in danger.

"If I were calling in with a coronary and I had to choose their system to what you will have I would choose yours," he said.

St. Clair County Commissioner Stanley Batemon said he agreed that taking the time to get it right would pay off in the long run.

"Just getting basic on was a huge step," he said. "Our goal now should be 100 percent accuracy."

St. Clair on line with central dispatch; phone numbers new

By Cindy Warner
Home staff writer

With St. Clair County's plan for centralized dispatch coming together, a lot of changes have been made, including some of the telephone numbers that are now being used for the different law enforcement agencies.

The centralized dispatching plan calls for all of the municipalities that are going on line with the new program to be dispatched from one central location, which is the county's new building on Cogswell Avenue in Pell City.

The entire county has pledged to go on line with the plan, except the town of Ragland, which voted to continue doing its own dispatching.

The town of Moody has made a firm commitment, but St. Clair County Commission Chairman Donnic Todd Jr. said it looks like they will join the plan.

The southern division of the county is already being dispatched from the new building, Todd said.

Pell City's equipment was moved about two weeks ago, and dispatching is currently being done for Pell City police, Pell City fire, the Sheriff's Office (Southern Division), the state troopers, Riverside police and county fire.

As soon as the rest of the equipment is moved in and the emergency telephone numbers for the northern division are verified, then everything will be dispatched from there, Todd said.

As it stands now, several phone numbers have been changed or adjusted for the plan, said Centralized

Dispatch Supervisor Jimmy Martin. The current emergency numbers are:

Centralized Dispatch: 884-3333 (old number for Pell City Police Department)

Pell City Police Department: 884-3334 and 884-3335. Business line or non-emergency line: 884-2039.

Pell City Fire Department: 884-4444 and 884-4123. Business line or non-emergency: 338-6006.

St. Clair County Sheriff's Department (Southern Division): 884-2677 (884-COPS), 884-2408, 884-2517 and 884-2610. Business line or non-emergency: 338-2812 or 338-2277.

St Clair County Fire: 884-3473 (884-FIRE) and 884-2309.

Riverside Police Department: 338-7692 (no change).

Riverside Fire Department: 338-2420 (no change).

Martin said the first number listed is the one that should be called, but the other numbers are extra numbers that can be used if the others are busy.

Riverside is currently doing its own dispatching during the day, but the phones roll over to the Operations Center at night.

Previously, the phones would roll over to the county jails. That is one thing the new dispatching operation hoped to eliminate in both the northern and the southern divisions.

No dispatching will be done from the new jails, Todd said. It will all be done from the Operations Center.

Martin said he isn't sure yet about

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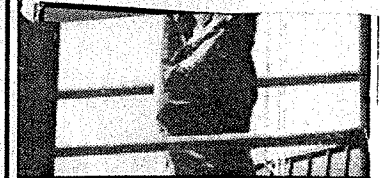


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the numbers for the northern division, but if there is a change or if any new numbers are added the numbers will be published at that time.

Dispatching for those areas could begin as soon as Monday, he said.



E-911 tower

John Poore of Jacksonville, left, and David Reynolds of Anniston recently installed the 100 foot tower at the St. Clair County Operations Center. The new tower will be used by the Centralized Dispatching Operation and Emergency-911. The men are employees of McCord Communications in Anniston.

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New dispatching plan doesn't affect E-911 coverage

By Cindy Warner
Home staff writer

Ragland Councilman Wayne Kendrick said there are some people in Ragland that are concerned about the town's decision not to join the St. Clair County Centralized Dispatching Plan.

They fear they aren't covered by E-911.

But, Jimmy Martin, communications officer for Centralized Dispatch said everyone in the county will get E-911 coverage, regardless of which towns voted to go to centralized dispatching.

Basically, Martin said, nothing has changed in the way the dispatching is done. The only thing that has changed is where the dispatching is done.

Previously, the Sheriff's Department did dispatching for most of the towns in the county at night, Martin said.

Most of the towns did their own dispatching during the day but at night, the calls were routed to the Sheriff's Department and were answered at the two county jails.

The plan for centralized dispatch was made for two reasons. First, new mandated requirements for the new jails stated that jailers could no longer do any dispatching.

"The jailers have too much to worry about with taking care of the prisoners without having to dispatch, too," Martin said.

Second, a communications center, such as the one at the Operations Center in Pell City, had to be set up anyway for E-911 to come on line.

When the new emergency system does come on line, the dispatchers for centralized dispatch will not only operate that system but the E-911 system as well, Martin said.

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The biggest difference is the telephone numbers that will be used for the two systems.

The centralized dispatchers will answer the phone for both numbers, but one number will be the regular seven-digit emergency number and the other will be the 911 number.

Most of the towns that joined the centralized dispatching plan will continue to do some of their own dispatching, Martin said.

But for the towns that do not have full time dispatchers to answer the phone at night, those calls will still be routed to Centralized Dispatch.

"That is the way it has always been," Martin said. "Nothing is changing as far as that is concerned. The only change is that it won't be answered at the jails, but it will be answered here at the operations center."

The only towns that will change will be towns that did all of their own dispatching all of the time, such as Pell City and Moody.

Moody has not officially agreed to join the plan, but if they do, Martin said the biggest change people there would have to get used to would be that the dispatchers would not be at City Hall anymore.

That change is one that has already taken place with the Pell City dispatching, which was once located at the police station.

Pell City not only agreed to join the system, but they agreed to allow the county to lease their dispatching equipment. So now, the entire Pell City dispatching operation has been moved to the Cogswell Avenue facility. The county is also adding more dispatching equipment to get ready for E-911.

For towns like Ragland, which also did their own 24-hour dispatching, that chose not to go with the plan, it means nothing has changed from the way it has always been done.

The same seven-digit number for police and fire is still being used, and the dispatching is still done locally in Ragland.

But, that does not mean that E-911 will not include Ragland, Martin said.

The vote for St. Clair County to bring E-911 was passed by the entire county, and the entire county has been paying taxes for the service.

When E-911 comes on line and calls are placed to that number, it will be answered by the centralized

not talk for some reason, the dispatchers will still be able to send help because the computer will be able to locate where the call is coming from.

"That is going to make it so much better than the way it is right now," Martin said.

Kendrick said the Ragland Council's main reason for not going with the plan is that they didn't want their local dispatchers to lose their jobs.

County Commission Chairman Donnie Todd Jr. told all of the towns when the plan was proposed that all of the dispatchers currently employed within the different municipalities would all have an opportunity to apply for the jobs.

The jobs were limited, however, and only the ones with the most experience and qualifications were chosen.

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The vote for St. Clair County to bring E-911 was passed by the entire county, and the entire county has been paying taxes for the service.

When E-911 comes on line and calls are placed to that number, it will be answered by the centralized dispatchers in Pell City and then it will be dispatched from there. If the caller calls the Ragland police seven-digit number, then it will be answered in Ragland and dispatched from there.

Martin said the E-911 system will provide the dispatchers with the address and telephone number of all the calls that come in.

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not talk for some reason, the dispatchers will still be able to send help because the computer will be able to locate where the call is coming from.

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Ordinance May Help Care Ambulance Collect

An ordinance adopted by the Pell City City Council at its regular meeting Monday night may bring some needed relief to Care Ambulance Service in the collection of unpaid bills, one of the major problems which the firm has been faced with in keeping its services open.

The ordinance, recommended by Emergency Health Planning Service, Region III, of which St. Clair County is part, calls for a fine up to \$200 or 30 days imprisonment for failure to pay ambulance service bills or for "prank" calls for an ambulance. (The ordinance is printed in full in this issue of the Observer.)

In other business, the Council again assured James Perry, owner of Perry's Standard in Pell City, that city wrecker business would be handled on a basis of asking the owner which wrecker service was preferred, then if no preference, rotating between the wrecker services inside the city limits.

Perry specifically asked Chief Ruble Bowlin if he understood the Council's intentions and Chief Bowlin said he did.

The Council approved an off-premises beer license for the Pine Harbor Marina boat dock; a private club license for the Golf Pro Shop at the Marina and an on-premises liquor license for the restaurant at the Marina.

An on-premise beer license was also approved for the Eldorado Lounge in Pell City and off-premise beer license for Ray Thornton, new owner of Lee's Pak-N-Go.

Parallel parking was approved for the area between Cogswell and First Avenue, South, across from Hagan Drug, on the recommendation of Councilman Bam Cox, who also asked that the Council commend the Peoples Bank for its "welcome to Pell City" billboard on Highway 231 South.

After a discussion by Coun-

cilman Harvey Watson of complaints about Tarpley and Sons parking its trucks and speeding on the Truss Ferry Road, Councilman Cox instructed Police Chief Ruble Bowlin to "take out every ordinance in the book and put a stop to it."

City Attorney Billy Church said that if necessary a citizen could have a warrant issued if the driver of the trucks could be identified.

Mr. Watson also discussed mobile homes being parked behind homes in violation of the City's mobile home ordinance.

A request from Bob Ginn for water for a mobile home park to be located approximately 2,000 feet beyond Radio Station WFHK was denied after the Council told Mr. Ginn that the City was attempting to furnish water to residents inside the

Continued On Page 2

city limits before taking on any additional territory outside.

An earlier delegation from Linnwood Subdivision, out the old Coal City Road, had been assured that the Council would meet with the Wattsville Water Works Board to try to work out some feasible plan for allowing Wattsville to take in part of the city's present water customers.

The Council adjourned to discuss architectural plans for a civic center.

Daily Home 2-3-94

St. Clair 911 service comes on line

By Cindy Warner
Home staff writer

St. Clair residents who have an emergency can now pick up the phone and call 911, according to St. Clair County Commission Chairman Donnie Todd Jr.

Todd announced Wednesday that the basic number was turned on Monday. But he stressed that it is only the 911 number; the enhanced services are not on line yet.

Residents should not dial the number unless there is an emergency or they are instructed to do so by an E-911 official testing the line, Todd said.

"We are calling select areas and asking them to hang up and call us back just to make sure the lines are working," he said. "But we are asking people to please not use the line unless they have a genuine emergency."

Todd said for all other calls, such

as requesting a police report or talking with an investigating officer, the appropriate seven digit numbers should be used.

If someone does need to use the 911 line and it doesn't work, Todd asked that the problem be reported to E-911 officials at 338-9911.

County leaders, E-911 officials and representatives from the four lo-

See 911, Page 14

911

From Page 1

cal telephone companies will meet Feb. 11 to establish a timetable for getting the enhanced service in operation.

Todd said the only thing left to be done is to put the final touches on the data base that controls the automatic number and automatic location identification systems.

"We still have a few areas in Springville and Pell City to finish up," he said. "And we have a full-time person working on getting Pell City up to date."

There have been some holdups in getting the system up and running.

In fact, Todd was told in October that the basic 911 number was almost ready.

As it turned out, tying the four local telephone companies together was a bigger task than anticipated.

"It really hasn't been anyone's fault," he said of the holdup. "It is just that tying those four companies together was a very difficult and time-

consuming task. If we had had one telephone company we would have been in good shape."

Another big problem has been with residents not accepting the assigned street names.

"I have had three calls this morning from people that wanted their street names changed," he said on Wednesday. "And every time we have to make these changes it throws us behind."

Todd added that many of the streets in question were named months ago.

Once the enhanced services are put on line, Todd said, dispatchers will be able to identify the number and the location of the call even if the person on the other end of the line can't speak or if the phone is hung up before the dispatcher is able to make contact with the caller.

In the case of a hang-up, the dispatcher will call the number back to see what the problem is. They will also automatically dispatch help to the residence of a caller that can't speak.

Ambulance payment law passes council

Following the example of several other Alabama municipalities, the Pell City Council Monday night passed a new ordinance making it a misdemeanor for persons within the city limits or police jurisdiction to call an ambulance when one is not needed and failure to pay their ambulance bills. Requested by CARE Ambulance owner John Dillender, the ordinance calls for the imposition of a \$200 fine or 30 days in jail for persons who fail to pay their ambulance bills. (See Ambulance Page 3-A)

service bill when financially able to. The same fine or sentence can be applied to persons wilfully calling an ambulance as a "prank".

The cities of Tuscaloosa, Selma, and several municipalities in Shelby County already have such an ordinance.

The council was also addressed by Perry's Standard Station owner James Perry regarding to the city wrecker business.

"When I first came up here, you said you would put the wrecker business on a rotating basis," Perry said. "Why is it you tell me one thing and put another in the minutes?" he asked.

Mayor A.E. "Dill" Nixon told Perry the recommendation of the committee was that "when a person involved in a wreck has a preference, that wrecker will be called. If not, the policeman working the accident will call for a wrecker on a rotating basis."

"This is how the committee

(Continued from Page 1)

reported and that's how it will stand," Nixon stated. "The police department will rotate the wrecker used by the wreck," Nixon added.

"That suits me fine," Perry said. He then asked Police Chief Ruble Bowlin, "Do you understand what he's saying?" Bowlin replied that he did.

In other business, the council was approached by a citizens group requesting water for an area outside the city limits between Pell City and Wattsville.

The council, after discussion with the group, agreed to meet with the Wattsville Water Board and see what sort of system could be worked out to serve that area. "If we can work out a system whereby the Wattsville board can take over the meters and so on out there maybe they can supply you with water," Councilman Forrest Walls told the group.

The council also turned down a request for water from Bob Ginn who wanted to set up a mobile home park just outside the city limits in the Eden area. "We have to meet the needs of the residents within the city limits first," Mayor Nixon told Ginn.

Beer and liquor license requests for Ray Thornton, Ed Bonner and the Pine Harbor Resort and Country Club were also granted by the council.

Nixon reported that progress was being made on the old theatre building demolition; that Alabama Power was checking on the cost of lighting of the First Ave. South area; and that he felt all the gas tanks dug up by the city on 231 should be retained. The tanks were donated to the city by Ray Miller and Clint Holdbrooks for their being removed from their

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Mrs. Thera Richter of the Birmingham Regional Planning Commission Commission presented the council with a questionnaire to fill out regarding the city's needs from the BRPC.

The council also discussed the city's mobile home ordinance; approved parallel parking on the opposite side of the street from Hagan's Drug Store; and went into a discussion with Jim Fuller regarding a city community center. The council adjourned until their next regular session May 27, 6 p.m.

Pell City Council approves roadblocks for emergency rescue squad drive

PELL CITY — A representative of the St. Clair County Emergency Rescue Squad came before the Pell City City Council Monday to ask permission to set up a roadblock.

Squad Captain Charlie Goodwin of the Southern division told the council that roadblocks had proved to be the best method for raising money in the past. The bi-annual roadblocks average between \$4,000 and \$4,500 a year for the squad, Goodwin said.

Goodwin said the summer months were the time of the year when the rescue squad concentrates on improving its equipment.

"If we could get annual contributions from citizens and businesses, that would be a lot of help," Goodwin said. "As it is, we have to buy second-hand equipment because we just can't afford anything new. This roadblock is about our only means of surviving."

The council agreed to let the rescue squad hold roadblocks at the in-

tersections of 19th Street South and U.S. 231, and 3rd Avenue North and U.S. 231.

Goodwin also noted that 35 paging devices had been donated to the rescue squad from the manufacturer, but an auxiliary radio frequency was needed to activate them.

The council said no auxiliary frequency was available.

A discussion of the method to be used by Pell City to collect liquor taxes, when the conversion is made from minatures to larger bottles in nightclubs, was tabled until the next meeting.

The council said the most frequent suggestions for collecting the tax were to base it on gross sales or an increase in the annual license fee.

County Attorney Billy Church said one large annual license fee could cause a hardship to business owners, if they had to pay it at one time. Some nightclubs in the city sell food as well as liquor, which would make overall liquor sales hard to determine, the

council said.

The council said \$2,000 in revenue had been collected on liquor sales in the first six months of this year.

In other business the council:

— Heard a request from Floyd Smith and Bob Hollis that drainage structures in their neighborhood were causing flooding. The council agreed to correct the problem. Hollis also complained of large speedbreakers on 2nd Avenue North near his home.

— Passed a resolution authorizing Mayor Hugh Hardy Williamson to request the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to complete Pell City Park. The park will actually be two multifacility parks behind the Pell City Civic Center in Cropwell.

— Discussed problems Art Smith was having in supplying cable television to certain areas of the city. Smith has been having difficulty acquiring sufficient cable to supply gaps in his service area.

Rescue squad may serve as backup for Pell City Ambulance Service

By ARROL SHEEHAN

PELL CITY — Complaints about existing ambulance service in Pell City may be answered by a backup system now being offered by the St. Clair County Emergency Rescue Squad, the City Council learned Monday.

C. J. Goodwin of the squad said the group has bought a regulation ambulance strictly for emergency use. The squad, backed by the Alabama Association of Rescue Squads, has 10 or 11 members who plan to enroll in Emergency Medical Training courses this June to aid one trained paramedic.

At the Jan. 15 meeting, the council had appointed a committee to study the problem of late-arriving ambulances. Three members appeared before the St. Clair County Hospital Board to offer their assistance in bettering the service.

A beeper system to call members also is now in service, Goodwin said.

Not only will this system prevent long distance calls, the overall process will be speedier.

The council also granted permission for the squad to hold a road block any weekend in April except Easter weekend.

In other business, a Planning Commission recommendation that a parcel of land be rezoned from R-A to B-1 was approved. The land, which is owned by Margaret Nixon, is across from Valley Hill Memorial Gardens and near the Civic Center.

Mayor Hugh H. Williamson explained that R-A is a holding-type zone, while B-1 is the type zone which restricts the type of businesses which can go into a zone.

Also approved was payment of a check by the city for garbage, sewage and water fees as had been done in years past.

On Councilman Dr. Joe Sawyer's recommendation, all bids for a garbage truck opened at the previous

meeting were rejected. Sawyer had pointed out the specifications called for a bigger truck than was necessary.

Councilman F. A. Walls reported the Recreation Department is in the process of getting out bids for fences and lights, and added that someone has requested the city do some work at the Little League field.

Walls said Avondale Mills has agreed to set up a backstop and batting cage at the Avondale field. The Recreation Department is also in the process of getting bids for carpeting the weight room at the Civic Center.

In other action, the council:

—Renewed its contract with the architectural firm of Cobbs, Adams and Bidden.

—Turned over to the police committee a request that a beer and liquor license be moved from Lakeview Lounge to the Hotsy Totsy Club.

—Agreed to buy a \$100 advertisement in a program to be printed locally for the state Babe Ruth tournament in Pell City in late July.

—Discussed replacing the flooring at the Recreation Hall on 19th Street.

—Discussed placing three street lights on the 1700 block of Cogswell Avenue and three others in the Flamo Subdivision.

—Agreed to replace a stop sign on a dirt road off Seddon Shores Drive.

—Noted the late Charles Looney, a Comprehensive Employment Training Act worker killed in an automobile accident last week, was covered by a \$10,000 death policy with Liberty National Insurance Co.

City Council raises gas rates, studies ambulance service

BY BILL BRYANT
News-Aegis Staffwriter

Passing along what they said was an increase in Southern Natural Gas rates to the city, the Pell City city council Monday night voted increased gas rates for citizens to absorb the costs.

The increases were made retroactive to Jan. 1, 1980 and will show up on bills in the next billing cycle. The last city gas rates increase was in July.

Councilman Paul Turner told the meeting he did not relish voting for the increase but he saw no way the city could absorb the cost. Mayor Hugh Williams said he felt the increases were evidence of what federal deregulation of gas prices were doing to consumers.

Under the increase, the residential and small industrial usage of less than 300 cubic feet per month will remain the same, \$2.70. However, the previous rate of \$3.70 per thousand cubic feet for all over 300 cubic feet per month will go from \$3.70 to \$3.90 per month. The rate for large commercial usage, previously \$3.40 per thousand cubic feet, with minimum billing of \$340.00 per month will go to \$3.60 per thousand cubic feet with a minimum billing of \$360 per month.

The industrial interruptible rate per thousand cubic feet per month was raised from \$2.71 to \$2.88.

Councilman Charles Lockridge told the meeting that he felt the city faced a serious problem with its ambulance service and urged the mayor to appoint a committee to investigate the possibilities of upgrading such services to city residents. Lockridge's statements came after a local citizen earlier complained to the council that she was unable to obtain needed ambulance service from Suburban Ambulance Service for her husband on new year's day.

"As far as I am concerned," Lockridge said, "in this town we don't have an ambulance service," to which Councilman Walls added, "You're right about that."

Presently, ambulance service for Pell City is under jurisdiction of the local hospital board which contracts with Suburban for local service. But the consensus was that the service by

Suburban, which is headquartered in Birmingham with a station in Coal City, is totally inadequate. Lockridge cited several recent instances when he thought response by Suburban was less than adequate.

Mayor Williams said he would serve on a committee to investigate the feasibility of obtaining better ambulance service along with Lockridge and Councilman Dr. Joe Sawyer and local emergency medical technicians Marcie Vandergrif and John McClerkin. Williams said the committee would meet with the hospital board soon and meanwhile asked Councilman Lockridge to investigate what federal or state grants may be available to fund up-graded ambulance services.

City to try new park angle

This Sunday city crews will be removing the old parking stripes on a section of Cogswell Ave., downtown in an effort to see if, by changing the angle at which cars are parked safer and more convenient space can be obtained.

At Monday's council meeting Councilman Lockridge said he did not think the angle of parking was "laid out right" and urged a section of Cogswell be re-marked for a test. He said several marchants have complained that customers may go elsewhere because of the cramped parking and severe angles.

So, to test whether a 45-degree angle would be better than the present 60-degree angle of parking, crews on Sunday will be working on the south side of Cogswell from 19th Street to approximately the middle of the block.

Motorists driving downtown are urged to watch for the working crews and drive accordingly.

In other business, the council set salaries for the mayor and council the same as last year, \$400 per month for the mayor and \$125 per month for councilmen.

An agreement was reached to make a survey along a section of 5th Avenue to determine if diagonal parking would be better in that area than existing parallel parking. The survey was agreed after the council received a petition with 24 signatures from citizens in that section asking the change.

Discussion was held concerning the problem of heavy trucks tearing up a section of King Circle, which runs off 19th Street onto U. S. 231. The problem, one of long standing, has been with clay-hauling trucks in that area ruining the surfacing. Mayor Williams told citizens inquiring about the problem that the council would see if federal help could be obtained in restoring the street section and assisting with costly water mains also needed in that area. He said street lights and new street signs already have been ordered.

The council also opened bids for a new city garbage truck; the low bid submitted by Ingram Equipment Co., of Birmingham was \$40,193.80; with all bids referred to the Streets and Sanitation Committee for study and recommendations to the council.

Approved an on-premises beer license for Richard Muir doing business at Pleasant Valley Grocery. Referred to the police committee a petition from businesses in the 1700 block of Cogswell for additional street lights.

Approved building permit for Marvin's, Inc., to construct a building for inside storage of building materials on U. S. 231 south. Asked Dr. Raymond Cox's police committee to check into possible gasoline sales without proper city taxes.

And heard a report from city fire chief Ben Windsor that the possibility seems good that Pell City's insurance rates could be lowered after a recent investigation of the city's fire-fighting and fire prevention abilities. Windsor told the council he would not predict that the city's classification would drop from its current seven to a five, but even a drop to a six classification would mean an 11 per cent savings to the city.

Ambulance payment law passes council

following the example of several other Alabama municipalities, the Pell City Council Monday night passed a new ordinance making it a misdemeanor for persons within the city limits or police jurisdiction to call an ambulance when one is not needed

and failure to pay their ambulance bills.

Requested by CARE Ambulance owner John Dillender, the ordinance calls for the imposition of a \$200 fine or 30 days in jail for persons who fail to pay their ambulance bills. (See Ambulance Page 3-A)

service bill when financially able to. The same fine or sentence can be applied to persons wilfully calling an ambulance as a "prank".

The cities of Tuscaloosa, Selma, and several municipalities in Shelby County already have such an ordinance.

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"That suits me fine," Perry said. He then asked Police Chief Ruble Bowlin, "Do you understand what he's saying?" Bowlin replied that he did.

In other business, the council was approached by a citizens group requesting water for an area outside the city limits between Pell City and Watts-ville.

The council, after discussion with the group, agreed to meet with the Watts-ville Water Board and see what sort of system could be worked out to serve that area. "If we can work out a system whereby the Watts-ville board can take over the meters and so on out there maybe they can supply you with water," Councilman Forrest Walls told the group.

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The council also discussed the city's mobile home ordinance; approved parallel parking on the opposite side of the street from Hagan's Drug Store; and went into a discussion with Jim Fuller regarding a city community center. The council adjourned until their next regular session, May 27, 6 p.m.

Ambulance service is leaving

Concern over the possibility of losing St. Clair's only ambulance service was the foremost topic discussed at the Pell City City Council meeting Monday.

John Dillender (head of Care Ambulance Service in Pell City) has declared that the local ambulance service must receive an operating expense of \$1,000 a month per ambulance in order to maintain the present county-wide service. If this sum is not met soon, then Dillender's company would be forced to submit a bid to Talladega County for its services.

One of Care's ambulances is currently in Talladega until the county receives new units expected around the first part of July. That ambulance serves also as a back-up unit for the one vehicle currently serving St. Clair County. Ambulance services have already been supplemented in the Steele, Springville, and Ashville area by units on call from Gadsden, Trussville, and Oneonta respectively.

According to Pell City Mayor A.E. "Dill" Nixon, a state bill passed in 1965 has enabled Talladega County to receive a grant in order to maintain a county ambulance service. The bill stipulates that counties qualifying for the grant must have a population of over 55,000; therefore, St. Clair County is ineligible.

A meeting of the St. Clair County Emergency Medical Service Committee had formulated a plan in which the county's municipalities would
(See Ambulance Page 5-A)

*St. Clair News Agency
5/30/74*

Ambulance (Continued from Page 1)

contribute half the cost of maintaining a county-wide ambulance service to contact Jones about the plan.

Dillender, along with R.L. Timmons, St. Clair Civil Defense Director and secretary of the CEMS, then submitted the proposal to the County Commission; asking them to furnish the other half of the maintenance costs. No word on In other business during session, new Pell City Recreation Director John Brigham, was introduced to the council by Mayor Nixon. Brigham commented on the tremendous recreational potential in this area and submitted a request for the

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*St. Clair News Review
5/30/74*

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Dillender, along with R.L. Timmons, St. Clair Civil Defense Director and secretary of the CEMS, then submitted the proposal to the County Commission, asking them to furnish the other half of the maintenance costs. No word on a decision by the commission has yet reached Timmons.

Therefore, the Pell City City Council decided the only legal alternative would be for St. Clair County Hospital to enter a contract with Care. In this way, the county municipalities could contribute half of the ambulance funds needed to the hospital, and in turn the hospital itself could subsidize the ambulance service by furnishing the rest of the money needed.

This proposal however, would have to be approved by the St. Clair Hospital Board and administrator. C.M. "Sam" Jones, Mayor Nixon promised

to contact Jones about the plan.

In other business during the session, new Pell City Recreation Director John Brigham was introduced to the council by Mayor Nixon. Brigham commented on the tremendous recreational potential in this area and submitted a request for the purchase of an automobile to be used by the recreation department. A motion was made for the city to purchase a 1969 station wagon and was passed unanimously.

A proposal to build some new living quarters for fire department personell and to widen two doors of the fire station was postponed until a further study of costs could be made.

The meeting was then adjourned with the possibility of a special session in the near future for discussion of St. Clair's ambulance problem.

The Pell C

Volume I, No. 3

Tuesday,

Firefighters Bring St. Clair One Step Closer to E-911

Anytime the Forestry Commission is handing out grant checks, there's bound to be a roomful of enthusiastic volunteer firefighters. Representative A. J. Blake and Senator Butch Ellis assisted Gary Hamilton and Tim Davis of the Forestry Commission in distributing \$1,350 State and local grant checks to twenty-three Volunteer Fire Departments, including Wolf Creek, Cook Springs and Riverside.

Before making the presentation, Blake told those gathered, "It's always a joy for me to be with people like you. The best St. Clair County has to offer is right here in this building."

Ellis told the crowd that their communities appreciate them and everything they do.

In thanking Blake and Ellis, Bill Carleton, President of the Association said, "Without what you and the Forestry Commission have done for us, we'd be a long way down the road in the opposite direction."

But the men gathered at the Wolf Creek Fire Department Thursday night



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Thursday night had more than money on their minds. The St. Clair County Firefighters Association wants Enhanced 911 service and they're determined to make it happen.

Jim Henson, Field Coordinator for the Birmingham Regional Emergency Medical Services System, was on hand offering assistance to the firefighters in their E-911 efforts. BREMSS is the lead agency, designated by the State to promote emergency medical services. The organization offers annual grants whereby they match the funds of fire departments for equipment purchases.

Henson explained the difficulty people have in knowing which agency to call in an emergency situation, as the services are often fragmented. He went over the benefits of E-911 and offered his agency's help. "Anything the public has to vote on, has to be sold. The public has to understand the value."

Henson told the firefighters that BREMSS can provide them with printed materials for use in St. Clair County, and that they already have speeches written for the purpose of promoting E-911.

County Commissioner Stan Batemon assured the group, the Commission would be behind their efforts. He advised those present to solicit other emergency services in the county to come before the Commission and request a referendum. "This can be done, but getting on the ballot is the first step"

Batemon said the Commission would appoint a Board

expressed his thoughts, "It's about time St. Clair County put two horses in front of the wagon."

Why E-911?

No one who has seen the movie "Down and Out in Beverly Hills" will forget Richard Dreyfuss running through the house screaming, "Call 911, call 911!" Everyone knows to call 911 in case of an emergency. Those three numbers are so well known in fact that, statistically speaking, one-fourth of St. Clair County residents would dial them seeking help, even though the only answer they'll get is a recording that says, "911 is not in service. If this is an emergency, dial the operator. Please refer to your telephone directory for the correct emergency number."

Last spring, UAB's Center for Urban Affairs conducted a survey funded by the Birmingham Regional Emergency Medical Services Systems (BREMSS). BREMSS is a coordinating and training agency assisting in the establishment and maintenance of high-quality emergency medical services throughout a six-county region that includes St. Clair County.

The survey was to determine the nature of public attitudes toward EMS services, and how to fund those services; examine the public's ideas of how to handle medical emergencies and to estimate the proportion of the population with

is the lead agency, designated by the State to promote emergency medical services. The organization offers annual grants whereby they match the funds of fire departments for equipment purchases.

Henson explained the difficulty people have in knowing which agency to call in an emergency situation, as the services are often fragmented. He went over the benefits of E-911 and offered his agency's help. "Anything the public has to vote on, has to be sold. The public has to understand the value."

Henson told the firefighters that BREMSS can provide them with printed materials for use in St. Clair County, and that they already have speeches written for the purpose of promoting E-911.

County Commissioner Stan Batemon assured the group, the Commission would be behind their efforts. He advised those present to solicit other emergency services in the county to come before the Commission and request a referendum. "This can be done, but getting on the ballot is the first step"

Batemon said the Commission would appoint a Board to oversee efforts to get the referendum passed, and E-911 working. He shared his feeling that politics should be kept out of issue, with appointments coming from people who could be of service to the Board...a banker, lawyer, policeman, fireman, etc.

Bill Carleton agreed, "We need a lot of knowledge on the Board; and then we need people with common sense."

One of the men present

running through the house screaming, "Call 911, call 911!" Everyone knows to call 911 in case of an emergency. Those three numbers are so well known in fact that, statistically speaking, one-fourth of St. Clair County residents would dial them seeking help, even though the only answer they'll get is a recording that says, "911 is not in service. If this is an emergency, dial the operator. Please refer to your telephone directory for the correct emergency number."

Last spring, UAB's Center for Urban Affairs conducted a survey funded by the Birmingham Regional Emergency Medical Services Systems (BREMSS). BREMSS is a coordinating and training agency assisting in the establishment and maintenance of high-quality emergency medical services throughout a six-county region that includes St. Clair County.

The survey was to determine the nature of public attitudes toward EMS services, and how to fund those services; examine the public's ideas of how to handle medical emergencies and to estimate the proportion of the population with some kind of training in how to manage emergency medical situations.

In defining EMS as "having specially trained individuals with specially equipped rescue trucks on call to the public 24 hours a day in the event of a medical emergency" and asking if "...such emergency medical services are available in your community," 74.1% of St. Clair County respondents answered

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es. BREMSS officials indicate that these percentages come close to the actual percentages covered by EMS within St. Clair County.

When asked which public service was most important, 48% of St. Clair residents rated Emergency Medical Services first. Police came in second with 35%, followed by fire with 12.5%.

Slightly more than half those surveyed felt EMS should be paid for out of taxes, while one-quarter endorsed a user fee. Of those backing tax funding, 63% favored using sales tax revenues, while income and property taxes garnered a 15% vote each.

When questioned on what to do in an emergency, more St. Clair County residents would call 911 than would call the police, fire department, or ambulance. Of those who would not call 911, the findings indicated they would, "deal with dangerous medical situations with the time-honored approach of rushing to the emergency room rather than using the phone for help or advice.

When the 37% who said they had some sort of emergency training were questioned further, only 18.5% could administer CPR, and less than 4% of our County's residents have had any real first aid training.

Lastly, the survey brought to light an alarming fact. While those in older age groups are at greatest risk of heart attack, thus having the more need of accurate knowledge concerning CPR, it is actually those under 30 years old who are best

brillators).

3. Does your community have 24-hour coverage?

4. The average response time of the department you're calling.

Then,

5. Post the emergency number on all your telephones.

Why So Long?

Establishing E-911 is a long process, taking from eighteen months to two years after being voted on. Following as a sequence of events for implementation, using November, (the next general elections) as a starting point.

Between now and November: The County Commission calls for a referendum so the County government can be given authority to appoint a seven-member Communications District to administer, the installation of an Enhanced 911 system.

The design process starts. The Board determines how many Public Safety Answering Points will be needed and where, firms up rates from all telephone companies for access lines, one-time charges and administrative costs.

Once the referendum is voted on and passed, contracts are signed between telephone companies and an implementation interval of eighteen months to two years begins.

In December, the Communications District Board contacts telephone companies and advises them to start collecting the monthly charge as previously approved in the voter referendum.

Starting in January, 1990 and continuing through April, 1991, telephone companies begin the implementation process which includes preparing and correcting address guides, ordering and installing equipment and training personnel.

During April, May, June and December of 1990, and January and March of 91, the Board will start the mechanized street address guide and will continue updating

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BREMSS recommends people in the St. Clair County area gather the following information:

1. What EMS service is available in your area (fire-medics, rescue squad, ambulance service, etc.).

2. Do they offer Basic Life Support of Advanced Life Support (able to administer lifesaving drugs and use defi-

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During April, May, June and December of 1990, and January and March of 91, the Board will start the mechanized street address guide creation. and will continue updating and correcting.

In February, 1991, a central office/equipment room will be established.

April, 1991...the Board will assess needs and begin a campaign of public education and information.

May, 1991...training will be provided by telephone companies.

June, 1991...the public will be able to dial 911 in case of an emergency.