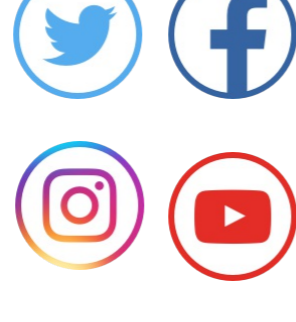


# The Official Newsletter of the Tennessee Emergency Communications Board

Serving the **first**, first responders.



## Legislative Session Begins

January 10th marked the beginning of the 2017 legislative session. Anticipated emergency communications legislation includes the TECB's Sunset bill which extends the board's existence to June 30, 2021. The bill will go through the Government Operations Committee chaired by Senator Mike Bell and Representative Jeremy Faison. The TECB would like to thank the general assembly for their support to the 911 Board.

Sunset Bill



Director of Government Affairs Amber McDonald with Chairman Jeremy Faison



911 Board Chair Jennifer Estes and Director of Government and External Affairs Amber McDonald visit with Economic and Community Development Commissioner Randy Boyd at the AT&T legislative reception.

## 911 Goes to Washington DC

The TECB will once again attend 911 Goes to Washington February 26th-March 1st. To register, click the link below and email amber.mcdonald@tn.gov upon completion.

Registration

## Commissioner McPeak Named NAIC President

TDCI's Commissioner Julie McPeak was recently named President of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), the nation's insurance regulatory support organization. The NAIC is the U.S. standard-setting and regulatory support organization created and governed by the chief insurance regulators from the 50 states, the District of Columbia and the five U.S. territories. Through the NAIC, state insurance regulators establish standards and best practices, conduct peer review, and coordinate regulatory oversight. The TECB would like to congratulate Commissioner McPeak on this prestigious honor.

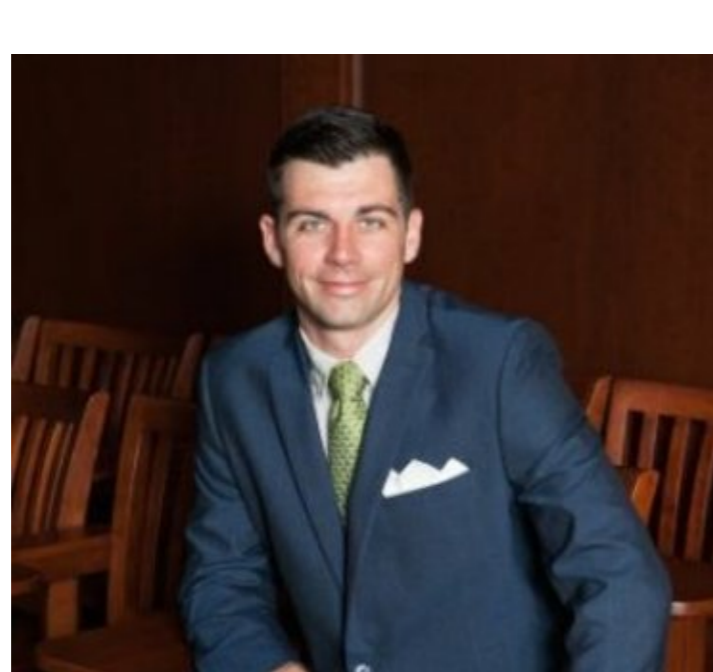


TDCI's Commissioner Julie Mix McPeak

McPeak Continued

## TECB Hires New General Counsel

Benjamin Glover joins the TECB as its new General Counsel. Prior to joining the TECB, Ben worked with insurance's Office of Legal Counsel as an Assistant General Counsel. While in that position he worked in the Division of Regulatory Boards representing many clients, including the TN Board of Accountancy, TN Board of Architectural and Engineering Examiners, and the Division of Consumer Affairs. Raised in Durham, North Carolina, Benjamin moved from Asheville, NC to attend law school in Nashville. He is member of the charter class (2014) of Belmont University's College of Law. Benjamin lives in East Nashville with his girlfriend and dog who all love sailing, kayaking, and live music.



Benjamin Glover

Benjamin.Glover@tn.gov

## Tech Tip

Technical Director Eddie Burchell gives you the latest technical advice to keep your PSAP running at its best.



Eddie Burchell talks about the impact of weather on your generator in this month's video.

## Want to Schedule a Visit to your PSAP?

Director of Audit Robert McLeod is available to visit your 911 Center and address all of your auditing needs. For scheduling, contact Robert.McLeod@tn.gov

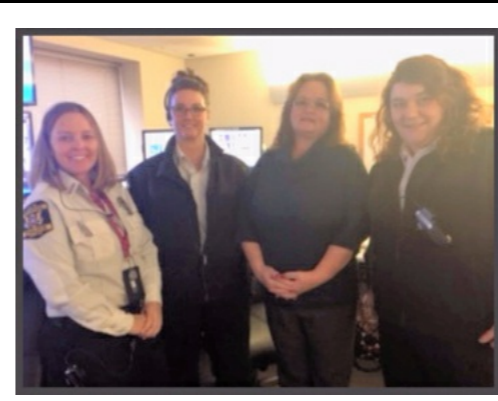


## Local PSAP News: Bristol 911

The TECB's Amber McDonald sat down with 911 Director Virginia Smeltzer and went behind the scenes at the Bristol 911 Center.



Virginia Smeltzer with Sullivan County 911 Director, Ike Lowry



Team Bristol 911

**Q: What made you want to become a 911 director?**

*A: I have always had an interest and love for public safety. I worked part time for an ambulance service and was a volunteer with a rescue squad for years. I have been a reserve officer. When the opening came up for an Assistant at Sullivan County 911 (while in the building stages) I took it. I was with Sullivan County for six years and loved the work. I felt like I had finally found the type work I had looked for for so long. Then the 911 District in Sullivan County was split by the Kingsport referendum and then by Bristol's and two of the Bristol chiefs asked me to consider the new director's job in Bristol. I did and became the first 911 Director in the City of Bristol Tennessee in May 1994 and we went live with our own 911 system in July 1994. I've been here ever since.*

**Q: What is the most challenging day you have ever had?**

*I think everyday is a challenge because there is always something new going on, a new project, a new training program, new equipment, new personnel, and on and on the list goes. I set up a multi agency command center at Bristol Motor Speedway twice a year and that is very challenging. We operated a secondary communications center in the MACC during the Battle of Bristol ballgame and that was quite an experience. A very different crowd and one of the largest crowds for any sporting event in America. The calls were rolling in but they were all processed successfully and at the end of day, things were good.*

**Q: If you could tell someone wanting a career in public safety one bit of advice, what would it be?**

*A: Don't do it unless you are truly committed to the work and making a difference. This is not a job to take just to draw a paycheck. It's almost a way of life and it takes dedication and commitment beyond any job I have ever had. However, I love it and can't imagine ever doing anything else. Oh, and you don't get rich in this field, at least not in money. The emotional reward and the satisfaction you get from the job and the people you deal with is amazing.*

**Q: What makes your 911 team so special?**

*They work as a team. They help each other and they are all committed to doing a great job and assisting anyone in need. We get very few complaints and the ones we do are usually very minor. This tells me as much as anything, that these individuals in this center go beyond the normal everyday job and provide true customer service. I see how serious they are about their job and providing whatever care and assistance they can to those in need. When things don't go right, I see and feel their pain but I know they will strive even harder to be the best.*

**Q: Why is the state 911 board and staff important to you?**

*A: The state Board and the staff have always been a resource for me. They have always been there to provide or help find answers. They provide assistance anytime I have asked. They promote the State 911 business and because of them our state is recognized nationally for our accomplishments and dedication to serving the public and responders. An idea is only an idea if no one does anything with it. However, that's not the case with the board or the staff, I have made suggestions and I know of many others that have and those ideas are looked at and investigated and not just pushed to side. The board and staff have supported me on legal and financial questions and issues that have arisen over the years. I was not supportive of the Board when it was being proposed all those years ago, but I came to quickly appreciate the work being done. The board and staff earned my respect and my support. Looking back I realize this was one of the best things that could have happened to 911 in Tennessee.*

**Q: What is one thing you would like the public to know about 911?**

*A: That 911 folks are dedicated and want to serve and help them whatever the crisis. They train for it, rehearse, exercise, and practice call taking so they are ready for that next call. They are the unsung heroes and they want to earn and continue to earn that designation. When 911 messes up, we all hurt and then we pick ourselves up, dust off, and work even harder to prevent future mess ups.*

**Q: What's the most rewarding day as a 911 director have you had?**

*A: I would have a lot of difficulty choosing just one. I love what I do, the people I serve, and the people I work with from the dispatchers to the responders to the other government agencies. When we make a difference in someone's life, that is a very rewarding day for all of us. When I see the smile or the tears of joy when one of mine does something and it all turns out right, I know I have one of the greatest jobs in the world.*

*I will retire in the next few years and I already feel a sadness. I will miss this work and all the people I have come to know and love over the last 28 years. This has never been just a job for me, it's been a way of life and a love that has given me so much over the years.*

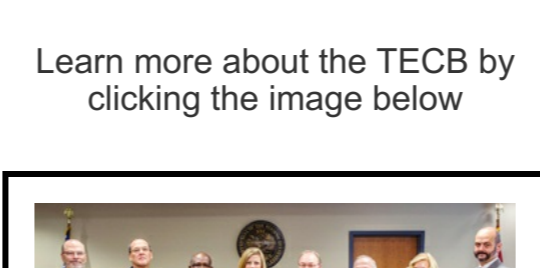
**To have your PSAP featured in an upcoming 911 newsletter, email Amber.McDonald@tn.gov**

## Next Board Meeting

May 3, 2017 at 9:30AM  
500 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, TN 37243

## Who Are We?

Learn more about the TECB by clicking the image below



## New NENA Classes Announced

The TECB and NENA have once again partnered to bring advanced 911 training to Tennessee. Funded by the TECB, 911 professionals can sign up free of charge for advanced education. Visit the TECB website for the new class schedule.



Sign up



Questions about the NENA classes? Barbara Shank can address your advanced education questions.

Barbara.Shank@tn.gov

## TECB and TDMHSAS Join Forces



## Next Gen Update

Below is the status map from the Next Gen status map of across the state. The project is at 99% completion.

Next Gen project manager Chad Brothers is leaving Comtech and joining Mission Critical Partners. The TECB wishes Chad the best in his future endeavors.



Pink, Light Blue, Gray: Stage 1  
Dark Red, Dark Blue, White: Stage 2

## Industry News:

### Can a glitch in the iPhone cause your device to repeatedly call 911?

Learn more from this month's emergency communications industry news.



Read More

## Money Matters

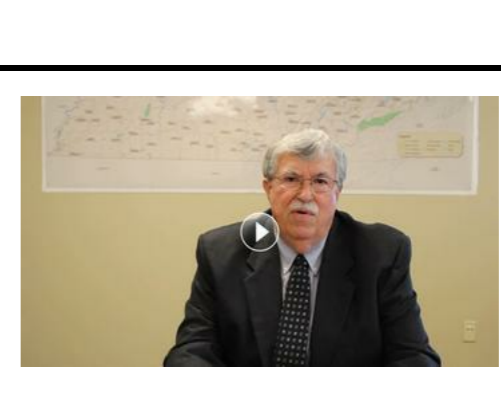
Fiscal Director Jim Barnes discusses financial matters and new policies passed by the state 911 board.



Click on this month's video as Jim addresses excess revenue.

## TECB on Location

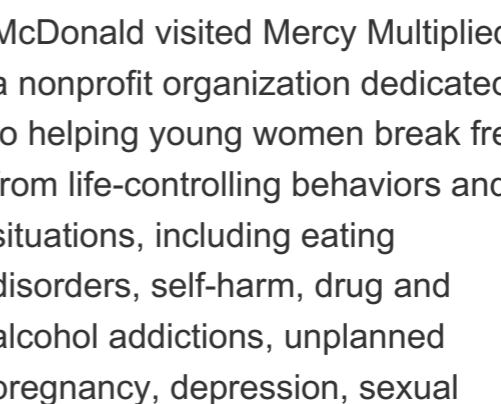
Formerly known as Mercy Ministries, The TECB's Amber McDonald visited Mercy Multiplied, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping young women break free from life-controlling behaviors and situations, including eating disorders, self-harm, drug and alcohol addictions, unplanned pregnancy, depression, sexual abuse, and sex trafficking. Amber spoke about the Next Gen 911 project and how new technology will allow women in domestic violence altercations to "text to 911" if they are unable to call. Text to 911 is projected to launch in late 2017.



Click on this month's video as Jim addresses excess revenue.

## Are you a New Local Board Member or 911 Director?

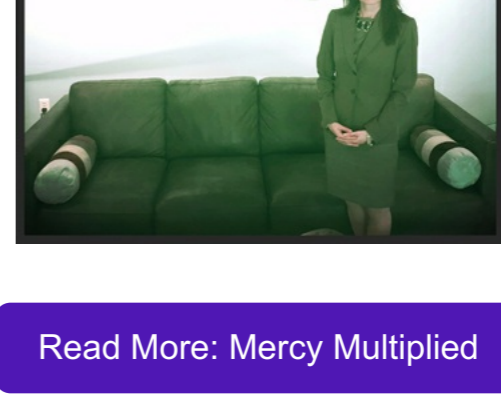
Check out our Board Member 101 packet to the other with all of your center's needs.



Board Member 101

## Can't make the 911 State Board Meeting?

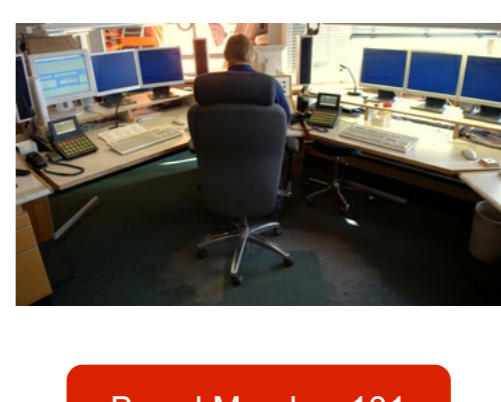
Not to worry, view all past and future LIVE meetings via the net and livestream.



Watch Board Meetings

## Contacting the NOC

Report outages, misroutes and troubles. 1-800-959-3749 or by email at noc@telecomsys.com



About the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance: TDCI is charged with protecting the interests of consumers while providing fair, efficient oversight and a level field of competition for a broad array of industries and professionals doing business in Tennessee. Our divisions include the Athletic Commission, Consumer Affairs, Tennessee Corrections Institute, Emergency Communications Board, Fire Prevention, Insurance, Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy, Peace Officers Standards and Training, Regulatory Boards, Securities, and TennCare Oversight.

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