



## City of Roanoke E-911 Center Memorandum



**To:** Sonya Roman, Department Manager  
**CC:** E911 Staff  
**From:** Joshua Mason, Training Coordinator  
Kentrell Trotter, 2017 Recruitment Specialist  
**Date:**  
**Re:** 2017 Community Involvement Annual Report

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The Community Involvement Annual Report gives the 911 Center an opportunity to survey outside factors in our community that may impact our Department and Public Safety services delivery in general. This report also serves to highlight attended events and track interaction with the citizens of Roanoke.

### Summary of Events:

<b>Program or event type</b>	<b>Number Conducted</b>	<b>Number of people contacted</b>	<b>Feedback Received</b>
911 tours	10 Tours (6 not in conjunction with a presentation)	101	
RPD Reads	13	236	
Career/Job Fairs	6	366	
Community Meetings	4	91	
Virginia Heights Career Day	1	22	
William Fleming High Career Day	2	58	

Hope Tree Academy Presentation	1	14	
Rivermont School Presentation	1	9	
Colorathon	1	56	
Med Express	1	75	
Lea Youth Basketball	2	30	
JobPlus	2	7	
Virginia Museum of Transportation Public Safety Day	1	43	
Citizen Academy	1	13	
Melrose Fall Festival	1	202	Hurt Park community member would like to see us attend more of the neighborhood events like this one
APCO Conference Presentation	2	70	

Our CIT members try to thoroughly educate our citizens about our department, technology and processes during presentations. Due to this fact most follow up questions relate to call volume, staffing/scheduling and location reliability. Any questions are immediately addressed during the event to ensure our citizens understanding of the topic. The only exception to this is if a citizen voices a complaint related to our department.

**Community Education**

We are committed to educating the citizens of Roanoke to ensure understanding of our public safety system and how to best access and use this service. Like most communities we continue to see an increase in cellular phone calls for our services and we have found that the vast majority have misconceptions of how this technology works. The City of Roanoke 911 center was the first PSAP in the region to implement TEXT2911 in 2016. It is important for the department to continue contact with citizens to ensure their understanding of the benefits and challenges of this technology and other equipment and technologies we utilize.

The members of the 911center and/or the 7 members of the Community Involvement Team participated in a total of 47 events. Total people contacted in reference to attended events were over 1393. Our goal for 2017 was to attend 45 or more events. These numbers reflect we met the goal of additional events although we had less Community Involvement

Team members than the year prior. For 2018, our goal will be to attend 50 or more events.

### **Social Media**

The 911 center launched a department Facebook page in March of 2015. In 2016, we had approximately 1,700 “likes”. In 2017, we ended the year with over 2,100 likes. We have utilized the page to push out general information to our citizens, during severe weather events and to share special events such as recognition ceremonies and news stories related to the center. Much of the increase in followers is contributed to regular posts and videos created by the department to educate our citizens.

We include a statement on our Facebook page advising citizens not to use Facebook as a means of reporting an emergency to the department. We will continue to work closely with the City of Roanoke office of Citizen Engagement to enhance and improve our social media exposure.

### **Media Requests**

In 2017, other than basic media requests related to calls for service, our department had three special requests for news story segments and informational purposes. In February, WSLS-10 requested to do an on camera interview to discuss technology and call location accuracy. In April, RVTV conducted an interview to discuss the department’s reaccreditation and hiring. In August, WDBJ-7 requested documentation regarding our call answer times.

### **Recruitment Events**

We will continue to work with our Human Resources Department to expand our departments’ efforts to attend both local and regional recruitment opportunities. Our team members who attend these recruitment events will continue to receive specialized training in this area.

### **Translation Services**

The Hispanic population in the City of Roanoke increased to 5.5 percent as of the Decennial Census Count, April 1, 2010. The E-911 center utilizes Voiance to assist us with interpretation on a multitude of languages. In 2017 we had a total of 612 calls requiring an interpreter. 541 of those calls were for Spanish translation for a total of 88 percent of requests. In 2016 we had a total of 451 calls requiring an interpreter. 387 of those calls were for Spanish translation for a total of 87 percent of requests. We had translation requests for a total of 15 different languages in 2017. The second highest demand of translation services was Swahili with 26 calls or just over 4 percent of total calls. These numbers reflect that our

total number of calls has increased significantly. The numbers reflect calls requiring Spanish interpreters increased by 154 calls compared to 2016.

It should also be noted that the use of translation services is useful to track multi-cultural requests for service but does not accurately reflect the true composition or percentage of callers. Some of the requests for service may be from other cultures however the caller or a relative of the caller may communicate well enough in English to not require translation services through a language service. It should also be noted that foreign language speaking families living in the City of Roanoke may have school aged children who are bi-lingual and can translate for family members.

We will continue to work with the City's Neighborhood Services and Human Resources department to increase our exposure to the Hispanic and other diverse communities.

### **Summation**

Our department continues to expand the Community Involvement Team and its efforts. These team members are highly committed to reaching out to our diverse community and assisting them with hiring opportunities and awareness of

our department and its responsibilities, challenges, accomplishments and technologies used. The Community Involvement Team continues to be successful at its core function of raising community awareness as it relates to our department, public safety and the City as a whole.