

Northeast Regional Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, April 22, 2009
10:00 a.m., St. Louis County EOC - Pike Lake

Proceedings:

Chair Marcus Bruning called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m. Attendees who signed in, who were recognized, and who joined by ITV are as follows:

1. Bill Bernhjelm, DPS/ARMER
2. Brian Belich, Carlton County Sheriff's Office
3. Brian Snyder, DSC Communications
4. Bruce Grotberg, Koochiching County Sheriff's Office
5. Bruce Hegrenes, St. Louis Co./Communications
6. Carey Johnson, Lake County Sheriff's Office
7. Chris Lentz, Motorola
8. Cynthia Suess, Minnesota State Patrol
9. David Dodge, Lakehead Mutual Aid Association
10. Erik Jankila, City of Hibbing
11. Jim Fregin, Federal Engineering
12. Joel Bebeau, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, ECOMM
13. John Bowen, Crow Wing County Emergency Management (ITV)
14. John Hyde, Duluth Radio Shop
15. John Strongitharm, Duluth Fire Department
16. Marcus Bruning, St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
17. Mark Falk, Cook County Sheriff's Office
18. Mark Smith, DSC Communications
19. Mark Stansberry, North Memorial Ambulance (ITV)
20. Mike Fink, Motorola
21. Monte Fronk, 1855 Mille Lacs Reservation/DPS/EM
22. Nell Hoey, Itasca County Sheriff's Office
23. Pat Coughlin, Minnesota DNR
24. Pat Lee, Arrowhead EMS
25. Randy Fisher, Cass County Sheriff's Office
26. Rey Freeman, GeoComm
27. Robert Jensen, Kanabec County Sheriff's Office
28. Roy Holmes, Minnesota HSEM
29. Scott Heide, Crow Wing County (ITV)
30. Scott Camps, St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
31. Steve Ovick, Pine County Sheriff's Office
32. Steve VanKekerix, Lake County Sheriff's Office
33. Terry O'Connor, Leech Lake EMS
34. Tim Lee, Mn/DOT Electronic Communications
35. Tim Thomas, Itasca County Sheriff's Office
36. Tom Hannon, Consultant/State Radio Board
37. Tony Pogorels, Hibbing Fire Department

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I. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions are made by those in attendance in the room and attending via ITV.

II. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Tim Thomas makes a motion to accept last month's minutes as submitted. Randy Fisher seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

III. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

A. Training Committee (Mark Falk)

Mark made contact with Pam Biladeau (DPS/ECN). There will be a meeting on May 29, 2009, in Roseville as it relates to statewide training.

At this point, Mark asks Tim Thomas about the COML training. Tim reports that he and Dewey Johnson attended the three-day event. Tim states there are approximately 25-26 tasks that need to be completed and evaluation forms need to be completed and sent off to the State of Minnesota for certification. Tim states that it is a continuing education process where one needs to be recertified every three years. Bill Bernhjelm states that everyone who went through the class is now classified as a COML trainee and once the package is compiled, it will be presented to the RAC for approval; it will then go to the RRB for approval; and that person's credentials will be forwarded to Tom Johnson in St. Paul. That person will then be credentialed as a COML and be available for service throughout the state. This group could also be used in a train the trainer setting.

B. Policy Committee

Pat Medure sent forms to the meeting that he had been working on (Expense Reimbursement Rates & Policy, User Committee Mileage Reimbursement Policy, Disbursements Policy, Expense Report Form, and an Assigned Representative Expense Reimbursement Authorization form). Tom Hannon states that the reports are consistent with the policies adopted in other regions, which provides for the User Committee receiving mileage. The policy also enables the other groups to receive dollars where appropriate. Mark Falk makes a motion to accept the policies as presented. Bruce Grotberg seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries. These forms will be moved forward to the RRB for their approval.

C. Technical and Operations Committee (Steve Ovick)

Nothing new this month. Steve Ovick reports that the Pine County Board moved to transfer all Emergency Management functions to the Sheriff's Office. Steve states that if anyone in the group has anything for Gene McLain, they should get it

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to him, as that position will be eliminated in three days. The Sheriff's Office will be delegating others to take up the slack. Marcus offers help in any way; Steve states that he will let someone know if it is needed.

D. SRB Operations and Technical Committee (Bruce Hegrenes)

Bruce reports that the meeting was last Tuesday. He reports that agencies on the ARMER system estimate how many radios they will have for the next three years. He states that there is concern regarding over-estimating the amounts. Bruce states that there are new standards for cross-band repeaters and updates for that. Video conferencing was discussed. He clarifies that the meetings are held at the Metropolitan Government Building, they do not have ITV available, so no one can vote via ITV. He states that as people are getting onto the system for interoperability, this RAC will have to make a decision regarding what format should be followed to request to get onto interoperability. DOT and ARMER have indicated that they want formal requests for additions, even for interop for one or two mobiles or portables.

E. State Radio Board Interop Standing Committee (Scott Camps)

At yesterday's meeting, Scott said the main purpose was to talk about the grant workgroup and the 2009 Homeland Security grants. The Interop Committee was asked to make recommendations to the SRB for communications funding. \$5.8 million was allocated from the 2009 Homeland Security grants for interop communications projects. Recommendations to the SRB Finance Committee (which will eventually go to the SRB for funding approval) are as follows: Region 2 (RAC area) \$803,000 to complete microwave links for each PSAP into the ARMER backbone. They voted for \$515,000, which will complete a few links but not all requested; border counties: \$875,000 was requested to complete the dedicated microwave hop along the seven border counties. About \$103,000 was approved. Ron Whitehead has money available to do a detailed implementation study, and a project manager will be utilized to narrow down where the towers are located and what needs to be done. Mn/DOT has built in their design plans for the seven border counties a dedicated DS3 link. Out of that \$5.8 million, division of ECN, it asks for \$3.5 million, and they were granted about \$2.8 million. Part of that is the ARMER implementation in those counties that will be migrating to the 800 MHz system. There may be benefit to areas of this RAC looking at the ARMER program (Aitkin, Pine, and maybe Crow Wing and Cass if they go that direction). There was also talk about the DNR forestry being on MINSEF. There was discussion of maybe making it more general use and not requesting specific authorization.

Bruce Grotberg brought up discussion regarding a man who was in Ft. Francis Friday and from Niagara who sent an e-mail to Brian Youso late Friday or early Saturday a.m. about wanting to meet at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday. He then was gone. This gentleman wants someone to go to Niagara to meet on May 15, 2009. Brian Youso told the man they could not travel that far. The gentleman then asked if they would send someone if his agency paid for it. Bruce jokes that, yes, he may be going to Niagara. No one from the RAC reported receiving any word about this man being in Ft. Francis. Scott Camps asks if it has something to do with the summit Tom Johnson

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has been working on with the Canadians for mid May. Bruce affirms that it does. Bill Bernhjelm asks Bruce to have Brian send him the e-mail and he will send it to Tom Johnson so they can figure out what is going on. Bruce states that he will talk to Bill after the RAC meeting about it.

F. Regional CASM Representative (Karla White)

Karla was absent, and there were no updates.

IV. Old Business

A. GeoComm Regional Radio Survey Update (Rey Freeman)

Ray passes out information on the status of the regional interoperability radio study that has been going on for one year. He reports that, overall, they are at a 93% completion status. He reports that they are having weekly conference calls with Bruce Hegrenes and Scott Camps and are still working with St. Louis Co. and trying to get the last few agencies there, of which they have picked up several. GeoComm has finished attempting to collect anymore surveys from any other agency. He reports that they did a separate NGO/EMS section because of hospitals and private ambulance agencies in the region. Rey reports that they hope to have the rest of the work done by the end of the month. He states that most of the reports are put on the website, as it is updated as sections are completed. Rey states that the EMS report is not on the website yet, because they are waiting for some feedback.

B. FEDERAL ENGINEERING (Jim Fregin)

See Jim's report below.

Table 1 – Report Status

Report statistics	Region	Queued	In progress	Q/A	Review	Revising	Approved/Completed
Existing infrastructure							
	NE	St. Louis	Koochiching	Lake		Carlton Cook Kanabec	Pine
Alternatives reports							
	NE	All					

Table 2 – Survey Statistics

County	Received	Distributed
Carlton	11	19
Cook	6	15
Kanabec	3	15
Koochiching	3	28
Lake	3	14
Pine	8	47
St. Louis	14	176

C. PSAP Consolidation (Marcus Bruning)

Marcus and Pat Medure are on this panel (as well as Commissioner Fenwick), and they had their first meeting in St. Paul last week. Commissioner Campion was in attendance, Mark Shields, Tim Lesley, and a number of reps from around the state talked about PSAP consolidation based on the Governor’s recommendation to look at it. The most important thing for everyone to understand is that it is *not* the Governor’s mandate to consolidate PSAPs. The direction the group has taken thus far is to try to develop a “cookbook” of what is needed to consider if you were to consolidate PSAPs. Areas that consolidated did presentations on hurdles, benefits, issues, etc. Marcus encourages each one present to pass the word around that this is NOT a mandate. It is about giving people tools in case they are considering consolidating PSAPs and what they need to do to get the job done. Funding was allocated by the Governor’s office to hire a consultant to assist in doing some of the work. Monthly meetings are planned. Marcus will keep the RAC informed.

D. User Committee (Marcus Bruning)

Marcus reports that he received information from Tom Hannon regarding a meeting that is coming up for the regional committee chairs throughout Minnesota. Invitations are to chairs and vice chairs of the RACS and members from the Users Committee and Owners & Operators Committees, and administrative support staff from each region throughout the state. Tom Hannon adds that the meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on April 27, 2009, in St. Cloud and will hopefully be done by 3:00 p.m. He states that the biggest objective is to get all the regions to interchange information and develop common objectives and goals. Issues everyone is facing throughout the state will be discussed, and there will be breakout sessions for the respective groups. Initially, it will be the meetings for regions from Greater Minnesota. After it is organized better, the MESB will also be participating. Tom encourages a few people from the User Committee and Owner & Operator people to attend. From the admin side, Tim Thomas and Nell Hoey will be attending. Marcus

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asks if anyone else would like to go and asks the group to contact Tim Thomas if interested. Marcus also asks that Tom Hannon and Tim give a report of how the meeting goes. Carey Johnson states that he would like to send someone from Lake County.

Regarding the User Committee, Nell has received a list from Carlton County, Cook County, Kanabec County, Lake County, City of Duluth, City of Hibbing, MSP/Duluth and Brainerd. She will try resending Pine County's. Nell also goes over the names of the delegates and alternates to the counties and cities of the RAC voting members. The official declaration is as follows, with delegates listed first and then alternates: Aitkin County: Scott Turner and Karla White; Carlton County: Brian Belich and Kelly Lake; Cass County: Kerry Swenson and Randy Fisher; City of Duluth: John Strongitharm and Eric Rish; City of Hibbing: Tony Pogorels and Erik Jankila; City of International Falls: Jerry Jenson (no alternate has been named as of yet); City of Virginia: Dana Waldron and Darrell Knapper; Cook County: Mark Falk and Jim Wiinanen; Crow Wing County: Scott Heide and John Bowen; Itasca County: Tim Thomas and Pat Medure; Kanabec County: Jeff Anderson and Robert Jensen; Koochiching County: Brian Youso and Bruce Grotberg; Lake County: Steve VanKekerix and Carey Johnson; Pine County: Steve Ovick (no alternate has been named as of yet); and St. Louis County: Scott Camps and Marcus Bruning.

John Strongitharm states that he is the alternate RAC seat for the RRB and he is the alternate for the City of Duluth at the RRB meetings; therefore, if Scott Camps could not make a RRB meeting, John would have to be two people at the same time on the RRB. Marcus mentions that he appreciates John bringing this to the RAC's attention. John's intention is to serve as the alternate for the City of Duluth at the RRB meetings. Nominations open for someone to be the alternate to the RAC seat at the RRB meetings. Carey Johnson nominates Steve VanKekerix to be the RAC seat alternate. All the RAC agrees by a verbal vote to this nomination. Marcus mentions that Doris Isham contacted him about representation on the RAC. She told Marcus that she had dug back into the archives and found that the Tribe was not willing to enter into the JPA, and she wondered if their representation on the RAC dissolved with the JPA. Marcus told her that we want all the users to be represented when it comes to input and perspective; however, voting members are restricted by our bylaws. Tom Hannon added that this was correct and that special action would have to be taken to give them a voting seat. Tom adds that they do have the right to attend, as the State Patrol or any other agency. He stated that the JPA could be amended to provide a voting seat, but it would take action to do that. Everyone is in agreement with this. The Tribes can serve on the User Committee if appointed by the county in their areas.

E. 2008 SHSP Grant (Scott Camps/Tim Thomas)

The grant is for \$102,564.00 and pertains to agencies on 800 MHz. The "immediate users" list includes fire and EMS and was whittled down to 12 from 40. Each radio is \$2,400.00, plus installation. Tim Thomas stated that Pat is still waiting for clarification on what some things mean and has not received that information as of

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this date. Scott states that he knows Pat is trying to identify some agencies that were directly affected by Itasca County's transition to 800 MHz.

F. Website (Pat Medure)

Nell reports that the Itasca County MIS department (Chris Worth) sent a quote for the website. The estimate of pages for the website is 10-12; the number of hours to create it would be 20. Estimated ongoing support would be about 1-2 hours a month. The domain name registration is \$9.95 a year. Because the initial creation could not be done during Chris' regular work schedule, he can do it after work for \$41.30/hour. Ongoing support can be done during regular work hours with Nell's assistance and billed at a regular MIS rate of \$27.53. Scott states that there should be money available, and he can bring it before the RRB tomorrow.

Tom Hannon states that the websites have been a critical communications tool for all regions that have them. The cost is included in the regular RRB budget for ongoing maintenance. Tom stated that it could be included in our budget as well.

Marcus asks for a motion for Scott to bring the Itasca County MIS estimate forward to the RRB for approval. Steve Ovick makes a motion and Carey Johnson seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

G. Policy Forms

This was already discussed under Policy (III. B)

H. Updates on stimulus funding (Bill Bernhjelm)

Bill states that he has not seen any updates and that it appears there is a process being worked on to distribute the funds. He is continuing to monitor. Bill mentioned that the Governor's supplemental budget is working its way through the Legislature right now. He adds that DECN (Division of Emergency Communications Networks) asked for \$5 million for local enhancements for agencies that will transition to ARMER. He states that in some cases, additional channel capacity is needed or additional tower sites, etc. The match could be up to 50%. It would not be available for subscriber unit purchases, but would be able to be utilized for infrastructure additions to the ARMER system. Bill states that there is another \$12 million for one-time costs related to the conversion to Next Gen 911. Marcus asks if there is a match for that as well, and Bill states no, that the State is taking care of it. Tom Hannon reminds the group that when ARMER was built up in the Twin Cities/Metro Area, the State did provide matching grants to local units of government that built infrastructure. He states that this is a continuation of that same process and policy. Tom says that it aided in allowing local units of government to add sites or capacity to existing sites, as those costs could be offset by a State participation of up to 50% of the cost of that infrastructure. He states that it was not funded to go beyond those areas when the total funding was provided for the build out, and it was one of the pieces of information that was supposed to come from the FE assessments. Tom states that what they are finding is that some counties (such as Aitkin) have already decided to move ahead and need to be able to have assurance that grant money is available. He states that this is a response to that need and a continuation of that equity issue, so everyone across the state gets treated fairly.

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F. PSIC Grant Progress (Scott Camps)

Just a reminder that there is money available for the 800 MHz radios and there is a timeline to commit to those funds, and if you are going to turn that money back to the RAC, it needs to be done so it can be reallocated. Tim Thomas states that it also has a 20% match. Mark Falk reports that it was around \$41,000 with a match. Tom Hannon asks if the RAC would like a copy of a form the Central Region is using for that certification. Tom states that each one of the partners to the JPA sends the RRB written notification that, yes, they are going to use the money and that they would provide the matching grant amount by that date. Scott agrees the form would be a good idea and wishes it sent to him.

VI. New Business

- A. Steve Ovick asked if everyone got the information from Gene McLain regarding ITV and how to set it up. Scott stated that it was good information and Marcus states that Nell can send it out again for subsequent meetings

VII. Future Meetings - (THESE DATES WILL CHANGE)

- May 27, 2009, 10:00 a.m., International Falls (directions to follow)
- June 24, 2009, 10:00 a.m., Lake County (directions to follow)
- July 22, 2009, 10:00 a.m., Itasca County (directions to follow)

VII: Adjourn

John Strongitharm makes a motion to adjourn. Randy Fisher seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion passes. The meeting adjourns at 11:19 a.m.

AS A REMINDER: THE NEXT MEETING WILL NOT BE MAY 27, 2009. IT WILL BE IN INTERNATIONAL FALLS ON MAY 20, 2009; AT 10:00 A.M., AS PER THE E-MAIL THAT WAS SENT YESTERDAY, APRIL 30, 2009.