

Northeast Regional Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, May 20, 2009
10:00 a.m., Koochiching County Courthouse

Proceedings:

Chair Marcus Bruning called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Attendees who signed in are as follows:

1. Bill Bernhjelm, DPS/ARMER
2. Bill Stroot, Consolidated Telephone Company
3. Brian Snyder, DSC Communications
4. Brian Youso, Koochiching County Sheriff's Office
5. Bruce Grotberg, Koochiching County Sheriff's Office
6. Gene McLain, Pine County HSEM
7. Jeremy Vogel, Rogers Two Way Radio
8. Jerry Jensen, International Falls EMS
9. Jim Fregin, Federal Engineering
10. Jim Wiinanen, Cook County Emergency Management
11. John Bowen, Crow Wing County Emergency Management
12. Marcus Bruning, St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
13. Nell Hoey, Itasca County Sheriff's Office
14. Randy Fisher, Cass County Sheriff's Office
15. Rey Freeman, GeoComm
16. Scott Camps, St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
17. Scott Heide, Crow Wing County
18. Steve VanKekerix, Lake County Sheriff's Office
19. Tim Thomas, Itasca County Sheriff's Office
20. Tom Hannon, Consultant/State Radio Board
21. Tom Ralidak, Minnesota State Patrol
22. Tony Pogorels, Hibbing Fire Department

I. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions are made by those in attendance.

II. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Bruce Grotberg makes a motion to accept last month's minutes as submitted. Tim Thomas seconds the motion. The motion carries.

III. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

A. Training Committee (Tom Hannon for Mark Falk)

Tom talks about the upcoming DECN training that Pam Biladeau is coordinating for DPS. They will be meeting on May 29, 2009, in Shoreview. Future plans are

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to use electronic communications and use the workgroup as a basis for developing a needs list. Tim Thomas, Mark Falk, and Tom Ralidak will be attending.

B. Policy Committee (Marcus Bruning)

The policy forms Pat presented to the RAC last month were accepted by the RRB at their April meeting in Duluth.

C. Technical and Operations Committee (Steve Ovick)

Steve was not at the meeting. Nothing to report.

D. SRB Operations and Technical (Bruce Hegrenes)

Bruce reports that they met a week ago Tuesday and spent two hours going through grants, which included the borders grant and the grant through the Homeland Security region for microwave. Everything that came before this committee was approved, graded, and forwarded. They feel that the dollar amounts they will receive for the grants are pretty accurate and what was forwarded will be approved and funded. It now goes before the State Radio Board. They are waiting for reports from the regions to find out where everyone is in planning for either VHF immersion or ARMER inclusion. The next meeting will be on video, on the second Tuesday of the month at 1300 hours. Anyone interested in seeing what the O&T does is invited. The site in Duluth is at the Mn/DOT center and other conference rooms around the state.

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

Scott reports that they met yesterday to hear Federal Engineering's presentation on their VHF/UHF public safety interop infrastructure planning. FE will be giving presentations at the RRB and RAC meetings in the future. Infrastructure needs for interoperability are being looked at and some other options.

G. Regional CASM Representative (Karla White)

Karla was absent, but she had a survey sent to everyone. Jim Fregin of Federal Engineering (FE) stated that the information being requested in the CASM survey is contained in the data collected by FE. All collected data is available to the county points of contact (POC) for the FE study via download from the FEClientnet site. The data has also been placed in the CASM-provided templates for direct import to CASM, but limited data can be directly imported because the templates were designed that way. Login information for the FEClientnet site was sent via email to each POC. If the email was not received, please contact Jim.

IV. Old Business

A. GeoComm Regional Radio Survey Update (Rey Freeman)

Rey reports that they are working with St. Louis County and gathering information. Some statistics were that St. Louis Co. has 1,000 mobiles for public safety and that about 60% were narrowband compliant; about 2,000 portables in

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public safety that are approximately 75% compliant; and close to 1300 pagers. Key comments that much of the information GeoComm received was good and that people went to much effort to provide specific information; some even included serial numbers.

B. Statewide RAC, User Committee, O&O Committees Training (Tim Thomas)

Tim Thomas reported that he and Nell went to this training in St. Cloud and that it was very helpful and informative. He states there was much information sharing between entities. The meeting was attended by non-Metro RAC members. Scott Wiggins provided ARMER updates and reemphasized that the PSAP consolidation issue is not mandatory. Tom Johnson stressed use of plain language and talked about the CASM and the importance of good information. Mn/DOT gave a presentation and reported that about 75% of the state may be covered with the ARMER system by the end of this year. By the time 2013 is here, approximately 320 towers will be part of the ARMER system. Pam Biladeau also gave a presentation on the training advisory group meeting in Shoreview. Tom Hannon gave updates and we then had breakout sessions. Tom Hannon adds that the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 27, 2009, in the central area. He reports that about 50 people attended, it was all positive, and more people/groups will be included next time. This was a good meeting also because solutions for Greater Minnesota are different than the metro area.

C. DECN Training (Tim Thomas)

Tim elaborates on the prior discussion. Pam Biladeau contacted Tim in April and asked him if he wanted to participate in the meeting. The meeting starts at 8:30 a.m. There will be an overview of the training advisory group. There will be discussion on training needs as well. Tim will report on the DECN meeting at the June RAC meeting.

D. Federal Engineering (Jim Fregin)

Status Report – MNDPS local and regional assessments – NE – May 20, 2009

Report statistics	Region	Queued	In progress	Q/A	Review	Revising	Approved/ Completed
Existing infrastructure							
	NE	St. Louis		Koochiching	Carlton - 1 Cook - 2 Kanabec - 1 Lake - 1		Pine

County	Received	Distributed
Carlton	11	19

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County	Received	Distributed
Cook	6	15
Kanabec	9	15
Koochiching	3	28
Lake	3	14
Pine	closed	closed
St. Louis	14	176

E. PSAP Consolidation (Marcus Bruning)

Marcus states they met once last month. The big message, again, was that consolidation is not a mandate. They are trying to create a recipe or menu of what needs to be considered if consolidation is of interest. The group agreed to hire a consultant to assist with this matter. Money from the State is coming to hire someone. They also heard about challenges from those who have consolidated. Major Al Smith, from the State Patrol, also gave a presentation. Their directive is to try to consolidate 10 PSAPs to 3. Mr. Smith talked about failures and challenges they have faced. The next meeting is scheduled for May 28, 2009.

F. User Committee (Tom Hannon)

Nell reports having volunteers for the User Committee from Carlton County, Cass County, Cook County, Lake County, City of Duluth, City of Hibbing, Kanabec County, MSP--Duluth and Brainerd Districts, and Pine County. Tom states that we could begin the process of convening the committee by setting a date and urging those agencies that have yet to appoint individuals to get them to appoint individuals prior to the convening date, then you set a location, etc., and the Owners and Operators Committee should be created as well. Marcus and Tony will discuss finding a meeting place and time for a convening meeting of the User Committee, with backup help from Tim Thomas.

G. 2008 SHSP Grant (Nell for Pat Medure)

Nell reports that Pat relayed to her that he is still working on this and that it is not yet complete.

H. ARMER Update (Bill Bernhjelm)

Bill reports that the presentation at the RAC Chairs meeting in St. Cloud regarding the sites that will be up and running at the end of the year will be uploaded to the ARMER website. He reports that he does have a couple ARMER radios for demonstration. Anyone interested in seeing this can call Bill.

I. Stimulus Funding (Bill Bernhjelm)

Bill states that the Federal Government is setting up for accepting applications in June.

J. PSIC Grant Progress (Nell)

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Nell reports that she sent out letters of commitment to each entity regarding the fact that they did budget in their 2009 budget for a 20 percent match for their part of the PSIC grant for mobiles and portables. The city of International Falls and Koochiching County are the only two entities that submitted a letter stating they have money budgeted for this grant. The letters will go to Itasca County, as they are the fiscal agent. Tom Hannon encourages the group to get their entities to get moving on this and get their letters turned in, otherwise it impedes the planning process. There was much discussion regarding the multiband radios, as Bruce Hegrenes reports that Mn/DOT has not yet approved them. Jim Fregin states that Motorola is not the only company producing the multiband radios. Bruce Hegrenes states that the radios may not be available for purchase by the time the funds need to be expended. Scott Camps states that the funds by agency need to be expended by September 1, 2009, and then the region will have a chance to reallocate within the region. Scott adds that the money needs to be spent by the region, or it goes back to the State for redistribution. He adds that you can buy the radios, but they may not be approved on the ARMER system. This causes much discussion. Scott also adds that there are no extensions for this grant. The notification needs to be in by July 1, 2009, to the Radio Board, stating that you intend to use the funds, and you need to use them by September 1, 2009. The date can be changed if the group so desires, but he does not think the July 1, 2009, commitment date should be changed. Tom states that he does not think the manufacturers will let it get to the point where they have a radio they've invested in and not take the efforts necessary to get it approved for use on the ARMER system. Marcus encourages the group to keep talking about the radio issue.

K. Management Administrative Funds for RAC (Scott Camps for Pat Lee)

Scott reports that Pat Lee/Arrowhead EMS is the fiscal agent for these funds. He states that \$400.00 was spent for the NEMNRRB convening meeting and there is about \$1100.00 left. The consensus of the group is to use some of these funds for the User Committee convening meeting and maybe the Owners and Operators group. The group is invited to let Scott Camps, Pat Lee, or Marcus Bruning know if they have other ideas.

VI. New Business

A. Joint meeting of the RAC and RRB (Scott Camps)

There will be a joint meeting on June 25, 2009, of the RAC and RRB. FE will be doing a presentation on VHF/UHF Interoperability Infrastructure Draft Report. Tom Justin may be able to also come up and do basic training on talk groups for whoever wants some education on the system. User Committee appointees will also be invited. The June meeting schedule will be: 9:00 a.m. RAC meeting (budgetary issues); 10:00 a.m. is the joint meeting and presentation for the RRB and RAC; after the joint presentation the RAC and RRB will have their meetings simultaneously. Steve Van Kekerix makes a motion to hold the joint presentation and RAC and RRB meetings on June 25, 2009, in Lake County, and Scott Camps seconds the motion. The motion carries.

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B. Consolidated Telecommunications Company - Bill Stroot

Bill reports that there is \$7 billion on broadband stimulus money available. \$2.5 will be distributed by Rural Utility Services and the recipient of the funding will likely be RUS borrowers. CTC has had 27 loans with RUS. CTC is planning a broadband wireless deployment if they are successful with the grant application. The areas affected are: southern Cass, all of Crow Wing, all of Morrison, all of Aitkin, all of Carlton Counties, and the northern part of Mille Lacs. Bill states that they need towers, which these areas have, and in exchange for free space, CTC will provide free fiber optics connectivity to all these towers that will aid in mobile data interoperability and high speed internet. This would open up the door for future public safety communication. Unserved and underserved areas will meet part of the criteria of the application. Other criteria include schools, hospitals, and public safety. CTC can meet these criteria as well. The reason for Bill's presentation was to solicit support from the NERAC so they can earn points toward this grant. Randy Fisher makes a motion of support from the RAC. Bruce Grotberg seconds the motion. The motion carries. Scott Camps will bring the matter before the RRB. Marcus Bruning has copies of letters of support they have received already. Nell will e-mail those out to the RAC members. Marcus will write a letter on behalf of the RAC and encourages those present to have their organizations write a letter.

Future Meetings

- Future RAC meetings will be the third Wednesday so it can be held prior to the RRB meetings.
- June 25, 2009, 10:00 a.m., Lake County (place to be determined)
- July 15, 2009, 10:00 a.m., Itasca County, Sheriff's Office Training Room, Itasca County Courthouse
- August 19, 2009; 10:00 a.m., Hibbing (directions to follow)

Other Business: Bill Bernhjelm states that TIC Plan training is June 9-10, 2009, in Thief River Falls. Bill will attend the meeting and bring the information back to the RAC.

VII: Adjourn

The meeting adjourns at noon.