

**Northeast Regional Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, February 17, 2010
10:00 a.m., Pike Lake EOC**

Proceedings:

Chair Marcus Bruning called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. Attendees who signed in or who were recognized are as follows:

1. Bill Bernhjelm, DPS/ARMER
2. Brian Belich, Carlton County Sheriff's Office
3. Brian Snyder, DSC Communications
4. Bruce Hegrenes/St. Louis Co./Communications
5. Chris Lentz, Motorola
6. Cynthia Suess, Minnesota State Patrol
7. Dana Putzke, Duluth Police Department
8. Dewayne Kvande, Roger's Two-Way Radio
9. Dewey Johnson, St. Louis County 911
10. Diane Thompson, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
11. Eric Mack, DSC Communications
12. Harry Algyer, Shetak Consulting
13. Jeff Anderson, Kanabec County Sheriff's Office
14. Jim Wiinanen, Cook County Emergency Management
15. John Bowen, Crow Wing County Emergency Management
16. John Hyde, Duluth Radio Shop
17. John Keenan, AREMA
18. Karla White, Aitkin County Sheriff's Office
19. Kerry Swenson, Cass County Sheriff's Office
20. Marcus Bruning, St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
21. Marilyn Cluka, Minnesota Department of Health
22. Mark Smith, DSC Communications
23. Mark Stansberry, North Memorial Ambulance
24. Mike Fink, Motorola
25. Monte Fronk, Mille Lacs Reservation/ DPS/EM
26. Nell Hoey, Itasca County Sheriff's Office
27. Nick Schatz, Mn/DOT
28. Pat Medure, Itasca County Sheriff's Office
29. Patrice Nelson, Minnesota State Patrol/Brainerd District
30. Renee Holmes-Holt, Pine County Sheriff's Office
31. Rey Freeman, GeoComm
32. Rick Morrow, GeoComm
33. Scott Camps, St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
34. Scott Heide, Crow Wing County
35. Steve Olson, Lake County Sheriff's Office
36. Steve Ovick, Pine County Sheriff's Office
37. Steve VanKekerix, Lake County Sheriff's Office
38. Todd Pieper, GeoComm
39. Tim Lee, Mn/DOT Electronic Communications
40. Tim Thomas, Itasca County Sheriff's Office
41. Tom Hannon, Governance Consultant
42. Tony Pogorels, Hibbing Fire Department

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I. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions are made by those in attendance.

II. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

MOTION made by Monte Fronk to accept last month's minutes as submitted. Steve VanKekerix seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

III. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

A. Training

Mark Falk is absent. No report.

B. Policy (Pat Medure)

Pat states that there is nothing to report at this time, but that we will move the same budget forward to the RRB that we adopted for 2010.

MOTION made by Steve Ovick to recommend moving the same budget forward to the RRB for acceptance as was adopted in 2010. Tim Thomas seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

C. Technical and Operations (Steve Ovick)

Steve reports that Pine County will add Naomi Koenig, from SMDC Ambulance Service to their Users Committee. Steve reports that HSEM Region II purchased 67 dual-band portable radios from DSC and that the distribution method will be decided during the Governor's conference. An e-mail will be sent to emergency managers requesting what frequencies need to be programmed into the radios for their agencies on the VHF side.

D. SRB Operations and Technical (Bruce Hegrenes)

Bruce states that there was a meeting on Tuesday, February 9, 2010, and the majority of the agenda was acceptance of participation plans--three were from the NE Region (Aitkin, Crow Wing, and Cass Counties). Bruce states they will be moved on to the SRB. Murray County also presented a participation plan that was approved. They are currently going through educational requirements for ARMER. Bruce adds that all meetings for OTC are via video-conference and if anyone is interested, sites can be added. A committee has been started to look at the blackboard, which is a system that provides information to each dispatch agency, and they are looking for representatives from Greater Minnesota to serve on this committee. Bruce states that ID requests are continuing to come in.

E. SRB Interop Standing Committee (Scott Camps)

Scott states that 2010 Homeland Security grants were approved at the last RAC and RRB meeting to submit application from the NE for \$450,000 to be available for the PSAP to ARMER link and another \$100,000 for end user equipment throughout the Region. In 2009 the Homeland Security Region received about \$500,000 for the PSAP to ARMER link. Scott encourages counties--particularly

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the three moving to ARMER--to apply for funding. Lowell Sedlacek, Kanabec County Emergency Management, is the fiscal agent for the 2009 grant. There are two categories where there may be 2010 money available for regions--one is for interoperable communications and the other is for infrastructure. Scott states that the timelines are short--applications need to be submitted to HSEM by Friday, February 19, 2010. Scott adds that they will get together as a grant workgroup twice next week and review applications and make recommendations. He states that Ron Whitehead will be making recommendations to several groups as well. Scott adds that they will not go back to ask for clarification so please read the grant notice to make sure all the information is included if you are applying.

F. Regional CASM (Karla White)

Karla states there is online training today and tomorrow. Harry Algyer states that John Dooley will be doing CASM training on April 14, 2010, and it will be available via video-conferencing.

G. NERAC Interoperability Committee (Scott Camps/Tim Thomas)

Scott states that as other counties go on ARMER, policies will need to be reviewed. Tim Thomas adds that Tom Hannon is working on a statewide interop conference at the end of April. Tom reminds the group that this will be the first interop conference, and it is scheduled for April 28-30, 2010, in St. Cloud, at the Civic Center. Registration: \$125/person, unless you are sponsored and approved by your RRB, then the registration will be \$50/person. Invitations are going to neighboring states, a few Canadian provinces, and other states that have gone to the statewide system. Tom states that there will be something for everyone; workshops, general session/speakers, break-outs. They will try to end the conference by early afternoon. Regarding training grant dollars, Pat Medure states that there is \$81,489.15 left in PSIC training funds and \$8,762.76 left in the 2009 IEC grant. Pat asks others to keep in mind that there may be future training. Tom Hannon adds that the conference registration includes 4 meals--breakfast and lunch on Thursday and Friday, and the hotel gave them a real break on rooms.

MOTION made by Kerry Swenson to recommend to the RRB that they give approval to use up to a maximum of \$300.00 per person in PSIC training funds for three members of the 15 JPA agencies to attend this conference. Pat Medure seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

MOTION made by Karla White for RRB approval of sponsoring anyone who would like to attend this conference from the 15 agencies at the reduced rate. Dewey Johnson seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

Much discussion follows regarding who can be included, how many, or if it should be wide open to see how much interest there is and then a decision can be made regarding who goes in March. Tom Hannon hopes to have a brochure out to send to the RACs and RRBs. Pat Medure recommends to Chair Bruning that once the brochure is sent with an e-mail of explanation and a deadline, the RAC can make a decision at the March RAC meeting of who to send from the other groups.

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H. User Committee (Monte Fronk/Erik Jankila)

In Erik's absence, Monte explains the two procedures the User Committee is bringing forward. The first one is in reference to Management, under Sub-Section 1.5. It addresses standards, protocols, purpose, and objectives. Feedback is welcome. The next relates to Sub-Section 1.7, and deals with Subscriber Radio Standards. Monte states that this information basically comes from the State website and the Central Region utilized it as well. This information was sent to everyone via e-mail. Pat Medure states if the standard is adopted for the Northeast Region, we would be approving radios on the system. He asks Tim Lee, Mn/DOT, the question of if we approve something different than what the State approves for radios on the system, how does that work. Tim states that you have to go by what the State approves on the system. Pat states that we may need something in the standard that reflects that fact. Tim Lee states that this goes back to a general question and states that we have a statewide radio system, we have the Statewide Radio Board that has created standards, and some of those standards apply to the system as a whole and part of our RAC/RRB agreement with Mn/DOT and any user that comes on the system is that the SRB standards and any standards created by our Region will be followed. Tim states that the question is which of the State standards needs to be modified to fit things in our Region and which just get left to run by. Tim states that it is confusing, as on the State level, we have a statewide system and the radios on the system all have to be approved and they need to be tested and shown to work with the system. He asks if we are going to do testing and certify different radios or just go with the State standards. Monte states that we need to make sure that all mobiles and portables meet the State standards. Pat Medure states that if the State already set the standard, we cannot go out and do our own testing and put this radio on the system without State approval, and if we feel we need to adopt a standard for radio equipment on the system, we should just adopt the State standard. Pat reiterates Tim's question by asking if we really need to adopt that standard if it is a State standard across the whole spectrum of the system. Marcus states that maybe the RAC needs to ask the User Committee to look at all the standards and decide which ones they want to work on that would be more stringent than the State standard. Discussion went into what other regions were doing. Monte will talk to Erik and get back to the RAC.

Monte reports to the RAC that he finally got a response from the other 10 tribal governments and stated that they are going to move forward with proposing a statewide tribal talkgroup for tribal fire, EMS, law enforcement/emergency management.

I. Owners and Operators Committee (Dewey Johnson)

Dewey states that they just formed their committee last month and he is the Chair, Steve Olson is the Vice-Chair, and they are in need of a Recording Secretary. They will be having a meeting after the RAC meeting today. He states that Scott Heidi is their Regional Radio Board representative and Steve Olson is the alternate RRB representative.

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IV. Old Business

A. ARMER Update (Bill Bernhjelm)

- Sales Tax Exemption Bill is coming up for discussion again. It is House File 2592. Nothing on the Senate side. Pat Medure states that it is very, very important that everyone present makes contact with their state senators, state representatives, county commissioners and administrators to pass it. He states that it is a fairness issue across the board, as all we are asking for is what the Metro received. Marcus adds that it would mean \$500,000.00 for St. Louis County.
- The regional leadership meeting in St. Cloud is scheduled for May 10, 2010--information went out via e-mail.
- Motorola has sale prices out until April on the XTS, XTL, and the dual-band APX.
- More towers are going up at various sites. Tim Lee adds that the latest map can be seen on the ARMER website.

B. Website (Nell Hoey)

Nell reports that she has contacted Itasca County MIS, but they have not had time to put in our new information.

C. 2010 Grants (Scott Camps)

Scott did address this earlier. Regarding 2009, there are dollars available through DECN. Scott states that \$2.6 million of Homeland Security funding was given to DECN. He states that there is up to \$30,000.00 available for participation plans per county; \$175,000.00 available for ARMER infrastructure; up to \$40,000.00 for member subscriber equipment. Part of the application requirement is to get approval by the RRB before submitting to the DECN for funding. There were around 12 requests for funding last week. This information is posted on the ARMER website so you can see who is asking for what. \$5 million was allocated by the Legislature to DPS to support local integration to the ARMER system. Applications must be approved by a RRB, and it allows up to \$1 million with a 50% cost match for infrastructure.

D. PSIC (Scott Camps/Pat Medure)

Scott points out that there are still counties that have not requested reimbursement from Itasca County (Aitkin, Kanabec) and Cass County still needs to spend their reallocation dollars. He urges them to get moving. Bill Bernhjelm states that the deadline for spending is 2011 for us and 2012 with federal approval. A matrix of the PSIC spending was passed out at the meeting. Pat Medure states that when Itasca County gets the invoices from entities, they are sent up for payment and we do not wait for the State to pay us. Reimbursement is then sought from the State. He adds that the sooner we get the invoices, the sooner the payment will be made.

E. Grant Synopsis (Pat Medure)

Pat states that the PSIC grant was already discussed and the training grant is the other one. Pat stated that he will be applying for another one next month for

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\$38,000.00 for interop equipment. There were handouts for the training grants.

F. Chairman Bruning's Letter to Terry O'Connor, Leech Lake EMS

**This is talked about later in the meeting.* Diane Thompson asks Marcus to talk a bit more about the letter to Terry O'Connor. Marcus explains that the RAC decided to have Marcus write Terry a letter explaining what their involvement is in the RAC, which Marcus did. Marcus states that he explained how the RAC was set up and that we want input from everyone, but the RAC members were limited to those owning infrastructure. Marcus states that he encouraged Terry to contact the people who would be representing his organization (Itasca and Cass Counties).

G. TIC Plan Update (Harry Algyer)

Harry states that the NE TIC Plan is close to being done and a draft will be available in the next two weeks. Harry asks those present to scrutinize the draft when it is available and will assume everything is correct if he hears nothing. Harry goes over the Tactical Interoperable Communication Plan he has been working on with the group and highlights sections, terms, protocol, etc.

H. Canadian Interop Meeting (Bill Bernhjelm)

Bill states that they had a good meeting, there was a lot of interest, there was a good turnout, good discussion, etc. There is need for further communications and updating cross-border agreements that exist for things outside of the forest fire arena. Another meeting is planned. In addition, there is a border meeting with Ontario and Manitoba on April 7-8, 2010, at the Holiday Inn, in International Falls. It is being coordinated by Minnesota Department of Health and Roy Holmes from HSEM. Issues: cross-border health issues, law enforcement, etc. Meetings in Manitoba are moving along as well. Watch e-mail for updates.

V. New Business

A. Gateway Training (Dewey Johnson)

Dewey states that he and Bruce are going to attend the Gateway Training in St. Cloud and wondered if it would be covered. Marcus asks if anyone else is going to the training. Scott reminds the group that up to \$3,000.00 could be spent w/o RRB approval if there was not time to get an okay, but the RRB would be kept in the know as far as what got approved. Harry Algyer adds that anyone who staffs a mobile communication vehicle would benefit from the training.

MOTION is made by Monte Fronk to give up to \$200.00 reimbursement per person of the training funds to those going to the Gateway Training. Pat Medure seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

*** Addition to Agenda: IECPG - Crow Wing County (John Bowen)**

John states that next week they are planning on taking two of the IECP grants to the RRB for application approval. Out of the SHSP grant, they are requesting \$40,000.00 in user equipment and \$175,000 for infrastructure costs. John states

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that this is a non-cost share grant. Out of the DECN grant, they are requesting \$762,500, at a 50% cost-share, for a project that costs over \$1.5 million for infrastructure. John states that their participation plan was approved by the RRB and approved by the OTC two weeks ago.

MOTION by Pat Medure to submit Crow Wing County's SHSP and DECN grant application requests to the RRB for their approval. Steve VanKekerix seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

*Bruce Hegrenes interjects here that the legislation for sales tax exemption is not Greater Minnesota exemption; it is only adding the rest of the counties in Phase 3, which is Big Stone, Chippewa, Lincoln, Rendo, Swift, Yellow Medicine, and one other county. He states there is a companion Senate bill. The interest is in there to include 4, 5, and 6. He states that it was introduced on the 4th in the Taxes Committee. It was 22-24 on the Senate side and 25-92 on the House side. Funds would not be available for purchase before the June 30, 2010.

B. Carlton County and Pine County Request Approval to Apply for Participation Plan Funding (Brian Belich and Steve Ovick)

There is discussion over whether or not one needs to get approval for this, due to e-mails from Ron Whitehead. The application seems to state otherwise. The RAC feels it would not hurt to have it. Pat Medure states that part of the DECN grant requirement is to receive authorization from the RRB.

MOTION made by Steve Vankekerix to make a request to the RRB to allow application of DECN funds for a participation plan for Carlton/Pine Counties. Monte Fronk seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

VI. Future Meetings

- March 24, 2010, Pine County Sheriff's Office (Third Floor)
- April 21, 2010 (To be determined--may be done via video-conferencing)

VII. Adjourn

A motion is made by Monte Fronk to adjourn. Steve Ovick seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries. The meeting adjourns at 11:33 a.m.