

**Northeast Regional Advisory Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, November 17, 2010  
10:00 a.m., St. Louis County (Pike Lake EOC) Host**

**Proceedings:**

Chair Marcus Bruning calls the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. Roll call attendees are as follows:

1. Bill Bernhjelm, DPS/ARMER
2. Brian Belich, Carlton County Sheriff's Office
3. Bruce Hegrenes, St. Louis Co./Communications
4. Chris Lentz, Motorola
5. Cynthia Suess, Minnesota State Patrol
6. Dana Putzke, Duluth Police Department
7. Dewayne Kvande, Roger's Two-Way Radio
8. Dewey Johnson, St. Louis County 911
9. Eric Mack, DSC Communications
10. Jeff Anderson, Kanabec County Sheriff's Office
11. John Hyde, Duluth Radio Shop
12. Marcus Bruning, St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
13. Mark Falk, Cook County Sheriff's Office
14. Mark Smith, DSC Communications
15. Mike Fink, Motorola
16. Nell Hoey, Itasca County Sheriff's Office
17. Nick Schatz, Mn/DOT OEC
18. Pat Medure, Itasca County Sheriff's Office
19. Rey Freeman, GeoComm
20. Steve VanKekerix, Lake County Sheriff's Office
21. Tim Lee, Mn/DOT Electronic Communications
22. Tom Ralidak, Minnesota State Patrol
23. Tony Pogorels, Hibbing Fire Department
24. Ross Litman, St. Louis County Sheriff's Office

**I. INTRODUCTIONS**

Introductions are made by those in attendance.

**II. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

**MOTION** made by Mark Falk 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)**

Mark talks about receiving his log-in for the training through Alex Technical College and how he did some training in Radio 101. He states that it was simple

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and easy to follow. Dewey asks what will be done for the rural areas that only have dial-up and wonders if a CD can be made up for them. Bill Bernhjelm states that he will check into the matter. Pat Medure adds that it is a good course and was put together well. Mark Falk brings up Steve Olson's memo regarding looking for a password and how he had contacted Tom Johnson last week to get it so he could get into the training modules, but he has not heard from Tom. Pat Medure adds that the password was not out yet. Bill states that the T.A.G. group would be used as the test group. Other training modules coming will be: control stations and how to operate patching for dispatchers and basic trunking.

**B. Policy (Pat Medure)**

Pat states that Itasca County's JPA resolution will go before the Itasca County Board next week. Nell states that she has received paperwork back from Aitkin County, Cass County, and the City of Virginia. Tony adds that Hibbing should be coming soon. Pat encourages those present to try to see that those get in before the end of the year so everyone gets a clean copy.

**C. Technical and Operations (Bruce Hegrenes)**

Steve Ovick's last day was last Friday and he was a part of the Technical and Operations Committee. Bruce states that nothing has changed on this committee in the last month. Bruce reminds the group that this committee deals with interoperable/technical issues between counties or issues related to the State system, as far as the region is concerned. Bill Bernhjelm adds that Steve Ovick was the representative on the Strategic Technology Reserve Committee, along with Pat Medure and Bruce Hegrenes. This matter will be further addressed under New Business.

**D. SRB Operations and Technical (Bruce Hegrenes)**

Scott Camps attended this meeting for Bruce and the highlight was that the Lake County Participation Plan and the statewide talkgroup request was approved by the OTC and recommended to go to the SRB. Bruce states that there were a lot of action items that they did not get to. He states that the fiscal year 2010 DECN allocations were approved, as well as the ARMER integration grants for \$5 million in 2010-2011 and the fiscal year 2010 SHSP DECN allocations for \$1.75 million. The next meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2010.

**E. SRB Interop Standing Committee**

(Scott Camps is absent; there is nothing to report under this item.)

**F. Regional CASM (Karla White)**

Karla was absent at today's meeting, but she did send word to Nell that there was nothing new to report.

**G. User Committee and Owners and Operators Committee (Dewey Johnson)**

Dewey reports that they hope to have three policies before the RAC in December. He adds that they are having trouble pushing policies through in a timely manner and Bill Bernhjelm suggests that they contract out for a planner to help keep this committee on track. John Keenan's name came up as a possibility. Bill states

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that there is planning money available and it should be used or it will be taken away. Bill states that a planner can organize what monies are available from what pot so you know what there is to work with and when a grant will expire. He states that a grants manager cannot be hired, but you can hire an interoperability planner; you cannot hire them as an employee; they must be hired as a contractor. Bill adds that the NW Region just hired a contract planner for their region. Bill encourages the group to look into this so things are more organized and can flow better. Pat Medure reports that there is \$103,000.00 for planning through AREMA and suggests that with emergency management coming under the joint powers, there may be an opportunity for funding. Nell asks for verification that the standards and policies that the Owners and Operators and User Committees passed through the RAC were still on hold. Dewey states that this is correct. Marcus asks if the planner decision would be negotiated by the RRB or if the RAC would recommend it to them. Bill Bernhjelm states that it should be brought forward as an agenda item to the RRB and contract amendments should be put together and brought to the RRB with the name of the person selected for contractor to do the named tasks for a certain number of hours and then indicate the funding source to them. Once the RRB approves it, the final paperwork will be done with the contractor. He states that the RRB could also go look for someone they desire through an RFP. Bill will get an example of the "scope of work." Marcus suggests putting a committee together to put together a scope of work proposal that Scott Camps can bring to the RRB. Pat Medure adds that he will look at the funding available. The discussion ends with the following people volunteering to get together to help with this project: Pat Medure, Marcus Bruning, Bill Bernhjelm, and Dewey Johnson. Marcus will talk to Scott about floating the idea by the RRB at Friday's meeting.

**IV. Old Business**

**A. ARMER Update (Tim Lee and Bill Bernhjelm)**

- Tim reports that in the last month they added another 10 sites, 5 of them being in Cook County. He states that there are about 15 sites expected to go on the air in the next month and there are another 12 sites where concrete was being poured. He states that they keep moving along. There were comments about coverage in the BWCA and questions regarding what direction the DNR would be taking and discussion about Forestry and the State Patrol.
- Bill comments on a standard that was sent out regarding use of interop statewide talkgroups for exercises and training and how those resources get assigned. Comments should be directed to Tom Johnson or Bill Bernhjelm by November 22, 2010.
- Bill states that an EMS standard was sent out to the User Committee. Comments regarding this standard should be directed to Bill Bernhjelm. The next meeting on this matter will be December 3, 2010.
- A presentation regarding the requirements of the NECP will be given by Bill Bernhjelm and Tom Johnson at the next RAC meeting. Nell sent out a booklet on the evaluations to everyone in the past.

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- Reminder that the Statewide Interoperability Conference is scheduled in St. Cloud on January 24-26, 2010.
- Northome has towers on the air in Koochiching County.
- Ontario/Minnesota interoperability meeting in December regarding discussions on border interoperability.
- Bill reports that there is no news of the cross-border demonstration grant project but will keep people posted.
- There is a volunteer group based in Aurora looking for used radio equipment. They did not get any UHF equipment, but they did get some VHF equipment and would like any VHF equipment anyone wishes to get rid of.
- The VHF frequency planning meeting was the first part of November. Brad Barber, from Federal Engineering, talked about the interoperability VHF plan. Bill states that Scott Camps represented the region at that meeting. The outcome is that there is a VHF interoperability zone that will be created for use in the Strategic Technology Reserve in any units continuing to use VHF radios. The last chance for comments regarding this matter will be at the interoperability conference, where Brad will make a presentation.
- Bruce Hegrenes asks Bill to talk about the DECN \$5 million grant. Bill states that if it came through the OTC intact, then the Steering Committee was next and then on to the SRB. Pat Medure states that they are all set to go for approval tomorrow at the SRB and that the Finance Committee approved them last Thursday. Pat Medure adds that Ron Whitehead is working on a mechanism to evaluate grants via certain criteria that is on a point system. Pat states that the Finance Committee voted to give dollars to people who are ready to go. He ends by encouraging the group to go to the ARMER website to find the meeting materials.

**B. Website (Nell Hoey)**

Nell reports that Chris Worth/MIS was going to come to today's meeting but because we met in person at Pike Lake, she asked Chris to come to the next meeting via ITV and talk about the website, how it could be linked into the SRB website--like Bill had suggested--and other matters.

**C. Jurisdictional Updates (Marcus Bruning)**

Mark Falk thanks Pat, Tim, and Marlyn for going up to Cook County to meet with their User Committee. He states that they brought radios and spoke to dispatch from the commissioners' room in the courthouse. Mark states that the message received was as clear as a bell, the room was stirred, and Grand Portage Ambulance sent him an e-mail stating, "We're going ARMER."

**D. Leadership Group Meeting (Dewey Johnson)**

Monday, October 25, 2010, was the last meeting and Dewey reported on that last month.

**E. Joint Powers Agreements (Pat Medure)**

This was already addressed earlier. Pat reiterates to keep things moving. He adds that the Itasca County Board of Commissioners was happy to see that the tribes

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were going to be included, as per legislation.

**F. Wisconsin Border Meeting (Bill Bernhjelm)**

This meeting is set for December 7, 2010, and will be in Rosemount at DCC.

**V. New Business**

**A. St. Louis County Participation Plan and Statewide Talkgroup Access (Rey Freeman/GeoComm)**

Rey gives a well-orchestrated presentation of the St. Louis County ARMER Participation Plan, which is the largest one in the region. He encourages everyone to look in the plan for finer details, as everyone received a copy. He adds that five statewide talkgroups are also being requested: North Law, South Law, Fire/EMS, Tech, and Emergency Button. Tim Lee adds that they want to make sure people understand that Level 7 priority is to be used infrequently and not to work on--it is just to be utilized for call-back. He adds that there could be issues if people are roaming and using it on a large scale.

**MOTION** made by Steve VanKekerix to move the St. Louis County Participation Plan and five talkgroup requests on to the RRB for their approval to move it on to the SRB. Mark Falk seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

**\*\*Addition to the Agenda:** Monte Fronk had talked about a project he would like to see developed through the use of some of our IECGP grant funding. The proposal is to create a video for newly-elected tribal officials which would stress communication and interoperability with local, county, regional, and federal agencies and talk with them about what plans they need in place (NIMS and P-25 interop requirements) and have funding available to do some sort of full-scale exercise. Monte would like to see this video given to all 11 tribal governments in Minnesota. Marcus and Pat Medure spoke about it and Pat stated that maybe we should think, as a group, about expanding this to include education for all elected officials. Marcus states that this could assist our newly-elected officials with information on interoperability and bring them up to speed. Bill Bernhjelm adds that this matter sounds like a statewide issue, and he will see if a module can be developed by Alexandria Technical College so that there could maybe be more than a video. He adds that some of these colleges are getting into video production, however, and maybe they can do it there. Pat Medure tells Bill that the concept of continuing to educate elected officials was on the to-do list for the SRB. Bill states that Safecom may have something from the national level as well, and he will dig around to find out.

**B. Committee Nominations (Marcus Bruning)**

Nominations for Chair, Vice-Chair, RRB representative, OTC representative will be discussed at next month's meeting. He adds that some action needs to be taken today regarding the Technical and Operations position Steve Ovick held. Marcus also states that the group needs to be thinking of a head for the Policy Committee when Pat Medure retires. John Hyde states that he is willing to be involved.

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Bruce reminds the group that in order to be on these committees, one must be a delegate or an alternate of the RAC. Marcus tells John that he can still be involved in the Committee. Steve VanKekerix is volunteered by another to be the rep on the Technical and Operations Committee.

**C. Sheriff Pat Medure Appreciation (Sheriff Litman)**

Sheriff Litman takes this opportunity to thank Pat--on behalf of the RAC and all the other sheriffs in Region 2--for his leadership and partnership with everyone. He states that Pat has been a good friend, a great resource to many, and states that we are all going to miss him. He congratulates Pat on his upcoming retirement, his career as a sheriff in the state of Minnesota and wishes him the best of luck and good health. Everyone claps and we all enjoy cake and ice-cream provided by Dewey and others.

**VI. Future Meetings**

- December 15, 2010, Lake County (Silver Bay) will host via ITV
- January 19, 2010, Itasca County will host via ITV

**VII. Adjourn**

**MOTION** made by Mark Falk to adjourn the meeting. Steve VanKekerix seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries. The meeting adjourns at 11:28 a.m.