

Northeast Minnesota Regional Radio Board Meeting
ITV Sites: Grand Rapids/S.O. Training Room (Host), Carlton County
Jail Basement; Lake County/Silver Bay Service Center; Pine County
Law Enforcement Center; Duluth Fire Station
April 8, 2010; 2:00 p.m.

Board: (☒ = present; ☐ = not present)

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mark Wedel/Aitkin | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Peg Sweeney/St. Louis |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marvin Bodie/Carlton | <input type="checkbox"/> Tony Cuneo/Duluth |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Dowson/Cass | <input type="checkbox"/> Tim Harkonen/Hibbing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Robert Fenwick/Cook | <input type="checkbox"/> Tim McBride/International Falls |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paul Thiede/Crow Wing | <input type="checkbox"/> Larry Cuffe/Virginia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catherine McLynn/Itasca | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Camps/NE RAC |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kevin Troupe/Kanabec | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mark Stansberry/User Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charles Lepper/Koochiching | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Heidi/O&O Committee |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thomas Clifford/Lake | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stephen Hallan/Pine (acting alternate board member for now) | |

Alternates: (☒ = present; ☐ = not present)

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|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Turner/Aitkin County | <input type="checkbox"/> Keith Nelson/St. Louis County |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Belich/Carlton County | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Strongitharm/City of Duluth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dick Downham/Cass County | <input type="checkbox"/> Rick Wolf/City of Hibbing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jan Hall/Cook County | <input type="checkbox"/> Brian McBride/City of Int. Falls |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doug Houge/Crow Wing County | <input type="checkbox"/> (No Alternate/City of Virginia) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pat Medure/Itasca County | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Van Kekerix/RAC |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Steve Schulz/Kanabec County | <input type="checkbox"/> Kerry Swenson/User Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rich Sve/Lake County | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Olson/O&O Committee |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Ovick/Pine County | |

Guest Speakers:

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting is called to order at 2:10 p.m. by Chairman Jim Dowson, Cass County.

APPROVE THE AGENDA

There were no additions or corrections to the agenda. *A motion is made by Sheriff Scott Turner to accept the agenda. Commissioner Sweeney seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries. **** (Nell reminds the group that the budget item (5. i.) would be skipped until next month.)**

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The meeting minutes from February 25, 2010, stood approved as submitted.

REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

- Scott Camps informs the group to refer to the March 24, 2010, minutes for details of the grant workgroup decisions. Scott reminds the group of the request submitted from the NE RRB for \$450,000 for the PSAP to ARMER link and another \$100,000 for end user ARMER equipment. Scott states that the Northeast ranked second highest and is eligible for up to 24% of the available funds via a formula based on counties and population. From there, it went to the Operations/Technical Committee; then the Finance Committee; then the State Radio Board Interop Committee; and was forwarded to the SRB on March 25, 2010.
- Sheriff Medure makes a motion to approve spending \$300.00/person in PSIC training funds to send 40 individuals from the JPA entities to the Interop Conference in St. Cloud this month. Commissioner Clifford seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries. Nell will send an expense form to the 40.
- A motion was made by Sheriff Medure to accept and pay Dewey Johnson's Gateway Training expenses in the amount of \$124.66, which had been moved forward from the RAC. Commissioner Bodie seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.
- FYI: Resolutions from Lake and Cook Counties were sent to the DECN declaring their intentions to move to ARMER and to engage in a participation plan.
- FYI: Steve VanKekerix (Lake County) applied for a port security grant. Scott adds that St. Louis County/City of Duluth also applied for port security grants in 2008, 2009, and 2010, which are all pending. A portion will be for interop communications equipment. The RAC will be having updates from members regarding grants that agencies have applied for and will update the RRB, so everyone knows what is being done in the Region.
- The RAC requests that the RRB approve Lake County's desire to seek participation plan funding through DECN. Commissioner Clifford makes a motion to accept Lake County's desire to seek participation plan funding through DECN. Commissioner Sweeney seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.
- The RAC requests that the RRB approve Cook County's desire to seek participation plan funding through DECN. Commissioner Bodie makes a motion to accept Cook County's desire to seek participation plan funding through DECN. Commissioner Clifford seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.
- The RRB received a request from Tom Johnson to sign a resolution approving a grant application for the Border Interoperability Demonstration Grant Program, which is a federal program with \$29 million dollars available. They are looking for demonstration projects on both the northern and southern borders, which can be replicated elsewhere throughout the border areas. Ron Whitehead and DECN have been working with all of the border counties for control stations, end user dual band radio equipment, infrastructure, and they are trying to link all seven border counties to the Port of Duluth; and that they are doing all the grant application, along with Mn/DOT and the ARMER program. Scott states that they are looking for support from the RRBs and counties so the letter of support can be submitted with the grant applications. John Strongitharm makes a motion to sign

the resolution in support of the BIDP grant submission. Commissioner Sweeney seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

- Scott informs the RRB that at the last RAC meeting there was a request for a letter of support from the RRB that agencies could send in when applying for firefighter grants. He states there was discussion that a general letter could be written for all of the public safety agencies in the Region to use showing RRB support of those agencies seeking funding for interoperable communications equipment. Nell and Bill Bernhjelm volunteered to write the letter with RRB approval. Commissioner Sweeney makes a motion to allow Nell and Bill to draft a letter from the RRB showing support of those agencies seeking funding for interoperable communications. Sheriff Turner seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

NEW BUSINESS

- Bill Bernhjelm is in International Falls and could not make the meeting.
- Sheriff Medure reports on the Sales Tax Exemption Bill and gives a brief history. Sheriff Medure reports that there was a movement on the House side where sales tax exemption bills were heard, and they passed out of Committee; prior to that there was discussion with Senator Bill Engebretson, who was trying to get a bill into the Senate Tax Committee hearing through Senator Bakk. Sheriff Medure states that Senator Bakk blocked the bill last year but promised Senator Engebretson that it would have a hearing this year. Senator Bakk changed his mind later on, stating that there was no money. After several phone calls, letters from the Regional Radio Board and the District 2 sheriffs, and a phone call to Itasca County Lobbyist Ron Dicklich, Sheriff Medure had an opportunity to talk with Senator Bakk for about 20 minutes on March 25, 2010, and relayed the importance of having a hearing on this matter. Senator Bakk stated that there was no money, he would see what he could do, but he did not want to pass this on to the taxpayers. Sheriff Medure states that his response was that was exactly what he would be doing if they didn't get it passed. Senator Bakk did allow a hearing at 8:30 a.m. today. Sheriff Medure states that he met with Senator Engebretson, Senator Rosen, and two other senators. Sheriff Medure states that there were three separate bills for the sales tax exemption matter and one amendment to retro back to the counties that didn't have the sales tax exemption and the expended dollars. Sheriff Medure states that Senator Bakk helped Itasca County get their sales tax exemption, but that Itasca County did not enjoy the full amount. Sheriff Medure states that Senator Bakk called him to the table today and asked how much money Itasca County did not enjoy (though Sheriff Medure did not want the focus to be the retro piece). Sheriff Medure states that he told Senator Bakk that it was about \$380,000.00 because the bill passed after the fact. Having said all this, Sheriff Medure reports that the amendment and the three bills passed out of the Committee. He states that the Committee will meet sometime in the future and prioritize all the Tax Committee bills and come out with an omnibus tax bill. Sheriff Medure states that he would like to see if there is some type of a compromise that can be made regarding the retro dollars and focus more on the counties coming onto ARMER now. Sheriff Medure reports that the retro dollars created a lot of heartache for a lot of committee members. He states that Itasca,

Meeker, and Kandiyohi Counties either had no sales tax exemption or only received a small portion. If this compromise is possible, Sheriff Medure reports, the MSA would be likely to not balk at it. Sheriff Medure also encourages letters to Senator Bakk for having the hearing and allowing the bills to be heard. Sheriff Medure states that he will ask the sheriffs of District 2 to send a thank you letter to Senator Bakk, thanking him for holding the hearing and passing on the bills. Sheriff Medure states that at the end of today, he will put in a phone call and e-mail to him proposing the compromise, as in the end, the question was where is the money going to come from to offset the sales tax exemption.

Chairman Dowson adds that we all owe Sheriff Medure a great deal of gratitude for taking the time to go to the Cities to lobby on behalf of the Minnesota sheriffs and the RRB. He reports that Sheriff Falk did write a nice letter to Senator Bakk and has been on top of this matter quite well. He encourages others to thank Sheriff Falk and others who are involved. Chairman Dowson reports that he did receive a letter from Representative Tom Rukavina, who stated that he supports the bill, but he did raise the same question of where the money should come from.

Sheriff Medure adds that only two people got back to us regarding the sales tax exemption letters: Senator Rukavina and Senator Bakk. Again, Pat encourages those present to personally make contact with their state reps and senators to say we need to have this passed and to explain how vitally important it is.

Commissioner Hallan reports that they sent letters to Senator Tony Lourey and Representative Tim Faust. He reports that they would support the bills, though they are not on the Senate Tax Committee. Commissioner Clifford states that he also sent letters to Representative Dill and Senator Tom Bakk, asking for support of the tax exemption bills.

OTHER BUSINESS

Those in attendance seemed to like the new video communication equipment and wish to do it this way next time to see how it works and, perhaps, go back to the old ITV way at a later time. Chairman Dowson suggests meeting all together in person this summer at a central location.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Sweeney makes a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Hallan seconds the motion. The meeting adjourns at 2:44 p.m.