

VERMILION VALLEY
REGIONAL EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS
JOINT AUTHORITY
VERMILION VALLEY REGIONAL E.T.S.B.
MINUTES OF VERMILION VALLEY REGIONAL EMERGENCY
COMMUNICATIONS JOINT AUTHORITY / ETS BOARD
MEETING OF MARCH 12, 2020

Chairman Woolford called the meeting to order at 09:59 a.m.

Roll call showed the following present, Jim Woolford, Jacob Campbell, William Flott, Jim Hargitt, Robert Turner, Gary Bird, Tony Childress and Paul Johnson. Absent was and Tim Henson. Also present was Jason Simmons, Emington/Campus Fire Dept.; Diane Schwahn, Finance Director, Livingston County; Alina Hartley, Executive Director Livingston County Board; Kathy Arbogast, Livingston County Board Chairman; Candi Bradshaw and Randy Wittenberg.

Woolford led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Woolford stated the Board Minutes for January 15th and February 19th Committee of the Whole Minutes were in their packets and asked if there were no comments or corrections he would entertain a motion to approve. A motion was made to approve the Board Minutes of January 15th Board Minutes and February 19th Committee of the Whole Minutes by Flott with a second by Bird. A voice vote was unanimous with all ayes. Motion carried.

Woolford stated financials reports & bills for January and February were in their packets and if no discussion he asked for a motion to approve the bills and financial reports for January and February. A motion to approve was made by Turner with a second by Johnson. A roll call vote was unanimous with all ayes. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

As brought up on the floor – None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Revenue Policy – Wittenberg reported that based on the Committee of the Whole he created a revenue policy. He said they could approve it or they could make changes to it if they would like. He explained this policy. He said revenue would remain stationary until 1/1/22. He stated increases for any budget year will be no more than 2 ½% and based on the needs of the center.

He reported the amount of money in their accounts at this time. He reported they still have not gotten a total of what we need to do for NG911 and is still a concern. He thinks financially they are prepared for that. He is concerned if they put a first net requirement on them of some kind. He stated they could approve it or table it. He just wants the board to think about it and they can discuss it at the next Committee of the Whole meeting next month. His recommendation is that they table it as he just wanted to give them something to look at it. A discussion was held on the percentages of what each entity pays and not getting locked into something that is going to change. Woolford stated he agreed on tabling the revenue policy and bringing it back to the committee to look at. Childress stated the county made a sizeable investment of \$3M for the upgrade project and for the fire departments wanting to go with UHF they should have to pay for that. A lengthy discussion was held on this with Hargitt explaining what he knows as far as what happened when the fire departments went to the county board. A lengthy discussion was held on this and Fairbury tested pagers and they did not work. Hargitt stated he feels as far as Star Com goes they are not there yet for fire departments and needs proof that this system will work for them. He stated he would like to see the cost of what it would take to put that platform in place for all of these departments have an operational system. A lengthy discussion was held on this with Johnson stating Dwight Fire spent all that money on switching and are not going to be on the hook for paying for a UHF System when they did what they were supposed to do. He also stated how he tried twice to include the fire and ems departments (minus SLECAS due to some profit things coming in) to go in on a grant with Dwight and Pontiac but they declined to do it. He said the stipulations were to not go over a million dollars and everybody wanted each individual guy to have their own portable radio and they couldn't come to an agreement, they didn't do it. He also stated Dwight FPD is not going to pay for a UHF Tower or UHF System because they are not going to use it. He also stated he and his board are adamant about this. Hargitt asked if Wittenberg knew what it would take to get Star Com working in the southeast portion of the county. Wittenberg replied that Motorola are working right now on coverage maps for paging and portables. He stated it looks to him like the City of Fairbury is a dead area, which they were aware of and the intersection of Route 47 & 116 is also a dead area. He stated the rest of the county looks pretty good; when you get out to the fringe areas/edges of the county it looks a little shaky. He stated there is a tower in Streator, a tower in Dwight, Sibley and one in Ashkum. He also reported they also just built one in Lexington. He stated they think they will get a little bit better coverage but does not solve the problem in Fairbury and Forrest. Wittenberg stated he started some conversations with MABAS and had a couple conversations with Gary Swartz. He said they are trying to figure out what's the best route for the fire departments. He stated he thinks the biggest problem they have right now is the paging. He doesn't think Motorola is there yet. He also stated another big problem is the tornado sirens. He said they are kicked off by our UHF radio system. That is also a problem that needs to be solved. He stated they need to continue to meet with Ragan's, Supreme and Motorola and any other vendors to take a look at this. A lengthy conversation was held on this. He doesn't want anyone to over react to this radio thing. He wants to make sure they are doing the right thing for everyone. Childress stated they talked about the dead spots 4 years ago and asked why this hasn't been resolved. Wittenberg stated they put repeaters in cars. Another lengthy discussion was held on UHF and what should be done and how Fairbury police at the time didn't want repeaters but have now taken the ones from Dwight for their police cars. Woolford stated this board has to decide if this is a 911 problem or a Fairbury problem. He stated if it is a 911

problem then the board should have to fund it. He said this is important to see. He also stated when Streator came in they paid for it. He said it is an issue that has gone on too long. Childress stated he thinks it's a 911 problem since they got money from the county. Another long discussion was held on this along with questions about Motorola being compliant with their contract. Wittenberg stated Fairbury will let us put something on their water tower in Fairbury but this will not solve the problem in Saunemin. Another discussion was held on the Saunemin issue. Wittenberg stated they have had some fruitful conversations with Motorola and the next step would be to hold their feet to the fire. Wittenberg stated he is more than willing to bring them in to the next Committee of the Whole Meeting and let the board express their opinions. He feels they need to understand their feelings as a board. He stated he will ask them to come to the next Committee of the Whole Meeting and give them a presentation as to what they plan to do about this problem. Another discussion was held. It was discussed if the Lexington tower helped out McLean County with Wittenberg stating he did not know. Woolford stated a lot of the questions brought up should be addressed at the Committee of the Whole with everyone on the board to attend not just a few. Wittenberg stated he would invite Motorola Corporate, Ragan's, and Supreme Radio to our next Committee of the Whole meeting. He said he would put together an agenda and get out to everyone in the next week. He also asked everyone to send him the pertinent questions they want to ask so he can get them out to these people so they can be prepared to answer them when they come to the meeting.

As brought up on the floor – None.

Coordinator's Report – Bradshaw stated they were a little late getting the 911 money this month due to the State putting in a new financial system and they had a few hiccups with the system. She also stated they got a little more money this one time due to a couple of cell phone vendors not paying what they should have earlier.

Director's Report – Wittenberg reported they are down to 10 full dispatchers this time and going down to 9 with Guth-Atkinson retiring very soon after 20 years of service. He reported they have 2 people hired and in training and are going to hire 2 more. He said he has 4 part time people none of them are in a position to go full time and as of May 1 they will be down to 3 part time people. He reported they are working hard to get people hired and trained. He explained the issues with trying to get people hired and trained. He's hoping to have one of the part timers out of training by June 1st and another one by July 1st.

Wittenberg stated he went to a 3SI demonstration and when he got back to the center they already have it and are using it daily. It is a system with the banks in case of robberies they can track the money. He also sent out letters this morning that the 911 Center is going on lockdown. No one other than personnel who work there will be allowed in due to shortage of staff until further notice. He also discussed the protocols they are operating under. He said he appreciated Chief Bird who has kept him up on this information and it has been really helpful.

A discussion was held on how many weather sirens there may be in the county and how they may be set off. Wittenberg stated each community has the ability to set off their own sirens. He explained how dispatch sets off some and some of the communities set off their own. Flott inquired what 911's financial involvement for the sirens. Wittenberg stated that each

community is responsible for their own sirens. He stated we do not own them. A discussion was held on this and whose responsibility it is to set them off.

Closing comments from public – None

Closing comments from Chairman and board members – Woolford asked Jason Simmons if he had any comments on the letter he has been distributing on behalf of the Mutual Aid Association. Jason replied he will be holding off on that at this time.

There was a motion made to go into executive session for (5ILCS 120/2)(c)(1) Personnel Matters Executive Session by Campbell with a second by Johnson. Roll call vote was unanimous with all ayes. Motion carried.

Regular session suspended at 11:44 a.m.

Regular session resumed on March 12, 2020 at 11:52 a.m.

Action resulting from executive session – none.

There being no further business a motion to adjourn was made by Flott with a second by Bird. Voice vote was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Candi Bradshaw

