

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 AUGUST 11, 2021

Woolford called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Roll call showed the following present, Jim Woolford, William Flott, Jacob Campbell, Jim Hargitt and Robert Turner. Tim Henson arrived at 11:03 and Tony Childress arrived at 11:09. Absent were Paul Johnson and Gary Bird. Also present were Alina Hartley, Director Livingston County Board; Dave Lander, Supreme Radio; Chris Cochran, Ragan Communications; Candi Bradshaw and Randy Wittenberg.

Woolford led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Woolford stated the Board Minutes for August 16th Minutes were in their packets and there was no meeting in July. A motion was made to approve the August 16th Minutes by Campbell with a second by Turner. A voice vote of was unanimous with all ayes. Motion carried.

Woolford stated financial reports & bills for June and July were in your packets and if there is no discussion he would entertain a motion to approve. A motion was made to approve the May and June financial reports by Turner with a second by Campbell. A roll call vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Update on Radio Project – Wittenberg stated they did receive 2 bids on the radio project. He stated they are working with Motorola on a 3rd option. He stated Ragan's bid came in at \$1,561,836.00 and Supreme came in at \$1,278,419.00. He reported he has started to review the 2 bids to make sure they are comparable and nothing is missing. He stated the other things that needs to be added is some buildings, HVAC and generators which need to be added to those bids that was outside the scope of the project. He stated they will enter into a period between now and our next board meeting where he will work with these vendors to negotiate some pricing, structures and those sort of things. He stated he may call a meeting sometime between now and then to bring this board up to date on what's going on prior to accepting or rejecting

any bids for our September meeting. Woolford asked how long the bids were good for with Wittenberg replying he thought they were good through the end of the year. Wittenberg stated there are 2 concerns, pricing being one but they have known from the beginning that this project would not start until after the first of the year so he's sure that is built into their pricing. The second concern is whether or not you can even get the components because of the situation we have had with China. He said they would keep moving forward with this project. He also stated both of them gave financing options and we also are working with Chief Johnson trying to get some options to get some government money involved. He stated they are not going to push this through to get something pushed through and make sure it is the right thing for us. Hargitt asked if the government funding was only for Star Com with Wittenberg stating no there is funding for the other as well. A discussion was held on this.

Flott asked what the bids they have are for with Wittenberg stating they are for the UHF Radio Project. Woolford asked Wittenberg to give an overview of what these bids entail and what their purpose is. Wittenberg explained the UHF update system project. He also explained he's in conversations with Motorola that if we upgraded the Motorola system and what that would entail to put all the fire departments on that system as well. He stated they want to do what's best for all the police departments, fire departments and the ETSB. A discussion was held on what advantages this could entail with other departments. A discussion was held on the tornado sirens also. Wittenberg stated he is going to a Star Com user's meeting next Tuesday and hoping Motorola may have some additional information at that time. Wittenberg reported to the Sheriff that the Star Com bid he's working on does include a tower at the corner of Route 47 and 116. He said they have a 400 foot tower right there they can put the system on. He stated it is a Clear Talk Tower. Hargitt asked about the Forrest / Fairbury area. Wittenberg stated they looked at the coverage maps and with this tower they feel the only place they may have some issues is in building coverage in the village of Chatsworth. A discussion was held. Hargitt stated he thought they were looking at an additional tower in Forrest. Wittenberg replied they had and can look at an additional tower in Forrest. He discussed there is a tower in Sibley that has been turned on to us as well as one in Lexington. He reported several other towers that have been turned on to us.

Crime Stoppers - Wittenberg stated Crime Stoppers has been moving along. He stated they have a booth at the Fairbury Fair and they are going to sell raffle tickets. He said they are doing a gun raffle for Crime Stoppers. He stated if they sell all of the tickets they could raise as much as \$15,000.00.

As brought up on the floor - Flott asked how is do we replace losing revenue from Duffy Ambulance. Wittenberg stated it is concerning and it is something they are going to have to work on in the budget process. He stated the other issue they have is they may have the same issue in Streator. He said they need to study this and make sure they do the right thing for everybody involved. He explained that Duffy's has closed down for whatever reason. He went on to explain who was all covering the Duffy's areas within the county. He did say that all the EMS agencies and dispatchers upstairs never missed a beat with this unexpected closure. He stated they all did a great job of getting help where it needed to be. A discussion was held on who was helping who and responding where.

NEW BUSINESS:

Lights on the Odell Tower – Wittenberg reported this has been an ongoing issue they have been dealing with. He stated they have had some lightning strikes they have had to deal with up there and they have re-grounded it a couple of times. He stated the county has been more than gracious in helping us out and trying to get this done. The recommendation he has from Ragan's is to replace the current lighting system with a completely new lighting system that is better. He stated he did talk to Alina a little about it the other day. He stated he does now have quotes and he will get with her on this. Right now there is no lights on that tower and the FAA is aware of it. He stated they need to work with the county to make sure we do the right thing by them. He stated he moved out of his former office for Sarah to have because that is where she needed to be.

Randy's Office – Wittenberg stated right now his office is downstairs and they are trying to work through some things upstairs. He stated it is inconvenient for him as well as staff. He hopes to get something done within the next 60 to 90 days.

As brought up on the floor – None.

Coordinator's Report – Bradshaw she had nothing other than what was in her written report.

Director's Report – Wittenberg stated other than what they have already talked about is that Sarah is doing a great job of managing the dispatchers. He reported she has worked on some IT issues with Jon and has taken on the Power Phone project. He explained that it is a new automated system they use when they start an EMS call which gives them a list of questions to ask and they answer. He said they have a lot of new staff upstairs and it gives them a way to make sure they are asking the right questions. They are encouraging their more senior dispatchers to go through that list as well. He explained how it will be better in the long run. He also said now they can go into those calls and see what questions were asked, how they were asked and what the answers were. He said then they will be able to go through some of these calls with the doctor at the hospital to ensure our protocols are correct.

He reported they are right on target with the budget. He stated our money is coming regularly with the State.

Hargitt asked if he was thinking of taking the Duffy shortage and spreading it between the other agencies. He said that was a great question and explained some of the issues they need to look at. He also said he is hoping to have a preliminary budget for 2022 for the board to look at in September. He stated they need to do the initial approval of that in October. A discussion was held on how the EMS agencies are based which is on the previous year's calls. A lengthy discussion was held on this issue along with the problems of using an EMS agency out of the county and in regards to a possible phone outage.

Wittenberg gave a Covid update on the dispatch center to the board. He stated he just put out another directive to the chiefs that no visitors are allowed into the center. He stated they have more vaccinated people than unvaccinated. He stated he probably will not allow the LAVC class to come in like he usually does to shadow us.

Flott asked if they are still looking for part-timers. Wittenberg stated eight now they have one full-timer in training and one part-timer in training. He stated they can only train 2 people at a time. He stated he probably hire another part-timer but he doesn't have anybody he is looking at right now. He doesn't see anyone leaving right now but he may have one retirement next year.

Hargitt asked if we work with Verizon a lot. Wittenberg and Bradshaw stated not a lot. Hargitt went on to discuss the problem they had a lot of problems during the Prairie Dirt Classic with people having no service due to so many people in town and over loading the system which could be a problem if they needed to call 911. Campbell stated maybe they should contact Verizon and they could bring a vehicle that had a booster to help out during this time for next year. A discussion was held on this issue.

Henson asked about Flanagan EMS not paying with Wittenberg stating that Flanagan EMS was under Flanagan Fire and Flanagan EMS never transported but Duffy's always transported for Flanagan. A discussion was held on this issue of fire departments having ambulances but not transporting people. Wittenberg also stated he just found out 2 days ago that Stark County has contracted to do transports for Streator and Ottawa, which means AMT is no longer doing transports so they are not getting paid by OSF which puts Streator to a point that we don't know what they are going to do. Turner stated they had a meeting with AMT yesterday with the City Manager and they are saying right now they are not going anywhere. Wittenberg stated he has had a phone call into AMT for 2 days and cannot get a response. A discussion was held on this issue.

Closing comments from public – None

There was no need to go into executive session for (5ILCS 120/2)(c)(1) Personnel Matters Executive Session.

Closing comments from Chairman and board members – Woolford read a notice from Chief Henson that effective tomorrow he is resigning from the VV ETSB along with other comments. Woolford thanked him for his service and thanked the Village of Dwight for having him sit on this board. He along with all the other board members and staff thanked him for his service and told him how much his service was appreciated.

Woolford also wanted to thank Hargitt and SELCAS and Cullom for stepping up as fast as they did to help the City of Pontiac in their quandary of getting everything covered for EMS services. He stated this is what mutual aid was thought out to be and he thanked them for that. Campbell also thanked them for coming to their aid when they needed it and it was a team effort on everyone's part. He also said if that time were to come and they had to repay it they would be there to help.

There being no further business a motion to adjourn was made by Flott with a second by Turner. Voice vote was unanimous with all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Candi Bradshaw 