

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 OCTOBER 20, 2021

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

Roll call showed the following present, Jim Woolford, William Flott, Paul Johnson, Jim Hargitt and Jacob Campbell. Absent was Gary Bird, Tony Childress and Robert Turner. Also present were Diane Schwahn, Financial Director Livingston County Board; Candi Bradshaw and Randy Wittenberg.

Woolford led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Woolford stated the Board Minutes for September 15th for regular meeting and September 15th Committee of the Whole meeting were in their packets. He asked if there were no comments or changes needed he would entertain a motion to approve. A motion was made to approve the September Regular Minutes and Committee of the Whole Minutes by Hargitt with a second by Johnson. A voice vote of was unanimous with all ayes. Motion carried.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

Radio Project – Wittenberg stated the only thing he had to report was the lights are back on at the Odell Tower.

He reported to the board about Rick Ragan being in the hospital and has been doing better as of the last couple of days.

He said he is still working with Motorola on a couple of things and will be meeting with them next week at the IPSTA Conference. The question was asked by Campbell if there was any kind of time frame he is looking at as to when a decision would be made. Wittenberg stated he

would like a decision to be made probably by the first of the year. He stated there are a couple of things that are contingent on that. He also stated he and Johnson talked about the fire fighter's grant and are waiting for that to come out and think it will come out about the first of the year. Wittenberg stated he did have a long conversation with Cindy at the Statewide 911 Office about the availability of money from them. She sent him some stuff but he hasn't had time to look through it in depth. Johnson explained the process for the fire fighter's grant and how much they might be able to get. He also explained the thought process is for a regional grant for the mobiles and portables; they would have to pick a host agency and stated how much he thought they might be able to get with the county's population size. He thought they could get maybe three quarters of the cost for the portables and the mobiles. This is just his guess. Then he stated that each individual department that needed pagers would give him their information to plug their information into the grant application per their individual circumstances and then they could submit them individually. He said potentially they could get three quarters of the radio project covered and all of the pagers covered. He said that would leave the additional \$300,000 for the radios and whatever infrastructure that is out there. He stated obviously that is in a perfect world. He said there is a lot of data they have to collect. He also stated it would be nice to know what is out there in 911 money to try to get.

It was discussed if we had money earmarked would that go against us. Johnson explained it is how you lay your budget out. He gave further information. Wittenberg reported that yesterday he sent an e-mail out to Jason Simmons asking him to distribute it out to the rest of his MABAS group about the fact we are working on this and will be asking for information and will need it forthright and if we don't get that information from you, you won't be included in this. He also stated he will be meeting with them November 10th, their board. He said he will reiterate that to them. He also said they are working on maybe changing a couple of other things. He stated they probably will change the way they do some dispatch type things. One of the things they are going to do is if they have a fire and the ambulance that is there leaves we usually wait for the chief to tell us to get another one; he said they will just go ahead and send another one without being asked. He said the other thing they are going to do is when they go down the box cards and say you're looking for an engine from Fairbury and they say we don't have the manpower to send one. He said they will not call and tell you that, they will just go right down the box cards on the list and send you the next engine. He went on to explain this to the board. He said this came out of the MABAS Training Conference he sent Rakoczy and Rexroad to. He said they are just trying to be more pro-active and efficient for them.

Johnson added to the previous conversation Pontiac and Dwight Fire already did get a regional grant so it would not be beneficial for them to participate in the regional grant talked about earlier but that does not mean they would not want to be part of the radio project but if the \$300,000 is the overage they would keep their data out of that set so it would be something that they could get some of that plus they have the 2 biggest budgets and payroll. Johnson went on to explain when they would hear about the application dates for the grants and how they will go about getting that information on the applications. He also stated there are some matches and things they will have to come up with as well. They need to make sure that is all explained out to everyone so they know and nobody gets caught off guard. A discussion was held on this along with how important this is and they can't let this sit. The American Rescue Plan was

discussed and Wittenberg stated he and chief talked about this the other day and neither he nor chief got theirs. However, Wittenberg stated they are getting \$20,000 from them because they did have a Co-vid outbreak. He went on to explain why they couldn't get any funds from the American Rescue Plan after talking with Alina. Johnson added it is all subject to the interpretation of the county board's and their finance people. A discussion was held on this. Wittenberg stated a couple of things happening that are good for us is there is a big GIS project going on with which Bradshaw has been working with Crossroads on this and he talked to Cindy at the State this morning about this and she told him we were to go with this. They are trying to make a statewide map for NG911. He stated he has our recording vendor coming in because our recorder needs to be I3 capable. This basically allows us to record voice, text and video. He stated he would meet with them to make sure we are capable of this for when we go to the next gen system. He stated we need a new phone system and when he talked to Cindy she stated on November 1st there is a grant coming out that would pay for our phone system and if we are not I3 capable there is a grant that will pay for that. He will be working on those 2 things going forward. He stated the other thing he found out is that with the GIS project he can go back to January 2016 and recoup any costs we've had in our GIS Project. He feels if we can recoup some of that money it will help us with this project. He stated he will meet with her next at the IPSTA Conference and there are a couple of classes on grant applications and he will be sitting in on them as well.

As brought up on the floor - Woolford stated he was asked if we are capable of text to 911 and what would that entail. Wittenberg responded that our system is capable of adding text to 911. He stated a couple of years ago he started down the path of doing this and he had a long talk with the Director of Champaign who did it and they were only getting 3 or 4 texts a month and if they were only getting that few he could imagine what we would get if any. He stated in Illinois with this next generation project they are working on, they may be providing text to 911 for us and he doesn't want to spend the money prematurely if they are going to provide this to us. He reported they should know more going forward in the next couple of months. He stated there some scary things about text to 911. One being dispatchers are capable of getting text, videos, pictures and those kind of things with people sending us pictures of things we don't need to be seeing. The good side of it is if you have someone who can't talk on the telephone it allows them to text stating they need help. He stated the State is going through this whole thing of trying to upgrade the 911 system and he feels we are in really good shape. He stated after his talk with Cindy he feels good about it. He said we have a state of the art CAD System, our phone system even though he hates it, we have passed that hurdle with them, our GIS is up to date and are where we should be at this point today. He doesn't anticipate that we will have to put out a whole lot of money to get over any obstacles with GIS. He thinks the next obstacle will be connecting to the cloud and that should not be an expensive proposition. Flott asked a question about text messaging and how it will come in with Wittenberg trying to explain what he believes / knows at this point. Woolford explained the example of why this was asked of him and what the status is of this project. A discussion was held.

NEW BUSINESS:

Budget - Wittenberg stated he wanted to thank Diane who has been invaluable in helping with getting the budget done. He went through the 911 budget with the board. He explained there

is a moderate increase in what we were a year ago but that's based on an early retirement program. He said it looks like they are still in good shape in the total fund balances in the end of the year. He reported on the dispatch budget stating it looks pretty much the same as 911 with an early retirement program in it also. He reported the salaries are down a little bit because they are taking a full time dispatcher out. He reported there is a lot of money in overtime but hopefully they won't need all that money. But he explained overtime is one of those things you just never know about for instance, our co-vid outbreak this past year cost around \$20,000. Capital projects he kind of just left that the same for now. He explained the good thing right now is they have \$30,000 sitting in a CD in capital they have not had to use in the past several years. He stated the same goes for 911 budget, they have about \$175,000 in CDs that hasn't been touched in last several years also. He said unless someone has some questions the budget is pretty straight forward and pretty much what it has been for the past couple of years. Flott asked about the cost sharing of Duffy's for Pontiac and Dwight and if that's not a problem for this year and then going forward and if doing that do they have to amend the bi-laws? Woolford stated passing the budget would involve 2 motions; one requiring 2/3 vote and the other requiring majority vote. He also asked if this budget was a 2 1/2 % increase for employees with Wittenberg stating yes and with an increase of 2 1/2% going out to everyone for next year. Flott asked about applying the 2020 census figures next year. Wittenberg stated they are waiting to make sure those figures are accurate enough to base the next 10 years finances on. Wittenberg stated they also talked about taking a look at the assessed valuations next year. Flott stated they need to look at the townships that have windfarms, their assessed valuations have gone up a lot and they have not taken advantage of that. A discussion was held on this. Wittenberg agreed they need to take a look at this and make sure everyone is treated fairly across the board. Woolford asked as a point of order to ask for 2 motions, first motion pursuant to section 6.12.2 which would be revising the methodology of fee for service for EMS services previously serviced by Duffy's to be split between Pontiac and Dwight using the figures they have agreed upon which he believed was of 681 for Dwight and 11809 for Pontiac. Woolford stated this was just for this year and then it's contingent on how to go forward; they are using last year's Duffy's numbers. Discussion was held. That motion was made by Hargitt with a second by Johnson. Roll call vote was unanimous with Campbell, Woolford, Johnson, Flott, and Hargitt all voting aye. Motion carried.

A motion was made to approve the budget and place it on display for 30 days was made by Flott and second by Campbell. A roll call vote was made with all ayes from Woolford, Campbell, Flott, Hargitt and Johnson. Motion carried.

Wittenberg then reported on the early retirement program. He stated they have a piece of paper with a financial analysis of it. He stated he has 2 employees that are eligible for this program. He explained the program to the board. He did state one employee has already stated he would take the retirement at the first of the year if approved. The other one has not decided. He stated if approved the window for them would open up December 1, 2021 and until January 31, 2022 to decide and then after they sign the agreement they will have 7 days to rescind the agreement. Woolford stated this was discussed in the finance committee meetings and asked the Finance Chairman Flott if he had anything to add on the consensus of the committee. Flott stated they had a consensus he believed. He stated he liked the idea of

having this option to offer to the employees but they would not be able to do this every year. Johnson asked about an accelerated payout with IMRF and doing this and Schwahn stated no this is the reason for the gross payout so there is no accelerated payout from IMRF. A discussion was held on IMRF stand point. A discussion was held on replacing or not replacing these 2 employees. He also explained one of the good things about having Cook over dispatch because he gets reports on manpower and it shows him where their call volume is by hours and he explained why he doesn't need to replace Kelly. He explained how they would handle not replacing the dispatcher along with Wittenberg taking over some of the duties for 911. Johnson asked about if Wittenberg would be putting himself back into being overloaded before they hired Cook to take over the dispatchers. He explained why it would not be putting him back to where he was before. A motion was made by Campbell with a second by Johnson to approve the retirement program as presented. A roll call vote was unanimous with all ayes from Woolford, Johnson, Flott, Hargitt and Campbell.

As brought up on the floor – None.

Coordinator's Report – Bradshaw reported the only thing other than what was in her written report was they have gotten the major 911 surcharge money. It seems they fixed their glitch and she is now just waiting for the under 100,000 population surcharge money to come.

Director's Report – Wittenberg handed out his written report to the board. He stated currently they have 14 full time dispatchers, one part-time trainee. He reported Williams is now out of training which gives them 14 dispatchers. He reported Doppler is coming along and they knew she would take a little longer but is hoping by December 1st she will be there and able to start working a shift by herself. He stated he already discussed the training that Rackozy and Rexroad went to. He said they have met with Tazwell County a couple of times due to they are going to Spillman and they are going to work on some interoperability things with them.

He reported they kind of frustrated due to being down a dispatch console right now and have been down for around 6 weeks because Intrado is almost impossible to work with. They are working with them through Supreme Radio to get this fixed and hoping to have it fixed in a week.

He reported they are going to the IPSTA Conference next week and they will meet with a lot of vendors there. He also stated that he had Cook call the banks and schools in Livingston County and Streator due to an issue we had a year ago when we had a bank robbery and when they called 911 it went to a national 911 center instead of coming to us, so we did test calls with all of them to ensure their calls were directed to our center. He passed out a sheet that shows all of the calls for the last 4 years with the number by unit. He explained the sheet. He said also there is a part in there with Duffy's by community for them to look at.

Closing comments from public – Schwahn asked if Wittenberg sent the engagement letter back to the auditors. Wittenberg stated he knows he has it but not sure if he sent it or not. He stated he will get it to her. She stated she just likes a copy to put in the file. Flott asked when they do our audit with Schwahn trying to explain how they did the county last year with a lot of work off-site due to where we were. Wittenberg stated he thought they started with us around March. Schwahn stated she told them before that she prefers to do ours completely separate

from the county because she needs to concentrate on the county and it makes it easier for her to get theirs done and then work on ours. She said sometimes they come and do the health department separate and they usually do that in late February.

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

Closing comments from Chairman and board members – None.

There being no further business a motion to adjourn was made by Flott with a second by Hargitt. Voice vote was unanimous with all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Candi Bradshaw

