

CENTRAL MINNESOTA REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RAC)

Meeting Minutes

Friday, February 13, 2009 10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Kandiyohi EOC

Willmar, MN – Kandiyohi County

Members/Alternates Present:

1. Micah Myers – Vice-Chair – Designee of St. Cloud
2. John Burski – Alternate Benton County
3. John Haukos – Designee Big Stone County
4. Tom Egan – Designee Douglas County
Michael Henrion – Alternate Douglas County
5. Troy Langlie – Designee Grant County
Greg Lillemon – Alternate Grant County
6. Stacey “Ace” Bonnema – Alternate Kandiyohi County
7. Mike Smith – Alternate Mille Lacs County
8. Jeff Jelinski – Alternate Morrison County
9. Mark Englund – Designee Otter Tail County
Judy Siggerud – Alternate Otter Tail County
10. Dave Pikal – Alternate Sherburne County
11. Jay Sikkink – Alternate Stearns County
12. Judy Diehl – Designee Stevens County
Scott Busche – Alternate Stevens County
13. Scott Mattison – Designee Swift County
14. Bob Cuchna – Alternate Todd County
15. Scott McKellep – Designee Wadena County
16. Rick Fiedler – Designee Wilkin County
Dawn Mund – Alternate Wilkin County

Members/Alternates Absent:

17. Meeker County
18. Pope County
19. Traverse County
20. Wright County

Guests Present:

Glenn Elvecrog, MN DPS/MSEM
Kathy Gilson, State Patrol
Tom Justin, RIC

Meeting was called to order by Chair Micah Myers at 10:05 a.m.

Chair Myers welcomes members and guests, introductions conducted. 16 Out of 20 members in attendance with quorum present.

Communications:

Nothing at this time.

Approval of Agenda:

Chair Myers asked to amend agenda and move reports to later on the agenda. *Bob Cuchna moved to approve as amended, Jay Sikkink second, upon vote motion carried.*

Approval of January 23, 2009 Minutes:

Judy Diehl moved, Tom Egan second to approve minutes, upon a vote motion carried.

Updates from Partners on Current Projects:

Mille Lacs County:

Mike Smith stated they are in the process of collecting surveys and inventories; GeoComm has been good to work with and plan to be in touch with Lex next week. Todd Pieper stated they are collecting data and plan to have a finalized plan by the end of March.

Regional Plan Update:

Chair Myers and Todd Pieper have a meeting scheduled for next week. The original scope of work was for eight counties and now is up to 20 entities. There are funds available in the 2007 grant and an allocation needs to be made by the end of March. *Jay Sikkink moved to accepting the scope of the additional work with GeoComm for approximately \$10,000. Second by Mark Englund, upon a vote motion carried.*

General Discussion and New Business:

Assessment of Alexandria Technical College:

Chair Myers stated GeoComm will be adding an additional item to the scope to cover the loading capacity on the system. Alexandria Technical College is looking at making the Tech Center a regional training center. *Scott McKellep moved, Judy Diehl second to approve GeoComm to complete the scope on the Alexandria Tech College, upon a vote, motion carried.*

CASM Update (GeoComm):

Todd Pieper stated Colleen Donavon is working on the CASM project in organizing the data; the State is requesting data that was not in the original study and will be contacting entities to collect this data. Colleen is finalizing the data and will be setting up meetings or phone calls, Todd will send Colleen's contact data out on the Listserv.

Old Business:

Sales Tax Exemption Update:

Chair Myers stated he spoke to Troy Langlie in reference to Senator Ingebrightsen stating there will not be a hearing this year on the proposed bill. The Senator is doing some work to see if something can be completed yet, Chair Myers contacted the House and was told to continue to move forward even if it may not be addressed this year. The house file is HF0245 introduced by Representative Brynaert, the language was pretty much the same as Representative Haws' bill except it didn't make reference to the reimbursement language. The two bills will be combined, the information reference to this has been sent out to the other RACS.

Letters to SRB – Colleges and University Assessment Letter:

Chair Myers has a draft letter out in reference to this, needs to make a few changes; would like to get representation on the RAC and RRB from the colleges and universities. When the SRB was crafted there was concern with representations and looking at adding the Colleges and Universities as an advisory role to the RRB and RACS. This letter should be out by the next meeting.

Grant – Expense Reimbursement:

Chair Myers has a grant match detail from the State regarding match guidelines. There are significant grant funds available that this group needs to make decisions on the allocation. There are funds for VHF infrastructure interoperability. Chair Myers would like this group to start discussing how it is allocated within the region looking at where it will best serve the region. Mark Englund suggested Chair Myers send out a memo asking entities to report back on their interoperability map/matrix with entities around them so we have a better idea where the region stands.

Grant Funding for Training:

Chair Myers stated there is a scope of services approved for Alex Tech College by GeoComm. There is a possibility of computer-based training, regional exercise training, etc. and the group needs to look at various uses. Jay stated perhaps provide train-the-trainer sessions to have additional trainers in the region. Chair Myers stated \$157,000 is available for training and requires a 20% match from the region. Marv Klug stated he has requests by firefighters to provide a training exercise. Bob Cuchna stated they are getting consoles and one training area would be for dispatch on how they use them. Chair Myers stated there could be training on how to dispatch. Mike asked the deadline for the training and Chair Myers stated he will need to get a timeline on the dispatch deliveries. Mike Kahl stated he received notice today that entities can make their purchases; these are for the base stations with two for PSAP and one for EOC. RIC Justin stated he will get details and email out, he thought the funds are available and it is the entity's responsibility to contact the vendors to get the consoles purchased and installed. He stated for entities that do not have a tower in their vicinity, the training would not be beneficial at this time, although there are a lot of counties who would be able to reach the system for training purposes. Mark Englund stated the User Committee had fleet mapping training recently and this group would benefit from a fleet mapping, talk group, radio IDs, etc. He would like to see something at a RAC level on this. Mike Kahl stated hospitals are being equipped with radios. Chair Myers stated at the User Committee they do have hospital representatives as members. Jay stated at the last User Committee meeting there was a lot of confusion following the training as it is a lot of information to obtain and retain at a single training; perhaps a Radio 101 Training would be beneficial. Chair Myers suggested putting together a Radio 101 briefing on a CD and make available to use as necessary. Dave Pikal asked if the RRB is looking for training, Chair Myers suggested perhaps we provide the training on an annual basis, Commissioner Wally Strand stated he felt it would be very beneficial to have a video at each county to utilize, Mike Smith also agreed it would be beneficial to his county.

RIC Justin stated the State committed to provide time to conduct Trunking 101, etc. and perhaps we look at providing it on a quarterly basis at a select location and anyone who is interested can attend if they chose. Scott McKellep stated a combination of a Train-the-Trainer class to teach the Radio Usage knowledge in combination of Radio 101 would be beneficial. Mike Smith stated the volunteer firefighters have training once per month and this could be an opportunity.

Debbie will summarize the training suggestions and send out via email for additional items to the list, we can then put together a committee to follow up.

Unused PSIC Grant Money:

Nothing finalized at this time.

Homeland Security Grant:

Glenn Elvecrog stated the next grant committee meeting is February 26th and is waiting for finalizing from the State for their 2007 grant for more detail.

Other:

Debbie will put together a list of upcoming RRB, RAC, and User Committee meetings for the year and post on web.

Owners and Operators:

Chair Myers stated the Owners and Operators will need to start meeting, we will need to get your nomination at the next meeting. RIC Justin stated there is Owner and Operator Bylaws and will be sent out.

Reports:

MnDOT:

Update will be available at next month's meeting.

SRB/ARMER Update MnDPS/MnDOT:

MnDOT:

No update at this time available, RIC Justin will send out an email if there is new information.

SRB:

South Central Owners and Operators Committee is up and running.

One member from each Regional Radio Board will be a part of the committee; it is the Governor's directive to put together a PSAP Study Committee. Suggestion was to have Kandiyohi or Big Stone County as member as they are a good fit.

They are putting together a committee to determine short and long term training needs and includes RRB member. RIC Justin met with two separate vendors and suggested having a vendor meeting with all of the vendors to discuss how they can all be involved. There are things private vendors could be involved with to assist the region. One item would be code plugs, it may be time for the regional standard to be readdressed and perhaps a subcommittee of the RAC could be put together to take a closer look into the standard to see if a change may be beneficial to the region. Chair Myers stated the region put some restrictions in the standard due to security. Perhaps there needs to be set guidelines put into place that private vendors would need to follow if they were allowed to work on the system as there is a growing need in the region. Dave Pikal stated State/MnDOT has a standard that addresses who can work on the system and the requirements of the laptop utilized in the programming. Chair Myers stated that the 4.XX standards already address these issues. The Region can make the standard more restrictive and indicate what the consequences would be if they were allowed to work on the system and did not follow the standard.

Jeff Jelinski stated he will need to work with his local vendor as he does not have the expertise within his staff to provide this. Chair Myers stated this is a state-owned system and there are some protocols in place as it is a State system. Jay Sikkink stated the concern is that it is a system that involves numerous counties and someone needs to manage it overall. Discussion is how much control is turned over to a vendor versus keeping the control to your self to avoid potential problems with various vendors being allowed to work on the system without set criteria. Jay stated a county would have to have a standard in place prior to working with vendors. Mark Englund stated we should identify the problems and needs, address it at the OTC as other regions will have the same issues and felt this should be a SRB issue brought up from the RACS across the state. Mike Kahl stated controlling what talk groups allowed in radios, etc. he would not want to be involved with those decisions although something like reprogramming a key he would like to be available to do. He understands there should be particular training required prior to a vendor being allowed to do this. RIC Justin suggested the region put together a committee and determine what they would need, what they would like to be allowed, not allowed, and submit the request to the OTC as they would like input from the regions. They should look at standards 4.XX and include radio shops in the discussions. Chair Myers suggested making them a Standing Committee on the agenda. Subcommittee consists of Chair Myers, Jay Sikkink, Dave Sisser, Mike Kahl, Andy Faith, Jeff Jelinski, Chris Lentz, Jon Wisner, and Rick Fiedler.

OTC:

Jay Sikkink stated it was a lengthy meeting, discussed three standards about radio ID having a more formal process for obtaining IDs. You will be allotted a set number of IDs if you use them up, you will need to request additional IDs.

2.6 Standard is being updated and is reference to fleet map standards and the type of things you will need to track. Jay will bring a sample standard from Washington County to next meeting.

2.5a Standard indicating Admin channels can be allowed on adjacent towers. Per this standard the main channels can be allowed on the adjacent entity. It also makes reference if too much traffic is being brought on the adjacent tower then there is a resolution such as needing to reprogram radios to avoid this scenario. Bob Cuchna asked if these towers are being monitored and Jay stated the State monitors it and he and Chair Myers do get monthly reports on this. Chair Myers stated usage on towers can be a standard item on the agenda as more counties come onto the system.

Jay stated the most discussion was Hennepin County asking for eight additional talk groups. His concern is if Hennepin has ten talk groups state-wide, how that affects the rest of the state. This did get passed and five were for Weapons of Mass Destruction to use. Washington County is working on a plan to request eight channels state-wide. In Central MN we currently have one for the region and Jay thought perhaps we need one per county. Chair Myers stated as the region builds out and more talk groups are added, are we moving away from interoperable communications.

Jay stated Hennepin County has their own technical resource and discussed whether this should be allowed state-wide. It was approved and had some controversy due to potential of misuse. Also approved COW (communications on wheels) which is a portable 800 tower site so if a disaster occurs, it can be set up anywhere and work as a tower site. This is a state-wide resource and an entity will need to contact Hennepin County if it is needed.

They approved the Sherburne/Wright Participation Plan with the updates. Another issue was paging and will be inviting Motorola up to the MTUG to look at 800 paging, Jay will notify the group when this meeting takes place. Motorola does not feel there is a lot of interest in 800 paging although this state feels it is a real need.

Interop:

Chair Myers stated the full group will be meeting next Tuesday to finalize grant money, the allocation model such as the IECGP Grant, and they are looking at putting together a training committee to determine what training is needed in the region and also putting together a computer based web training.

CMNRRB Update:

The RRB is looking to this group to develop a matrix to determine what talk groups are needed. They approved the MOU from the State grant. They are putting together a financial statement to indicate where the grant money is going. Another item is unused PSIC Grant funds for entities that do not use the funds they will then be redistributed to the entities who are participating. Chair Myers will send out samples of what needs to be submitted to him to comply with the commitment with the May deadline. They approved the Wright/Sherburne Participation Plan. Tom Larson spoke on the HSEM Grant funds, discussed COML training for Dona Greiner and Scott McKellep to reimburse them for unreimbursed expenses to attend the training.

User Committee:

They have not met since last month and will be meeting Tuesday. Debbie put together a list of User Committee attendance so the RAC and RRB can see who is attending the meetings or if some of them need to be replaced. Their main topic for discussion will be regional talk groups.

Regional RAC Committees:

No report at this time.

Regional Training Facility:

See Assessment of Alexandria Technical College below.

Regional Radio Board:

Next RRB meeting will be April 29th at the City of St. Cloud at Council Chambers.

Upcoming Meeting, Set Date, and Location:

March:

Next meeting will be Friday, March 13th in Meeker County.

April:

Due to Good Friday, the April meeting will be moved from April 10th to April 17th in Mille Lacs County. *Judy Diehl moved, second Bob Cuchna to change the date from the 10th to the 17th, upon a vote motion carried.*

Adjournment:

Bob Cuchna moved, second Scott McKellop to adjourn at 1:05 p.m., upon a vote motion carried.

Minutes recorded by Debbie Backes.