

CENTRAL MINNESOTA REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RAC)

Meeting Minutes

Friday, October 5, 2007 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Otter Tail County Government Center, Fergus Falls, MN

Members/Alternates Present:

1. Micah Myers – Chair – Designee of St. Cloud
2. Troy Heck – Alternate Benton County
3. John Haukos – Designee Big Stone County
4. Troy Langlie – Designee Grant County
5. Stacey “Ace” Bonnema – Alternate Kandiyohi County
6. Dan Hartog – Designee Kandiyohi County
7. Jeff Jelinski – Alternate Morrison County
8. Mark Englund – Designee Otter Tail County
9. Tom Larson – Designee Pope County
10. Jay Sikkink – Alternate Stearns County
11. Judy Diehl – Designee Stevens County
12. Scott Mattison – Alternate Swift County
13. Scott McKellep – Designee Wadena County
14. Dawn Mund – Alternate Wilkin County
15. Rick Fiedler – Designee Wilkin County
16. Greg Howell – Designee Wright County

Members/Alternates Absent:

1. Douglas County
2. Meeker County
3. Sherburne County
4. Todd County
5. Traverse County

Guests Present:

None

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

Chair Myers welcomes members and guests, introductions conducted. 14 out of the 19 members in attendance with a quorum present.

Approval of Minutes:

Chair Myers asks for a motion to approve RAC minutes of September 14, 2007. *A motion by Jay Sikkink, second Troy Heck, upon a vote to approve the RAC minutes of September 14, 2007, motion carries.*

Communications:

System Access Request from Melrose and Sauk Centre Ambulance Services:

Chair Myers reports Melrose and Sauk Centre Ambulance requests to be on the system, Jay Sikkink had meeting with ambulances, hospitals, fire and police departments. This is the first meeting with the ambulance services, working out layouts for radios and how the system will be utilized. He has been working on standards 5.2 regarding hospitals.

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Communications: (Continued)

System Access Request from Melrose and Sauk Centre Ambulance Services: (Continued)

In Metro they have hospital-to-hospital radios and Stearns County is having communication with them, they have their own hailing channel for communication. Jay indicated Sherburne and Wright may need to have both compacts in their radios since they are so close to both regions. He stated the standard is a starting point and will need to be changed as details are worked out.

Discussion regarding what constitutes a region, Chair Myers stated the SRB discussed this and it was determined it is by who you communicate with on a day-to-day basis. Scott Mattison stated they will need to communicate with individuals in several regions.

Tom Larson stated he thought there may be another movement later this year to redefine the regions.

Hospital Access:

Jay Sikkink stated permission letters will be needed even though hospitals communicated with other entities in the past. Chair Myers stated for hospital access the standard is not for day-to-day operations, it is for interoperability when needed. Jay stated ambulance patient is a concern as to how ambulances communicate when they leave the area; someone from Metro was present to inform the group how they communicate in this scenario.

Reports:

SRB/ARMER Update, MnDPS/MnDOT:

Jay Sikkink stated the SRB handed out a chart for progress of towers indicating the various stages. Chair Myers stated the SRB also talked about encryption standards, Motorola has up to four different encryptions available in radios. The SRB approved two additional standards and approved Sherburne/Wright plan. Ron Whitehead provided an updated SCIP Plan. Scott Mattison asked if the SRB will be expecting a plan from this region, Chair Myers stated he has been working with Ron on this and we will discuss plans later in today's meeting. Jay Sikkink indicated the State needs to submit their plan to Federal in December. Scott Mattison stated he met yesterday with individuals from the State and regions that do not have plans ready to go will not be able to apply.

CMNRRB Update:

Chair Myers stated there was not a meeting since last month.

OTC Update:

N/A

Interop Sub-Committee:

Jay Sikkink stated the Interop Committee did not meet for a few months, MnDOT is moving their tower, Stearns County and the City need to retouch approximately 800 radios each with the rebanding process. One of the biggest items is the Scene of Action channel and needs to be coordinated state-wide.

Scott Mattison asked if we are looking at going to wireless reprogramming, Jay and Chair Myers stated they are working on it but it is expensive and they are working with Motorola on this for the future. Jay stated as additional counties come on, they may need to add additional interoperability channels.

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Reports: (Continued)

Interop Sub-Committee: (Continued)

Jay stated last week they were made aware of VARDA alarms being an issue with radios and are working on this now. Mike Kahl, Granite Electronics stated there are a lot of issues with this. Chair Myers stated issues such as this are things other counties will have as they come onto the system.

Jay stated appendix C in reference to permission letter to have another individual's talk group in their radios. Jay stated he will not let a radio go out until all of the appropriate permission letters are on file.

Standards, Protocols and Procedures:

Chair Myers stated SRB has protocols broke out into: management, configuration, maintenance, financial policies and procedures, conflict and compliance issues, appendix, etc. He will put together a cover letter explaining eight of the standards the RAC modified over the last 2-1/2 years, he passed out a synopsis of all the interim standards to date. This item was tabled from September RAC meeting as there was discussion of the necessary to have an explanation of each standard.

Chair Myers will have a cover letter, synopsis of all the standards out to the RAC members early next week; any comments, etc. should be sent to Chair Myers.

Mark England moved to present standards to the RRB contingent upon cover letter completion, Jay Sikkink second. Motion carried.

Chair Myers stated he pulled the State's standards and to ensure he included all of the standards approved to date were included and compared them to the CMN Region.

He stated the interoperable coordinator will need to work with the agencies who do not come onto the system for interoperable communication.

Jay stated in Stearns County their philosophy is if an entity utilized a patch, it was only for a temporary basis and the entity will need to come on eventually. Rick Fiedler, Wilkin County asked if it is up to them to have the radios necessary to communicate with North Dakota as they provide mutual aid to them. Rey Freeman, Geo-Comm stated they will be doing a study for Wilkin County and will look at this issue. Chair Myers stated the interoperable coordinator will need to work with them on that. Jay stated this may be a case where a permanent patch may be necessary and be sure to work with a qualified shop for equipment.

Chair Myers stated at some point all entities will need to switch to narrow band VHF or 800MHz, they will not have a choice. Mark England asked if it would be necessary for all entities to know what other issues the other counties have, Chair Myers stated these issues will be covered in the regional plan.

Programming by Non-Governmental Agencies:

Chair Myers stated we are working on standard 4.10 on programming by non-governmental agencies and asked for approval

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Regional Radio Board:

User Committee Appointments:

Some agencies still have not turned in their appointees, Debbie will contact individual counties who have not completed their list and email out next week to RAC members. The User Committee will meet January 16th at 6:3 p.m. at Starbuck Community Center in Pope County. If the meeting needs to be cancelled due to weather, Debbie will notify members via listserv.

Standards, Protocols & Procedures Summary for CMNRRB:

Chair Myers will also provide the dates standards were adopted with the distribution of standards.

Tom Larson suggested Chair Myers asks CMNRB if they are ok with us utilizing amended standards prior to the CMNRB approving them. It was the consensus that this group should follow the same procedure as the SRB and need CMNRB approval first.

Updates from Partners on Current Projects:

Chair Myers states he needs a motion to approve Grant County for funding of their study, there is sufficient funds available. *Tom Larson moved, Judy Siggerud second, upon a vote, motion carried.*

Wright and Sherburne Counties Planning Project Update:

Steve Hildre, Geo-Comm stated their plan to the OTC Board was premature, it was a preliminary plan and will be brought back to this group for final approval of plan and then to the OTC for their approval.

Kandiyohi, Meeker, and Todd Counties Planning Project Update:

Rey Freeman stated Kandiyohi County reviewed and submitted back comments, suggested changes, updates, etc. to their plan study, Geo-Comm is in process of implementing changes and will be submitting to Kandiyohi County for final review and presentation. Rey stated by the end of the year Kandiyohi should have a tower up and functioning.

Steve Hildre stated Meeker and Todd County's plans are nearing completion, Meeker's plan should be completed for the RAC's November meeting. Mike Mazzitello is setting up meeting tentatively for October 15th with Meeker County.

Swift and Big Stone Counties Additions to Kandiyohi:

Rey Freeman stated Swift and Big Stone Counties received data collection forms and are having a few issues; they will be doing site visits in the next couple of weeks. Scott Mattison stated they have concerns if Geo-Comm is being spread too thin on studies, he stated Swift is in the process of PSAP and radio studies at the same time. Scott stated they have concerns if grant funds need to be paid out by November 30th and if the timelines need to be moved up.

Chair Myers stated he has concerns with studies, one being the hospital study which has been hanging out there for some time and the RAC needs an update on the hospital study. Steve Hildre stated Todd Pieper said the final document should be ready for review by November. Chair Myers stated there are a lot of studies in process and it is imperative to get these studies complete. Steve stated the studies do have people assigned to them: Big Stone and Swift is Rey Freeman, Pope, Stevens, and Morrison is Mike Mazzitello, Otter Tail is Rick Tennant, and Wilkin is Rick.

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Updates from Partners on Current Projects: (Continued)

Swift and Big Stone Counties Additions to Kandiyohi: (Continued)

They want to provide high-quality work on each study, they have looked at hiring additional staff, although with the current staff they have, they feel confident the studies can be completed on time. Geo-Comm appreciates the patience as they finish the studies.

Jay Sikkink reminded group that the hospital, school, Meeker and Todd Counties need to be expended by December this year. Tom Larson asked when they will have a meeting with Mike of Geo-Comm and Steve stated within two weeks.

Dan Hartog asked when the regional plan deadline is and Jay stated it is also December. Scott Mattison stated he is concerned with the 90% payout, Steve asked if the studies had to be approved by the OTC and it was clarified it needed to be delivered to the appropriate party. Chair Myers will check with the SRB for clarification of deliverable, check with Scott Wiggins and Marv Klug for verification.

Regional Plan Update:

Steve Hildre stated this will be by November.

District 742 Planning Efforts:

Mike Mazzitello and Jamie Dixon did the first round of radio testing, still have a few schools in the St. Cloud District to complete testing, he will work with Jamie on October 22nd to complete testing.

Grant Money for Studies:

See other discussions.

Items of Interest:

Jay provided a 5000, model 2 radio to demonstrate for educational purposes, he stated model 2 has a display, model 3 has a keyboard. He explained the features, programming options, etc., provided a radio layout for the Stearns County Sheriff's Department and explained the layout of the talk groups, explained the zone setup, and regional TACTICAL channels.

Scott asked if there is a standard to what radios are allowed on the system and Jay stated there is a list on the SRB website as to what radios are allowed. Chair Myers stated the City of St. Cloud Public Works Department uses a basic radio without the display to costs; maybe the display is determined by discipline

General Discussion and New Business:

PSAP/ARMER/911 Issues:

Scott Mattison stated since the last RAC meeting, the COR Advisor Group met and had a training component as part of their meeting, NG911 will be impacting radio communications, look for IP radio, ROIP issues, etc.

Training - Trunking 101 by Geo-Comm:

Geo-Comm provided Trunking 101 training.

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General Discussion and New Business: (Continued)

Meeting Location:

Chair Myers stated the round table set up works very well, Stearns County will host at the State Patrol, tentative date is January 11th. Jeff Jelinski asked if we could put out a rotation list, Debbie asked if anyone can not host to let her know and she will come up with a rotation list for the future.

Chair Myers stated there will not be SRB meetings in December, therefore the next meeting is in January.

Other Items of Interest:

RAC members contact information, Chair Myers asked if members had concerns about RAC members having contact information posted, *Jay Sikkink moved, Scott Mattison second, to post member information on CMN radio website, motion carried.*

Upcoming Meeting, Set Date, and Location:

Next meeting will be Friday, November 16, 10:00 a.m. at Big Stone County in Ortonville.

January meeting will be the 11th at State Patrol in St. Cloud.

Jeff Jelinski moved, Rick Fiedler second to adjourn at 2:00 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Debbie Backes, Recording Secretary.