

**REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Friday, November 17, 2006**  
**Kandiyohi EOC**  
**Willmar, MN**

**PRESENT:** The following RAC members and alternates were present: Tom Hannon, Micah Myers, City of St. Cloud; George McClure, Jay Sikkink, Stearns County; Paul Olmanson, Benton County; Greg Howell, Wright County; John Olson, Sherburne County; Jeff Jelinski, Morrison County. **The following guests were present:** Tom Justin, Richard Wilson, Dave Pikal, City of St. Cloud; Tom Cherney DPS/ARMER; Dan Gelle, Gold Cross; Andy Faith, Granite Electronics; Mike Mazzitello, Todd Pieper, Rey Freeman, Geo-Comm; Frank Karnauskas, Karns Services; Jamie Nixon, Kyle Paavola, St. Cloud School District 742.

Meeting called to order at 12:25 p.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS:**

Introductions were conducted with representatives for eight out of the nine members present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mike Hirman moved, second George McClure to approve minutes of October 27, 2006, motion carried.

**TRAINING, RADIO 101 AND TRUNKING 101 BY KARNS, INC.:** Karns, Inc provided overview training for the RAC group, approximately one hour.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

Greg Howell talked to Bill Swing regarding the letter from Wright County's consultant, Jeff Nelson of PSC Alliance. Jeff had open heart surgery and recovery is going well. Therefore, the progress of the Wright and Sherburne planning process is slowed down a little. The parties are hoping to get their report by the end of the month. Tom stated there were no other communications directed to the entire RAC group.

**ARMER UPDATE:**

Tom Cherney updated the RAC group regarding the allocation of grant funds for 2007. The 2007 grant program provides for \$125,000 in infrastructure funding and \$125,000 in planning funds. The 2007 allocation provides that \$25,000 of the 2007 planning funding should be set aside for regional planning.

Tom Cherney relayed that the State Radio Operations & Technical Committee (OTC) recommends the RAC appoint someone to attend meetings of that group. He reported that there are a lot of things going on and our input is greatly respected and is needed. Discussion followed. Chief Curt Gullickson of the Sauk Rapids Police Department had been appointed to represent the immediate St Cloud area during the planning and construction of that system. The group requested the chair to determine if Chief Gullickson was interested in representing the broader regional area and the RAC until the Regional Radio Board is actually created and that group appoints a representative to the OTC and other Statewide Radio Board committees and groups. The chair will report back at the next meeting.

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**ARMER UPDATE: (CONTINUED)**

Tom Cherney provided copies of a memorandum from MNDOT regarding the configuration of the phase 3 Central Minnesota ARMER buildout. The handout describes changes to the conceptual plan necessary to facilitate the requirements of the actual buildout. He stated our region had a site added in Buffalo and in Terrance which was changed from phase 5 of the plan to phase 3 as well as a couple other areas and reconfigured some of the internal configurations. The details are in the handout he provided.

**STANDARDS, PROTOCOLS, AND PROCEDURES UPDATE:**

Micah stated that the State has provided electronic copies of the current index of adopted standards, a listing of all proposed standards and draft copies of standard 401. The 401 Standard addresses training and technical qualifications and requirements for support staff. The proposed standard would apply to both vendors and in-house staff. The current 401 Standard is in draft form and the Statewide OTC is working to complete this standard. Upon completion by the Statewide Radio Board it will be offered for consideration by the RAC for interim approval.

**CREATION OF USER COMMITTEE, CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION FROM OCTOBER 2006:**

The RAC group discussed creating the User Committee contained in the Regional Radio Board Agreement draft. Discussion included the desire to have a functioning user based committee and selection of appropriate Board members. General consensus included that if the User Committee was organized at this time the RAC should follow the appointment process contained in the draft agreement to select the members of the committee. Since the draft agreement was not yet approved by all members it was felt this approach was premature. Observations also included that it would be difficult at best to encourage users to attend meetings without operating systems in their area. It was generally acknowledged that it could be a significant time period before all areas of the region have operating ARMER systems.

There was discussion regarding the organization of the User Committee, questions concerning by-laws, block or delegate voting and numerous other issues. There was general consensus that the user committee should be organized as soon as practical following the administrative approval of the Radio Board agreement draft. Upon organization the User Committee should focus on organizational issues such as voting process, drafting by-laws and other organizational matters so that the committee was prepared to function and operate when the Board is formed.

Discussion indicated a desire by the RAC group to engage the user community more fully in the planning process currently under way. Various options were discussed to provide a structure for greater user participation. There appeared to be consensus to include the current St. Cloud/Stearns Interop sub-committee as representative of this process. Discussion followed relative to transferring the existing sub-committee to the RAC and expanding its' focus to include more jurisdictions and agencies as an interim solution pending the completion of the Radio Board Agreement draft approval process. There appeared to be consensus within the RAC to transfer and expand the existing sub-committee to provide a representative user forum encompassing all the jurisdictions to provide user input to the RAC during the initial formation of the Radio Board Agreement and planning process.

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**CREATION OF USER COMMITTEE, CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION FROM OCTOBER 2006: (CONTINUED)**

Discussion followed on creating both the User and Owners & Operators committees following approval of the Radio Board Agreement.

George McClure moved, second by John Olson to create an Interoperability Sub-committee of the RAC and appoint Jay Sikkink as chairperson. The initial membership should include the current Interop sub-committee of the St. Cloud/Stearns planning committee and be expanded to include such persons as each agency party to the RAC desires to include. The sub-committee is authorized and encouraged to discuss issues of interoperability, process, procedures, and protocols affecting interoperable communications in the Central Minnesota area and offer recommendations and suggestions to the RAC affecting planning and operations that enhance interoperable communications. Motion carried.

**REGIONAL RADIO BOARD CREATION:**

**Results of Administrative Review by Each Party:**

The group discussed responses from administrative review process with each county and city administration. Tom Hannon thanked Benton County for the extra effort Michelle Meyers from the Attorney's Office in Benton County put into the review. Tom Hannon and Pat Bettenberg participated in a conference call earlier in the week to discuss a number of items and potential resolution. All items were resolved within the parameters defined by the RAC at last meeting. Paul Olmanson stated he talked to her today and she said everything looks great.

Tom Hannon polled the RAC group regarding administrative approval. The following summarize the results of the polling:

<b><u>Entity</u></b>	<b><u>Approval</u></b>
City of St. Cloud	Yes
Benton County	Yes
Kandiyohi County	Yes
Meeker County	Yes
Morrison County	Under Review
Sherburne County	Yes
Stearns County	Under Review
Todd County	Absent
Wright County	Yes

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**Additional comments included:**

- St. Cloud is prepared to submit the agreement to the City Council.
- Wright County: Greg Howell reported they do not have any problems with the proposed agreement but are going to meet next Wednesday with their technology committee which has a few commissioners on it and may have more input after that meeting.
- Benton County: Paul Olmanson reported Benton County is fine with the agreement
- Stearns County: George McClure stated they are waiting for the response from Sheriff John Sanner. They do not anticipate any issues from the county administration or board on the proposed agreement.
- Sherburne County: John Olson stated he spoke to Sherburne's sheriff and attorneys and they didn't see any problems.
- Morrison County: Jeff Jelinski stated the sheriff is still reviewing and will be participating in further review with the County Attorney. Tom Hannon offered to participate as an additional resource to help resolve technical issues during the Morrison County review.

There appeared to be similar concerns and questions from the entire group pertaining to the issue of user fees, potential costs for membership in the Regional Radio Board and more fully describing the requirements for appointment to the required committees. The RAC discussed modifications required to resolve these issues.

With six of nine potential partners prepared to submit the draft agreement for final approval there was consensus that progress was being made. The group agreed to wait until the January meeting to secure the administrative approval from the remaining three entities. It was the consensus that the group was probably best served by proceeding simultaneously in all jurisdictions on the final approval process.

**Organizational and Process Charts:**

Organizational charts and budget process flow charts were distributed for review and discussion. All charts were distributed in draft form and it was acknowledged they need "polish". The organizational charts include the following:

- Organizational chart describing the relationship of Regional Radio Boards to Statewide Radio Board.
- Organizational chart describing the membership of the proposed Central Minnesota Regional Radio Board.
- Organizational chart describing the relationship between the proposed Central Minnesota Regional radio Board and its required committees.
- One organizational chart for each of the required committees describing the required qualifications for appointment and number of representatives from each party to the agreement.

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**Organizational and Process Charts:** (Continued)

Jeff Jelinski requested clarification of the intent regarding User Committee voting issues, including the possibility of block voting regardless of the number of representatives in attendance from each partner. Discussion followed by the RAC group. The consensus of the RAC determined that the intent was to provide as much autonomy as possible to each committee in their internal organization. It appeared the intent was that each committee would be required to develop by-laws and operational procedures defining their internal relationship, similar to those developed by the RAC, as their first order of business. It also appeared to be the group's preference that each committee's by-laws and procedures be submitted for approval by the Regional Radio Board before the User Committee and Owners and Operators Committee actually begin operation.

The budget flow charts include one chart describing the budget creation process and one chart describing the budget approval process. Both charts conform to the requirements of the proposed agreement.

The budget is put together by the interaction of the three committees (User, Owner and Operator, and Advisory) which jointly produce a draft budget document for Radio Board action. The draft budget has to have three components: 1. Administrative expenses, 2. Operational expenses, and 3. Capital expenses. Each one of these components deals with a separate function and can have separate funding streams in order to provide the services. The source of funding model is totally up to the Radio Board to determine. Anything that is a capital expense item and is either local or sub-regional in nature must be approved by all affected agencies before it gets included in the budget. The Radio Board may approve all administrative, operational budget items and capital budget items only affecting the entire region. The Board must submit the draft budget to each partner for approval action no later than June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year.

Each partner must approve or disapprove the proposed budget by September 1<sup>st</sup>. If a party objects to any part of the proposed budget the Radio Board and objecting party meet to resolve the difference by September 15<sup>th</sup>. If a party to the Agreement neither approves nor disapproves the proposed budget by September 1<sup>st</sup> it is considered to have approved the proposed budget.

There was discussion regarding the organizational and process charts. The RAC did not make any modifications to the charts.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION AND NEW BUSINESS:**

Tom Hannon has requested authorization to use some of the planning grant funds for the first year's organization and operation of the Regional Radio Board. He is awaiting an answer.

Jamie Nixon reported on St Cloud School District 742 communications grant and the upcoming planning activities that will be accomplished under grant funding.

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**GENERAL DISCUSSION AND NEW BUSINESS: (CONTINUED)**

Tom stated he talked to Geo-Comm several times this week and one of the unaddressed issues was the impact of integrating educational institutions into a regional interoperability plan. Currently Geo-Comm has been contracted to complete a regional plan encompassing the eight counties and the City, but the plan scope does not include educational or medical institutions. There was general discussion among RAC members regarding including schools in the current planning process and availability of grant funding to cover this project scope change.

The consensus developed to request Geo-Comm to provide a scope change to the regional plan development project including a pricing estimate and modified timeline. The proposal should address an in-depth review of one school district from each partner to the RAC and a general survey of the remaining districts within the region to ensure that the in-depth review provides results that are representative. It was felt this approach could leverage the St Cloud school's grant to provide much more detailed integration of educational institutions. Jamie Nixon addressed the issue of non-public schools in the region and their inclusion in the plan. There was discussion regarding ensuring that each district selected for an in-depth review would adequately represent the needs of non-public education within their area of responsibility. It was the consensus that each party to the RAC would be responsible for selecting a school district within their jurisdiction for the in-depth review.

The group discussed adding EMS and hospitals to the regional plan modifications. There was concern stated that available funds may not be sufficient to do an adequate job on all facets of the upgrade to the plan scope. The group determined that Geo-Comm should provide scope and pricing information for the next meeting itemizing the additions to include educational institutions, EMS and hospitals within the region. The group expressed a willingness to extend some of the plan work into the next years planning grant by separate agreement.

**UPDATES FROM PARTNERS ON CURRENT PROJECTS:**

**Wright and Sherburne Planning Project Update:**

Nothing additional to report at this time.

**Kandiyohi, Meeker, and Todd Planning Project Update:**

Todd Pieper of Geo-Comm stated they surveyed all agencies in Todd County and approximately half have been returned, they are working on equipment inventory, will be scheduling more meetings. Kandiyohi have quarterly fire chief meetings and already have a public safety user group that meets as needed and will try and bring everyone together and do a presentation and update them on what is going on.

Mike Mazzitello stated they have met with the primary people at Todd and Meeker with a kick-off and are working on getting the surveys out. Once the information comes back in, they will be setting up meetings to get more of the details and do site visits.

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**UPDATES FROM PARTNERS ON CURRENT PROJECTS: (CONTINUED)**

**Regional Plan Update:**

Tom Hannon asked if Geo-Comm needed anything from the RAC at this time to complete the regional plan. There was nothing at this time. Tom Hannon stated we need action from the RAC authorizing someone to sign the agreement with Geo-Comm on the regional planning agreement. Motion by George McClure, second by Dan Hartog to authorize the chair of the RAC to sign the contract with Geo-Comm to conduct the regional plan.

**Items of Interest:**

Jay stated on November 7<sup>th</sup> the Stearns County Board passed a resolution that the County will bring to the Minnesota Counties Association to fully fund the ARMER system buildout.

Micah stated that St. Cloud Mayor Dave Kleis is putting together a meeting with area legislators. He feels the state wide buildout of the ARMER system and system operations and maintenance cost issues should be included.

**UPCOMING MEETING, SET DATE, AND LOCATION:**

Next meeting will be Friday January 12, 2007 in Litchfield. Meeker County will host the meeting. Meeting time is scheduled for 10:00 AM with lunch to be available at noon.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.