



Lt. MIKE PARKER, Co-Director
Chief CECIL RIDGE, Co-Director
WENDY SILVA, Operations Manager

EMERGENCY DISPATCH JOINT POWERS AGENCY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

January 21, 2015

1:00 p.m.

City-County Administration Building
1010 Tenth Street, Board Chambers
Modesto, CA 95354

Commission Members Present: JPA President, Bill Zoslocki; JPA Vice-President, Bill O'Brien; Modesto City Manager, Jim Holgersson; Stanislaus County Assistant Executive Officer, Jody Hayes (Alternate for C.E.O. Stan Risen); City of Newman Chief of Police, Randy Richardson (Alternate for Mayor Katen); Chief of Police, City of Modesto, Galen Carroll; Stanislaus County Fire Warden, Dale Skiles; County Counsel, John Doering; Attorney for City of Modesto, Rolly Stevens

Absent: C.E.O., Stan Risen; Mayor for the City of Newman, Ed Katen

Vice-President Bill O'Brien called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

I. Public Comment Period

There were no public comments

II. Agenda Items

A. Miscellaneous

1. O'Brien/Carroll, abstain Skiles Approved Minutes with correction as noted from December 17, 2014

Chief Skiles asked to correct the minutes regarding DHS funding was approved which it has been, and the EHP consultant has been hired. It also states that there could be some monetary savings which will go toward the generator for the Fire Station. The facts are that DHS monies will be used for the EHP consultant, but there has not been approval for the generator because it's unknown what the savings will be and those DHS funds go through OES and there's a process in place for that, and we may be able to get here, but this states something relatively emphatic and that's not been approved at this point, just asking for a point of clarification for the minutes.

2. JPA Commission Member Administration

Holgersson/Hayes, abstain Richardson agreed to table the discussion for a later date.

Chief Ridge spoke to the Commission regarding a question Chief Carroll raised at the December 17, 2014 JPA Commission meeting, but due to it not being on the agenda, the commission was unable to have discussion. Chief Carroll's question regarded the seat currently held by the City of Newman on the JPA Commission. As of January 1, 2015, Emergency Dispatch responsibilities for the City of Newman were reduced to fire dispatch only. The Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement between the City of Modesto and the County of Stanislaus for Emergency Dispatch Services was provided to the Commission, with direction from Section 8 which defines the Commission structure and it's administration board.

Chief Carroll asked if this discussion should now wait until the Matrix study is completed; do we continue to move forward together; leave the position as it currently is. Newman still has Fire Dispatch, but the Police Dispatch has gone away, and generally it's the Chief of Police that is

here as the representative for the City of Newman. Chief Carroll feels it makes a difference as far as the face of the Commission overall.

Chief Ridge reminded the Commission there will be a meeting on January 29th with the City Manager and the C.E.O., and the JPA Advisors to review the initial draft of the Matrix Report.

Bill O'Brien commented that we wait until after the Matrix Report, as there will be a lot of questions that need to be answered, and a lot of direction that need to be given. There are two trains of thought; the Commission could appoint someone from the Fire Authority since so much is on Fire Dispatch as well, or perhaps another City Manager from one of the smaller cities. Those are two alternatives worth exploring, but it could be part of the entire Matrix Study as there will be a lot of directions to be determined.

Chief Skiles inquired if County or City Counsel has reviewed the Agreement and perhaps they would have an interpretation from their legal perspective as to the language written within the JPA.

County Counsel suggested the question be tabled allowing time for the Matrix Report, and review of the JPA Agreement.

III. Scheduled Matters

B. Mt. Oso

1. Mt. Oso Lease Agreement cost increase

O'Brien/Carroll unan Authorized a 3 month extension at the new lease rate in order to allow time for counsel and Executive staff to review the proposed lease and bring back to this board for further direction.

Chief Ridge reviewed the background regarding the Lease Agreement Cost Increase for Mt. Oso.

Vice-President O'Brien asked if we are renting a spot of land or if this is space on a tower.

Kurt Kline, Systems Engineer with Stanislaus Regional 9-1-1 explained that we are renting land, with our building and tower, and generator. We're leasing a 150' by 150' piece of property on Mt. Oso.

Vice President O'Brien asked if we should be looking for a longer than 3 year term for the lease. We have built and have fixed assets on the mountain.

Kurt Kline explained that he understands the county policy is a maximum 5 year agreement. There was some question if the term refers to agreements in general.

Vice-President O'Brien agreed that we need to renew the lease, but we should look at a longer term strategy, especially because we have installed and own the building. Inquired if either of the attorneys for the Commission have reviewed the lease agreement.

President Zoslocki encouraged that to happen as well.

Mr. Holgersson asked if we could ask for another extension of the current lease agreement allowing counsel to review it.

Jody Hayes spoke about the advice on the original length of the proposed lease agreement is consistent with County standard leasing practices; however this situation lends itself to a potentially different model.

Mr. Doering received a copy of the lease agreement for review.

Chief Ridge suggested we could return to the property owner, asking for an extension while we review the document and are entertaining a longer agreement that would possible be 5 years or longer. A longer contract might make them more agreeable to an extension now, allowing counsel to review.

Vice-President O'Brien suggested we should recommend the authority for the higher amount for a couple more months while attorneys look it over, and maybe bring it back to the City Manager and CEO Risen and proceed from there.

Chief Carroll asked how big the plot of land is that is under discussion.

Kurt Kline explained that it's approximately. It's basically the footprint of the tower, building and generator.

It's known that this property is all about location, as there are several other users on the mountain as well. It's unlikely the owners would be willing to actually sell a plot of land for our use, and no longer need to pay high monthly lease costs. This is definitely an income source for the property owners. Finding a top of a hill with a 3,000 ft. elevation, a clear view of the valley, with electricity and roads is extremely rare.

Mr. Holgersson suggested that we should ask for an extension of the current lease while we work on other recommendations for the JPA.

President Zoslocki inquired if it would be a problem asking for an extension from the property owners.

John Bettencourt, Business Services Manager for SR 9-1-1 explained that our purchasing agent would be contacting the owners. She's been working on this agreement with the owners.

IV. Informational

C. Stanislaus Regional 9-1-1 Director's update

1. Staffing update

Wendy Silva shared with the Commission that there are currently 4 open positions for an Emergency Dispatcher. We also have two employees that will be retiring in March 2015, both of them with almost 30 years of service. We have permission from the County to over hire for those 2 positions, and with the timing required to hire and train people in our department it will work. Originally we had 8 people that passed the recruitment process and we have lost 3 of them, which is common in our line of work. The 5 remaining will go into background. Thanked the Sheriff's Dept. for taking on all 5 of those applicants to conduct their backgrounds. We hope to be starting an in-house academy hopefully in the next month or two. Because we still have openings, and potentially more openings in the future, we have started our second round of recruitments, for the one position with a possibility of more in the near future. With the time it takes to get through the entire process, testing, interviewing, and backgrounds.....the overlap should be on target. As of January 24, 2015 one of our part time call takers has accepted an offer for a full time call taking position, so we are back up to full staffing for our four full time call takers.

Vice-President O'Brien inquired about the 3 applicants that we lost in the recruitment cycle.

Wendy replied that one of our top candidates never replied to our attempts to reach them to continue with their recruitment process. We even checked with SBT to insure our e-mails were going out, since she had gone through quite an extensive process to get to that step. The remaining two applicants failed the background process with their personal history regarding drug usage as well as some other red flags.

Vice-President O'Brien inquired about the testing product used in the recruitment for Emergency Call Takers and Dispatchers. Wendy said we have not looked at other test products, that getting the 5 applicants from this round is actually very good for us, and the 5 we have seem to be good quality at this point. We won't really know until they get into the room to begin their training, but they seem to be very good candidates, so we would like to continue with the current test environment at this time.

President Zoslocki inquired what our expectations were with the next group in recruitment. Wendy indicated we started the last round with approximately 350 applicants, after initial screening they were reduced to about 150, for incomplete applications submitted. From those 150 tested and interviewed, we have the 5 candidates going forward. She is estimating a similar number for the next cycle.

President Zoslocki inquired regarding the time frame on the recruitment cycle.

Wendy indicated that we hope to start our in-house academy in the next month or so, depending on when the Sheriff's Dept. is able to complete the backgrounds and then within the next month or two, we also hope to start the next cycle of recruitments and testing.

President Zoslocki inquired regarding the Psychological Evaluation portion of the recruitment.

Wendy replied that Jocelyn Roland is our new Psychologist, we have met with her a few times. Once the backgrounds are complete, then the applicants meet with her for her portion of the recruitment. She's ready to meet with them when they complete their background.

Chief Ridge shared some additional information regarding Dr. Roland's findings that may help us modify our training in the future to help applicants be more successful in the dispatch environment. We are very excited about this relationship and the additional services she's going to be able to provide due to the analytical data she compiles as compared to instincts as was more heavily relied on by our previous psychologist.

Chief Carroll asked if we have employed ways to speed up the process of recruitment so other departments would not have as much opportunity to hire them from under us.

Wendy indicated we are moving them through as fast as we can. It all has to do with people available to conduct the interviews, testing, and the geography of our building for available space to conduct the processes.

2. 800 MHz project update

Kurt Kline, Systems Engineer for SR911 spoke to the Commission. Two of the 5 sites have been commissioned, Ceres, and Turlock are up and running, on the air. We are doing coverage tests and operational tests now. There have been some minor issues with console gateways that connect the consoles to the new system. We have them running at SR9-11, are

working with Ceres and Turlock the get them going. Initial fields tests, portable to portable tests good. We are moving along.

Chief Carroll asked when the tower on 10th St. and Fire Station 6 are expected to be completed. Also inquired about the handheld to handheld test process.

Kurt indicated that portables are used to do the testing. Mobile have much greater coverage as compared to portable so the portable worn on the hip is the worst possible scenario and that's what we're using to test with. Currently the programming is being fine-tuned for the mobiles and portables. It will be another week or so when the gateways are working and final programming for the subscriber units. Then they will start programming units in Ceres and Turlock and get them tested. The best test is having a lot of users on the system.

Chief Carroll asked when he should begin making the investment in new radios.

Kurt replied that as soon as we get one site running the plan is to patch the new and the old systems together for MPD. MPD's channel 1,2 & 3 will patch those two together so we can fine tune before it goes live. It's approximately a year away still before the new radios will be employed.

President Zoslocki confirmed that we are still about a year out for the process to be complete, providing all goes correctly. Is there a way to simulate the process to insure the testing is effective before we go live.

Kurt indicated we have a number of portables at our discretion for use, so we're doing a number of tests, everything from busying out the system to taking physical readings, and comparing the new and the old systems, getting signal readings. The new system has a lot more functionality than the old system. It has everything from alerting messaging, individual call. There are number of issues that need to be tried and tested. It is a full digital system so it has broad capabilities compared to analog. It's a voice over protocol total digital system.

President Zoslocki indicated he wants to insure that when the system comes on-line we're fully ready, and the system is integrated with all our users on this side of the system, and understand that it's going to meet emergency requirements at that time.

Kurt explained that the plan was to bring Ceres and Turlock up first, allowing them to guinea pig the system. Since both the cities already have existing 800 MhZ systems, we're going to patch the old and new trunking systems together; have them switch over to the new system. If it fails or doesn't work right they can easily switch channels back to the old system and it's seamless. If there is any anomalies with the system, software is usually the problem with any system. Any software or functionality bugs would be discovered then. Any problems with the simulcast overload in the overlap areas should be discovered also. It should give them equal to or greater coverage than they have now for both cities. They should be able to roam seamlessly now through both cities as opposed to just having coverage in their city. That and a check sheet for functionality is what we're using for testing and our evaluation.

Chief Carroll asked regarding equipment warranties and outdated software before it's even installed, requiring additional funds to deal with that.

Kurt indicated it's a two year warranty, which will be expired, and the software has already been upgraded. It will be out of warranty when the system goes on line. We do have spare equipment. Tait does have a good track record with their product reliability. We're using that now in the conventional P25 status. Failure rate has been very low. The first 5 years, there

were 3 failures total, 2 power supplies and 1 PA, and that's with over 120 repeaters, base stations and voting receivers on existing equipment currently employed. It's been really reliable equipment.

President Zoslocki inquired if there's some way to speed the project to shorten the timeline toward completion, and asked for further information hopefully by the next time the Commission meets in February.

Chief Ridge spoke regarding the antenna sites for this project. There's a conference call scheduled to try to identify some problems that came up to try to get back on schedule and move forward. Chief Carroll offered to help should there still be some bumps in the road after the conference call so there are not further delays.

President Zoslocki asked if Chief Ridge could provide an update for the record regarding the Matrix report.

Chief Ridge replied that he, the City Manager, The C.E.O., Lt. Parker, and the 4 advisors have all received a draft copy. The draft copy has been reviewed for errors and accuracy. There will be a meeting on January 29, 2015 to have the first discussion with Matrix on the draft.

Mr. Holgersson indicated that the goal would be to bring it to the JPA in the February meeting. There are a number of questions from the study that will need to be corrected. The management team is meeting with Matrix, asking those questions, getting some clarification so we can bring some recommendations, options, and be prepared to answer any questions. The February meeting may not reach any conclusions regarding the report, but that we would just begin the process.

V. Adjournment at 1:40 p.m.

ATTESTED: Kaye-Marie Newell, Joint Powers Agency Commission Clerk. The above is an expanded summary of the minutes of the Governing Board of the Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency. Complete audio-taped minutes are available from the Stanislaus Regional 9-1-1 Administration office.