

**Dakota Communications Center (DCC)**  
**Board of Directors**  
**Minutes of Meeting: 01.17.08**

**Members Present:** Burnsville – Elizabeth Kautz; Dakota County – Nancy Schouweiler; Eagan – Mike Maguire; Farmington – Kevan Soderberg; Hastings – Mike Slavik; Inver Grove Heights-George Tourville; Lakeville-Laurie Rieb; Mendota Heights – Ultan Duggan; Rosemount – Mike Baxter; South St. Paul – Beth Baumann; West St. Paul – Darlene Lewis

**Members Absent:** Apple Valley – Bob Erickson

**Alternates Present:** Apple Valley – John Bergman;

**Others Present:** DCC - Kent Therkelsen, Diane Lind, Jennifer Hildebrandt; Executive Committee Chair – Jamie Verbrugge

**Call the Meeting to Order:** There being a quorum, Chair Kautz called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM.

**Roll Call:** Roll was called. Members in attendance are noted above.

**Announcements:**

Chair Kautz reminded of the 8:00 am start time and then welcomed new representatives from Hastings and Rosemount. The group then went around the room with introductions.

**Additions to Agenda:**

None

**CONSENT AGENDA**

3.
  - a. Approve Minutes from Regular Board meeting of December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007.
  - b. Adopt and Ratify Executive Committee's Approval of 11/01/07 – 11/30/07 paid claims.
  - c. Approve November, 2007 Financial Reports.
  - d. Official Newspaper

**Discussion:**

Duggan (Mendota Heights) requested item 3D be pulled from the consent agenda for separate discussion.

**Action:** Motion by Maguire (Eagan) to approve consent agenda items 3a, 3b and 3c. Second by Duggan (Mendota Heights). Motion passed unanimously.

**Further Discussion:**

Duggan (Mendota Heights) commented that he was concerned that the recommended official newspaper was not available to all member communities. Therkelsen (DCC) acknowledged that the Rosemount Town Pages was focused on the Rosemount/Farmington area and had limited circulation. Therkelsen (DCC) clarified that the recommendation arrived at was based on a couple of things.

1. Legally required postings are bids and requests for proposals.
2. Employment opportunities are not posted in this paper but in the Star Tribune, Pioneer Press and on the DCC website to ensure all member communities have the same access capabilities.

Therkelsen (DCC) stated that this paper simply met the statutory requirements and offered the lowest price. Therkelsen added that staff could request Rosemount TownPages send copies of their newspaper to each of the agencies if desired. Chair Kautz (Burnsville) acknowledged. Verbrugge (Executive Committee Chair) reminded members that the Rosemount TownPages was a paid subscription paper and asked if the DCC would be paying for these subscriptions for the different agencies. Verbrugge suggested finding out if the postings could be accessed online. Therkelsen (DCC) acknowledged that staff would find out if the postings could be accessed on line and added that if there was a posting, the DCC could ensure that notices could be forwarded to members. Maguire (Eagan) commented that if Eagan was interested in a possible legal notice for the DCC, their staff would not go to the paper to obtain that. Maguire added that they would have no need for a subscription to the paper; especially if the accessible online. Schouweiler (Dakota County) commented that the County already received a subscription to the Rosemount TownPages and added that it was also the paper that the County used for their legal notices. Lewis (West St. Paul) asked if there is something noticed in every edition of the paper. Chair Kautz (Burnsville) clarified that there was not. Lewis (West St. Paul) responded that she would then be in favor of having access to the legal notices on the website. Also, in motion...the agenda for the DCC be published someplace. Should be on the website. If not listed in paper, it has to be someplace for all to access.

**Action:** Motion by Duggan (Mendota Heights) to approve consent agenda item 3D. Motion also to make legal notices available on the DCC website. Second by Schouweiler (Dakota County). Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Baumann (South St. Paul) to direct staff to make minutes and all other pertinent information available to the public via the DCC website as soon as available. Second by Maguire (Eagan).

**Further Discussion:**

Therkelsen (DCC) clarified that the desire was to have approved minutes posted on the website with public access. Duggan (Mendota Heights) recommended the minutes be placed on the website in draft form as soon as they were available. Members agreed.

Motion passed unanimously.

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

### **4. Election of Chair and Vice Chair.**

#### **Discussion:**

Chair Kautz (Burnsville) informed members that the bylaws required the Board elect a chair and vice chair at their first meeting of even number years.

**Action:** Duggan (Mendota Heights) motioned to elect Mayor Kautz (Burnsville) to a second 2-year term as Chair of the DCC Board of Directors and Councilmember Erickson (Apple Valley) to a second 2-year term as Vice-Chair of the DCC Board of Directors. Second by Soderberg (Farmington).

#### **Further Discussion:**

Bergman (Apple Valley) commented that Erickson's attendance was required at another meeting and that he was participating in the Board meeting in his place but that Erickson was still wishing to participate on the Board. Tourville (Inver Grove Heights) reminded that it was not the city that held the position but the person

Motion passed unanimously.

Kautz (Burnsville) thanked members for electing her to a second term and commented that she looked forward to continuing to serve as the chair.

### **5. Executive Director Report.**

#### **Discussion:**

Therkelsen (DCC) commented that the meeting was the first since the DCC had gone live and that most of his report was related to how things were going. Therkelsen stated that as of close of the business the previous day, dispatch had processed just over 20,000 incidents, which translated to just over 1,000 a day. Therkelsen stated that in the first 3 weeks of business, staff saw some themes of what was going well and what was not. Therkelsen stated that the member agencies had been extremely tolerant and helpful.

Therkelsen (DCC) acknowledged that staff was starting to see a few issues that they felt were work flow design and training related and added that most of the issues were on the fire/ems side of the spectrum as that was where there was the most variation in procedures among the members. Therkelsen assured that supervisory staff had been documenting the issues as they arose and was taking them very seriously.

Therkelsen (DCC) informed members that the field users had commended the audio quality and coverage footprint of the radio system as it had clearly improved. Therkelsen added that another clear improvement is the flexibility DCC staff has when major incidents presented themselves.

Therkelsen (DCC) stated that at the end of each month, staff would be compiling information on calls and radio traffic. This information would then be plugged into the performance measures that were previously approved by the Board. Therkelsen

acknowledged that there were one or two items that would probably not meet the standard the first month but the goal was constant improvement.

Baumann (South St. Paul) asked Therkelsen about issues that she had heard about through South Metro. Therkelsen (DCC) responded that he had been in constant conversations with Chief Ehret and the South Metro medical calls were distinctly different protocol than the rest of the County but that he hoped to be able to report improvements to Chief Ehret very soon.

Maguire (Eagan) thanked Therkelsen for the update and commented that he was unclear on the implication of protocol differences with the fire departments. Maguire then asked how the differences were causing glitches. Maguire clarified stating he was wondering if they were internal procedural glitches or are they glitches that influenced the performance measures. Therkelsen (DCC) responded that in the performance measures, staff was measuring how long it took to pick up calls, how long it took until the information was made available to the dispatcher and how long it took until the call was aired. Therkelsen stated that staff went from a single stage process, where the call taker also dispatched the call, to a two stage process, where the call taker relayed the information to another person to be dispatched. Therkelsen clarified that the call taker may be on the other side of the room and when the facility first went live, the call was relayed to the dispatcher with no audible to alert them they had a call waiting. That has since been made audible. Therkelsen stated that from community to community the response protocol was different as some agencies wanted to be dispatched on every call and some agencies only wanted the serious calls. Therkelsen asked Operations Director Lind to explain EMD.

Lind (DCC) informed members that staff had also implemented EMD (Emergency Medical Dispatch), which was adding to the response time. Lind clarified that EMD was a method of the dispatcher walking the caller through a series of questions to help determine the priority of the call. Lind stated that DCC staff was going through and determining what level of response they wanted on their calls. Lind acknowledged that this was proving to be a bit difficult because some of the departments were paid on-call, some were full-time. Some medical responders come out of the fire stations and some are contracted services. Lind confirmed that this was new to the dispatchers and that there was a lot of room for improvement. Lewis (West St. Paul) asked if it was a matter of the dispatchers becoming familiar with each entity and how different they were. Therkelsen (DCC) responded that the staffing plan was based on all dispatchers being able to do all the jobs. Therkelsen added that there had been discussion at the last Fire/EMS Operations Committee meeting about having specialized dispatchers work the fire channels. Therkelsen stated that as experience and time passes, there may be the need to gravitate to specific fire dispatchers. However, all dispatchers needed to understand the position and be able to do that job.

Chair Kautz (Burnsville) reiterated that there was a need for discussion on policy and direction as Board members could only control what they were involved in on the Board level recognizing that at the individual cities, the issues also needed to be addressed at that level.

Soderberg (Farmington) commented that with this discussion, it was obvious that there was work needed on the fire/ems side of the spectrum. Soderberg questioned if the dispatchers were getting the same sort of support as officers do when dealing with this number of stresses. Therkelsen (DCC) responded that this was being dealt with on a couple different levels. 1) Supervisors were expected to be checking in with their dispatchers and give additional attention through getting the dispatcher out of the situation. 2) Availability of the East Metro Critical Incident Debriefing System. Kautz (Burnsville) added that there is an Employee Assistance program available to the employees through the benefits package.

Chair Kautz (Burnsville) thanked staff for the communications during the cutover.

Tourville (Inver Grove Heights) asked if it might be easier for staff to see how events played out by using a flow chart process. Therkelsen (DCC) responded that in the summer of 2007 staff and the fire departments developed a matrix. The Fire/EMS committee and staff then went through the matrix and indicated what resources needed to be notified for each fire department. This was then set up in CAD so when the dispatcher got a fire call, the CAD system could recommend the needed response automatically. Therkelsen stated that the Ops committees were developing a line level user group from each agency and that staff and the operations committees had designated on contact at each agency, including the DCC, where issues could be streamlined and dealt with.

Maguire (Eagan) commented that the group was focusing on glitches because it was human nature. However, the over response to the transition was positive.

Baumann (South St. Paul) asked if there should be better communication to the public regarding the all-response directive. Kautz (Burnsville) agreed that was a valid point and stated something should be put on each agency's website. Therkelsen (DCC) acknowledged that it had been a fairly soft message.

Rieb (Lakeville) asked if there were technical difficulties with some of the equipment. Lind (DCC) responded that some of the pagers were having sporadic issues through the County and that staff, PSC Alliance and the County were working to isolate those issues. Kautz (Burnsville) asked if the redundancies were also being worked on. Lind (DCC) confirmed.

Therkelsen (DCC) informed members that he had met with the fiscal agent the previous day to kick off the budget cycle, which would be starting late February or early March. Therkelsen stated that the goal was to bring a preliminary budget to the Executive Committee in April but that staff was not required to have it to them until May. Therkelsen added that staff was required to have the recommended budget to the Board by their September meeting.

Therkelsen (DCC) reminded members that the strategic planning session was scheduled for March 13<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 – 11:30 am and that more details would follow.

Therkelsen (DCC) informed that staff was doing some pre-employment backgrounds to fill some employment vacancies in dispatch.

Therkelsen (DCC) informed members that there had been some recent modification to the website. Therkelsen clarified that most of the modifications were to bring the site to the present tense but added that there was also a new photo gallery on the site.

**Action:**

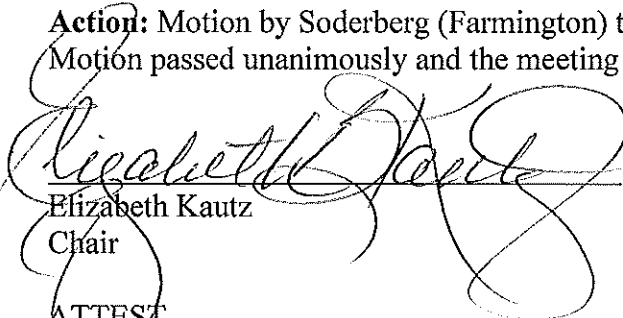
**6. Miscellaneous**

**Discussion:**

**Action:**

**7. Adjourn**

**Action:** Motion by Soderberg (Farmington) to adjourn. Second by Rieb (Lakeville). Motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:58am.

  
Elizabeth Kautz  
Chair

5/15/08  
Date

ATTEST

  
Kent Therkelsen  
Executive Director

5/15/08  
Date

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**Next Meeting:**  
**Thursday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008**  
**8:00 am**  
**Location: DCC**