

**Dakota Communications Center  
Executive Committee  
Meeting Minutes: 04.01.09**

**Members Present:** Tom Lawell – Apple Valley; Craig Ebeling – Burnsville; Peter Herlofsky – Farmington; Dave Osberg – Hastings; Joe Lynch – Inver Grove Heights; Steve Mielke – Lakeville; Jim Danielson – Mendota Heights; Dwight Johnson - Rosemount; John Remkus – West St. Paul

**Members Absent:** Brandt Richardson – Dakota County; Tom Hedges – Eagan; Stephen King – South St. Paul

**Alternates Present:** Don Gudmundson – Dakota County; Dan Vujovich – South St. Paul.

**Others Present:** Kent Therkelsen, Jen Hildebrandt, Troy Ruby – DCC

**Call the Meeting to Order**

Chair Osberg called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

**1. Announcements**

None

**2. Additions to the Agenda**

None

*Consent Agenda*

**3.**

- a. **Approve minutes from the February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Executive Committee meeting.**
- b. **Approve December, 2008, January and February, 2009 Paid Claims.**
- c. **Receive December, 2008, January and February, 2009 Financial Reports.**
- d. **Receive Minutes from Operations Committees.**
  - o **Fire/EMS Minutes from February 10<sup>th</sup> and March 10<sup>th</sup>.**
  - o **Law Enforcement Minutes from February 5<sup>th</sup> and March 5<sup>th</sup>.**
  - o **Joint Operations from March 26<sup>th</sup>.**

**Action:** Motion by Johnson (Rosemount) to approve the consent agenda. Second by Ebeling (Burnsville). Motion passed unanimously.

Financial reports for December, 2008 and January and February, 2009 were not yet available for review by membership and will need to be presented for receipt at the May Executive Committee meeting.

*Regular Agenda*

**4. Mass Telephone Notification System Recommendation**

**Discussion:**

Therkelsen (DCC) informed that members that the Mass Telephone Notification System (MTNS) RFP process had been concluded and that the committee had presented a recommendation for

consideration. Therkelsen directed attention to the handout that was made available at the meeting.

Ruby (DCC) reviewed the process with members and added that the committee had received eight (8) proposals by conclusion. Ruby commented that the committee, using the scoring system detailed in the RFP, and made up of four (4) members from across the county: Joseph Sapletal (Dakota County GIS), Jeremy Klein (Eagan PD Support Services /Emergency Manager), BJ Battig (Department of Risk Management/Homeland Security Dakota County) and himself, Troy Ruby (DCC Supervisor), initially narrowed the field to three (3) proposals. Ruby assured that after contacting references listed on all three (3) proposals, the committee consensus was to recommend vendor Code Red. Ruby (DCC) commented that Code Red clearly reflected the superior service in the eyes of the committee. Ruby (DCC) directed attention to the second page of the handout where it detailed exactly what set the Code Red proposal apart from the other proposals. Ruby (DCC) added that Code Red is being used by the Red River Valley Regional Dispatch Center (Fargo-Moorhead) and the City of St. Paul; both providing very positive feedback.

Osberg (Hastings) asked where Code Red is based. Ruby (DCC) responded that Code Red is based out of Florida. Ebeling (Burnsville) asked what Eagan is currently using. Ruby (DCC) responded that Eagan currently works with a company called Intrado, providing a system that was originally procured through Qwest Communications. Lawell (Apple Valley) asked how the product relates with wireless lines and if residents can register their contact numbers. Ruby (DCC) responded that Code Red has a very nice web page that they will tailor to the DCC. This web page can be used by citizens to sign up whatever contact numbers they want to be notified on, whether they are land line or wireless.

Ruby (DCC) informed members that one topic discussed by the review committee was how this system can be used for continuity of operations. Ruby clarified that the current specialty team notification system supported by LOGIS, Emergin, will not be supported starting January 1<sup>st</sup> of 2010. Ruby stated that Code Red has unlimited texting at no cost.

Ebeling (Burnsville) referred to the estimated cost listed at the bottom of the second page of the handout and asked Ruby to clarify. Ruby (DCC) responded that the cost Code Red proposed is \$53,000 per year. Ruby clarified this is a fixed price for the length of the contract. Ruby added that covered by this cost the DCC would receive 200,000 minutes of call time per year. Ruby reminded that the unlimited texting is the primary day to day use, which costs nothing. Ebeling (Burnsville) asked what happens if the consortium were to go over the 200,000 minutes. Ruby (DCC) responded that the cost would be \$2,000 for each additional 10,000 minutes. Ruby (DCC) commented that another perk to the Code Red proposal is that they bill in 6 second increments, which none of the other vendors do.

Therkelsen (DCC) commented that when staff met with Code Red previously, staff was informed that when creating proposals Code Red looks at the community population and demographics and estimates how many minutes may be needed. That number is then doubled. Therkelsen added that Code Red stated they have never had to bill a customer for minutes used over and above the banked minute allotment.

Osberg (Hastings) requested staff walk members through the process if the recommendation is approved by the Executive Committee and Board of Directors. Therkelsen (DCC) responded that if the Executive Committee endorses the recommendation it will be brought before the Board of Directors at their April 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. Therkelsen (DCC) continued that staff would ask the Board to approve the recommendation and authorize staff to negotiate a contract with Code Red.

Therkelsen (DCC) reminded members that the first year cost would come out of the undesignated fund budget which is currently estimated to be at 1.1 million dollars. Therkelsen stated that 700,000 of that undesignated fund budget was, essentially, returned to members in the form of a reduction in capital debt payments for 2009, leaving a balance of \$400,000. Therkelsen continued that both the Automatic Vehicle Location and the Mass Telephone Notification System along with routine renewal and replacement of capital items are scheduled to be deducted from this \$400,000 balance. Therkelsen (DCC) clarified that it is now believed that there is probably at least \$100,000 additional undesignated fund balance in this account than when the \$400,000 estimate was made. Therkelsen (DCC) informed members that the cost of this capital purchase is \$53,000.

Johnson (Rosemount) asked when staff anticipates MTNS to go online. Therkelsen (DCC) responded that assuming an uneventful contract negotiation with Code Red, staff hoped to have the system active by Labor Day. Johnson (Rosemount) mentioned that at the last Executive Committee meeting there was discussion about limited ability of agency use. Johnson then asked if this system allowed for local launches by the agencies. Ruby (DCC) responded that the system certainly has the capability of doing that but that he was not yet sure what the usage policy would be. Therkelsen (DCC) added that the DCC was cautioned on how to approach the usage policy. However, DCC staff acknowledges the desire for agencies to be able to use the system for possible staff notifications. Therkelsen added that it is important that the public recognize calls from the system to be critical messages for their benefit. Therkelsen stated that the system is web-based so permissions can be given to key officials for system use. Therkelsen (DCC) assured that usage is monitored and easy to track.

Ebeling (Burnsville) asked if a chief needs to do a notification, they would call the DCC or do the notification themselves. Therkelsen (DCC) responded that because the system is web-based, it is possible to do the notification from any computer. However, DCC recommendation would be the system be used for emergent events and be done from the DCC as the notification may result in inquiry calls to the DCC, confining local launches initially to non-emergent staff notifications, etc. Remkus (West St. Paul) commented that there is an obvious need for a discussion on the policy associated with the system costs and usage. Therkelsen (DCC) informed members that a policy had not yet been drafted because of the variety of pricing models that were represented in the proposals.

Remkus (West St. Paul) asked about the possibility of messages being sent out in other languages recognizing a large Hispanic population in West St. Paul. Ruby (DCC) acknowledged the desire and although currently unable to respond, agreed to follow up on the desire for additional language information.

Mielke (Lakeville) agreed with Remkus in the need for a policy and added that it should be in place prior to implementation. Mielke continued that the policy should be strict to begin and if there is room to loosen the restrictions, that can be discussed at that time. Mielke (Lakeville) also suggested a pricing schedule for convenience calls. Mielke (Lakeville) then asked staff if the recommendation had been brought before the operations committees. Ruby (DCC) responded that a large percentage of the committees is familiar with the program but not necessarily familiar with this vendor. Osberg (Hastings) commented that the Law Enforcement Operations Committee meets on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and the Fire/EMS Operations Committee meets on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Osberg stated that if the Executive Committee is ok with the recommendation and barring any unforeseen issues at the operations committee level, staff should be able to bring the recommendation to the Board meeting on April 16<sup>th</sup> with the endorsement of all 3 committees. Therkelsen (DCC) agreed to bring the discussion before the operations committees but reminded members that the Joint Operations Committee doesn't meet until the end of May.

Vujovich (South St. Paul) commented that at the last meeting staff reported that the DCC is looking at possible partnerships in with some of the companies in the county that generate hazardous materials for cost recovery. Therkelsen (DCC) confirmed and stated that Flint Hills currently has a Mass Telephone Notification System agreement with the City of Eagan. Therkelsen stated Flint Hills has voiced interest in transferring that relationship to the DCC, but no formal discussion or agreement has taken place as of now. Therkelsen (DCC) stated that BJ Battig, with Dakota County, has also mentioned working with the Emergency Managers to work with other HAZMAT generators within the county to explore partnerships to help defray costs to the DCC.

**Action:** Motion by Mielke (Lakeville) to recommend approval of the Mass Telephone Notification System proposal from Code Red. Motion also to direct staff to implement a usage policy prior to implementation. Second by Lynch (Inver Grove Heights). Motion passed unanimously.

## **5. Funding Formula**

### **Discussion:**

Therkelsen (DCC) informed members that the budget sub-committee has visited about the current funding formula and has requested some discussion and direction from the Executive Committee on the future funding formula. Therkelsen (DCC) directed attention to the background packet and accompanying memo in the agenda packet. Therkelsen stated that the first fact on the background item is the exact wording taking from the JPA.

Therkelsen (DCC) reminded members that the DCC is using the original funding formula that was put in place when the JPA was signed in 2005. Therkelsen continued stating the JPA requires, after the first full year of operations, the formula be adjusted annually to reflect the last full year of operations prior to that budget. Therkelsen clarified that the 2010 budget would reflect the full year of 2008 statistics.

Therkelsen (DCC) stated that one thing learned in operations at the DCC is that staff cannot accurately allocate wireless 911 calls amongst the members and roughly ½ of all incoming 9-1-1 calls are wireless. Therkelsen (DCC) clarified that the cities previously running dispatch centers that dispatched for only their city should have very accurate numbers. However, those agencies who previously had dispatch centers serving other cities are getting the other city wireless calls added to their totals. Therkelsen (DCC) stated that the call origin information the DCC receives comes from the MESB. Therkelsen assured that staff has been talking with the MESB about this issue but added that it is an extremely difficult correction that would only result in about 90% accuracy. Therkelsen added that the MESB feels any action to make this correction would be done at the DCC's expense.

Therkelsen (DCC) directed attention to the memo that was included in the agenda packet and stated that staff tried to identify some calculations from the original formula. Therkelsen stated that approximately ½ of all incoming wireless calls are not precisely identifiable as to the community of origin. Therkelsen added that even having the community of origin doesn't necessarily track to an event in that area. Therkelsen stated that the budget sub-committee has tried to identify some questions needed to be addressed by the consortium prior to action by the group.

- 1) Does the consortium wish to maintain a cost allocation system that distributes cost to members in proportion to their usage of DCC services?
- 2) Are there alternatives available that maintain this policy, while overcoming the identified limitation?
- 3) Should the consortium consider a "blended rate", using activity factors over a longer period than one year?

Therkelsen (DCC) acknowledged there are some serious considerations that need to be made before any kind of change to the JPA is considered as that is a very formal, legal process.

Therkelsen added that the bylaws stated the JPA cannot be changed without unanimous agreement among the membership.

Therkelsen (DCC) reminded members that this discussion has no impact on the debt service allocation as it was set up in the beginning and will continue for the life of the bond. Therkelsen (DCC) stated that staff intended to come back to the June Board meeting with a resolution and use the August meeting to present the budget in an effort to handle the funding formula separately. Osberg (Hastings) reiterated that staff hoped to get the funding formula resolved prior to budget discussions.

Mielke (Lakeville) commented that it would be easy to look at the options and select whichever option best fit his city, but it is important members look at the original funding principal as a whole. Mielke asked staff what information they feel is a good benchmark. Therkelsen (DCC) responded that the most precise information is the CAD events stating that now that all staff is consolidated there is more consistency in definitions and what events result in CAD event creation. Therkelsen (DCC) acknowledged that there is some opportunity for agencies to make decisions about how they do CAD events in an effort to keep their CAD numbers down. Therkelsen (DCC) stated that law enforcement CAD is even more standardized than fire CAD as there is much more local customization with Fire.

Johnson (Rosemount) commented that it sounds like using the CAD events would be the most accurate formula. Herlofsky (Farmington) suggested using a formula that would correlate to population as it is much more understandable.

Gudmundson (Dakota County) asked if there is a sense of where the majority of calls based on CAD will come from. Therkelsen (DCC) responded that CAD produces accurate agency-by-agency totals, suspects there may be a GIS approach available. Therkelsen (DCC) commented that when discussions first began there was a spreadsheet that showed population correlations. Mielke (Lakeville) agreed but stated that was a discussion about population not reflecting activity and is why the group decided to avoid population specifically. Mielke (Lakeville) acknowledged that a formula based on population certainly is the simplest approach but he is not sure it is reflective.

Mielke (Lakeville) commented that for an event that happens there may be multiple phone calls but only one CAD event. Mielke continued that 911 reflects the number of calls. Mielke then suggested that a blended method be visited.

Ebeling (Burnsville) commented that he would like the simplicity of a funding formula based on population but stated that Burnsville generates more traffic per capita as a host of a large retail corridor. Ebeling (Burnsville) added that he feels the group needs to stick to some sort of activity parameter. Osberg (Hastings) reiterated that the group is in general agreement of wanting to avoid having to amend the JPA. Lawell (Apple Valley) responded that although that is a good goal, he's not sure how it would work. Mielke (Lakeville) agreed that there may not be another option than to go back and amend the JPA. Mielke added that if the group sticks to the principals, it is OK to go back and say the patterns have changed and what we have been using is no longer working.

Members reviewed the selected formula alternatives and discussed the fact that in any scenario, six agencies go up and 6 agencies go down. Mielke (Lakeville) stated that now that the DCC has operational experience, the funding allocation moves from estimates to reality. Lawell (Apple Valley) concurred and reminded the group that everyone knew it was going to change.

Osberg (Hastings) stated that there is no rush to make an immediate decision. Osberg

reiterated that general consensus is to work based on sustaining the principals irrespective of what the numbers are. Osberg continued that the funding formula should be based on usage and members should anticipate a need for an amendment to the JPA.

Johnson (Rosemount) commented that the sub-committee should really look at the blended option to address the increase or decrease. Johnson clarified that the blended option could use a 3 year rolling average of all the numbers and would help mitigate a one year change. Mielke (Lakeville) agreed. Lawell (Apple Valley) commented that the blended option has the least impact considering the need for support by the councils. Lynch (Inver Grove Heights) agreed with the approach but asked if this is a process that can be done in 4 months. Therkelsen (DCC) assured that staff has the numbers already, although the process will involve many steps. Therkelsen added that changing the formula would require a very clear recommendation from the Executive Committee. Mielke (Lakeville) voiced concern with waiting until August for the budget. Therkelsen (DCC) responded that he believes the budget process is on track to be presented to the Board in June and hopefully adopted. Therkelsen (DCC) commented that there will need to be a lot of ground work outside of the meeting to get this JPA done during the same timeframe. Mielke (Lakeville) suggested a sub-committee.

Therkelsen (DCC) asked if the JPA amendment requires each governing board to pass it or if it just requires each DCC board member to agree to it. Lawell (Apple Valley) responded that each council would need to approve it. Osberg (Hastings) added that the question of "what happens if the amendment is not approved" will need to be answered. Therkelsen (DCC) asked if there would be an option or way to administratively go ahead with this while still honoring the JPA. Mielke (Lakeville) responded that is a question the sub-committee should look at. Steve Mielke from Lakeville and Joe Lynch from Inver Grove Heights agreed to sit down with Peter Herlofsky (Farmington) and John Remkus (West St. Paul) of the budget sub-committee to work on the formula.

Lynch (Inver Grove Heights) commented that given the fact this is the first year examining this and given all the changes, maybe 2010 isn't the year to implement the change. Lynch commented that he'd hate to see the work of the group or sub-committee hurry to get something adopted and then not have the best formula. Ebeling (Burnsville) agreed but stated that 2010 is ideal from the perspective that it is the 1<sup>st</sup> adjustment from the start-up allocation. Ebeling (Burnsville) then asked how far off it would be to define 911 calls as 911 calls that can be accurately tracked?

Mielke (Lakeville) commented that we should distinguish between the expense and revenue budgets in this discussion. Ebeling (Burnsville) commented that maybe 911 calls are a bad parameter. Lawell (Apple Valley) commented that there is equalization in using the CAD event. Lawell (Apple Valley) also commented that he was not aware that the 10-digit numbers were also not able to be accurately allocated by Member as intended in the original JPA.

Remkus (West St. Paul) commented that there is no perfect calculation. Remkus added that sometimes issues like this are overanalyzed. Remkus stated that he really believes using the CAD events and possibly a blended calculation of 3, 4 or 5 years is necessary.

Osberg (Hastings) reiterated that the sub-committee will look at a blended formula and bring it forward to the next Executive Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>. Therkelsen (DCC) added that staff will also come to that meeting with legal language and the resolutions for consideration with the help of the DCC attorney. This will need endorsement from the Executive Committee and will then be brought to the Board for consideration followed by the City Council meetings. Osberg (Hastings) confirmed but added that if staff can arrive at a conclusion that doesn't need an amendment to the JPA, they will try to do that. Mielke (Lakeville) reminded members how critical it is for board representation to fully understand this

and be able to carry the topic forward to their councils. Vujovich (South St. Paul) restated that the sub-committee will look at a blended formula using total CAD.

**Action:**

No action. Discussion only.

**6. Service Issues**

**Discussion:**

Therkelsen (DCC) reviewed a service issue summary for July, 2008 through February, 2009 with the group. Johnson (Rosemount) requested agency totals be copied to their respective Executive Committee representative. Johnson (Rosemount) asked if there was a reason for the spike in inquiries in October? Therkelsen (DCC) was unaware of a reason for the spike.

**Action:** No action. Update only.

**7. Director's Report**

**Discussion:**

DCC Update to City Councils - Therkelsen (DCC) reminded members that he is available to present a DCC update to member City Councils.

Budget - Therkelsen (DCC) informed members that the 2010 budget background work is almost complete. Therkelsen added that the sub-committee meets again on April 21<sup>st</sup> and staff plans to be back at the April 29<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee meeting with the first round budget.

AVL – Therkelsen (DCC) informed members that AVL has been implemented in Eagan, South Saint Paul and Burnsville. Therkelsen (DCC) added that LOGIS is rolling AVL out to the other agencies one at a time. Therkelsen (DCC) commented that AVL seemed to be working very well.

LOGIS CAD RFP – Therkelsen (DCC) informed members that the LOGIS CAD RFP is in process and that 6 vendors have sent letters of interest. Therkelsen added that LOGIS is working on obtaining possible grand funding for this project.

Fiscal Agent Update – Therkelsen (DCC) updated that DCC's fiscal agency, The City of Lakeville, has discovered a USBank invoicing problem with how they are handling the debt service invoices for members. Therkelsen assured that the fiscal agent has worked hard to get this straightened out and corrected invoices sent. Mielke (Lakeville) added that he tried to get a sense of the scope of the mistake and in some cases the discrepancy was thousands of dollars. Mielke added that some agencies were over billed and others were under billed. Mielke reminded members that the fiscal agent didn't make the error, but was working to make sure it doesn't happen again. Osberg (Hastings) asked if the contractual agreement between the DCC and The City of Lakeville appropriately reflects the amount of work. Mielke (Lakeville) responded that the City of Lakeville is considering charging USBank for the work. Mielke (Lakeville) added that the contract between the DCC and the City of Lakeville is for 2 years and was based on bidding assumptions. Mielke stated that fiscal work on behalf of the DCC has proven to be more work than anticipated. Therkelsen (DCC) concurred and stated that the staff at the City of Lakeville have been doing a phenomenal job for the DCC.

APCO Award – Therkelsen (DCC) informed members that he and two dispatch staff attended an APCO event in St. Cloud earlier in the week where the DCC was recognized for their involvement in the Burncliff fire in Burnsville. Therkelsen added that 4 PSAPs were recognized at the event and the DCC was proud to be one of them.

Lawell (Apple Valley) asked if there was another nomination for award in process. Therkelsen

(DCC) confirmed that staff had received notification that ICMA had received the nomination and that the DCC should hear back in April.

**Action:** No action. Update only.

## **8. Miscellaneous**

**Discussion:**

None

**Action:** No action. Update only.

## **9. Adjourn**

**Action:** Meeting adjourned by acclamation at 3:17 pm.

**Next Regular Meeting:**  
Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm  
Location: DCC  
2860 160<sup>th</sup> Street W  
Rosemount, MN 55068

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