

**Dakota Communications Center
Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes: 12/07/2016**

Members Present: Tom Lawell – Apple Valley; Dave Osberg – Eagan; David McKnight – Farmington; Melanie Mesko-Lee – Hastings; Justin Miller – Lakeville; Dwight Johnson – Rosemount; Steve King – South St. Paul

Members Absent: Heather Johnston – Burnsville; Matt Smith – Dakota County; Joe Lynch – Inver Grove Heights; Mark McNeill – Mendota Heights; Matt Fulton – West St. Paul

Alternates Present: BJ Jungmann – Burnsville; BJ Battig – Dakota County

Others Present: Tom Folie, Cheryl Pritzlaff, Jen Hildebrandt – DCC; Mike Meyer – Fire/EMS Ops Sub-Committee Chair

1. Call the Meeting to Order

Chair Miller (Lakeville) called the meeting to order at 3:00p.m.

2. Roll Call

Members in attendance are noted above.

3. Approve Agenda

Discussion:

Action: No action.

Consent Agenda

4.

- a. **Approve minutes from the October 5th Regular Executive Committee meeting.**
- b. **Approve paid claims.**
 - **September 1st – 30th, 2016**
 - **October 1st – 31st, 2016**
- c. **Receive financial reports & recommend approval.**
 - **September, 2016 Unaudited Financial Report**
 - **October, 2016 Unaudited Financial Report**
- d. **Receive report on contracts and agreements executed between September 28th and November 30th, 2016.**
- e. **Receive operations committee meeting minutes**
 - **October 20th Fire/EMS Operations Sub-Committee Meeting**
 - **October 27th Law Enforcement Operations Sub-Committee Meeting**

Discussion:

None

Action: Motion by Johnson (Rosemount) to approve the consent agenda. Second by King (South St. Paul). Motion passed unanimously.

Regular Agenda

Action Items

5. 2017 Meeting Schedule

Discussion: None

Action: Motion by McKnight (Farmington) to approve the proposed 2017 meeting schedule. Second by Jungmann (Burnsville). Motion passed unanimously.

Information Updates/Discussion Items

6. Executive Director Update

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) noted that this would be his first Executive Committee meeting since his appointment as Executive Director and thanked members for their support.

Board Appointments – Folie (DCC) reminded representatives from Farmington, Hastings, Inver Grove Heights, Mendota Heights, Rosemount South St. Paul and West St. Paul that they Board representation appointments were needed in January. Likewise, if there will be any representative changes for Apple Valley, Burnsville, Dakota County, Eagan or Lakeville, they should be reported to the DCC.

LE Observation Report – Folie (DCC) reminded members that discussions earlier in the year resulted on members of Law Enforcement to do sit-alongs to observe DCC operations. Folie stated that there were approximately 56 sit-alongs averaging four hours. Folie noted that after the observation period came to a close, both observers and DCC dispatch staff were invited to participate in a survey discussing what they observed as possible obstacles for DCC operations. Folie noted that the facilitators of this process received 33 surveys from law enforcement observers and 21 from dispatchers with four topics rising to the surface.

1. Use of 911 for Emergency and Non-Emergency needs –

Folie noted that this was not the first time a concern about calling 911 for both emergency and non-emergency response had been revisited. Folie acknowledged that it would be nice to be able to separate the two types. Folie explained, however, a number of reasons this didn't seem feasible.

- a. DCC fielded regular calls on the non-emergency number that were actual emergencies, or that turned into emergencies. I.e. Alarm calls, people who were afraid to call 911 but truly did need emergency response.
- b. The system and DCC structure were developed so both emergency and non-emergency calls came to the same dispatchers. Dispatchers are trained to triage all incoming calls whether they are on 911 or the administrative line.
- c. Call 911 for any response had been pushed for the past ten years and he was not sure reverting was a good idea. This is the same conclusion previous discussions on this topic had arrived at.

Mesko-Lee (Hastings) noted that she had received feedback stating that people felt foolish calling 911 for everything.

Miller (Lakeville) commented that he had a different take on it stating that there was an ease in communicating "calling 911 for all response". Miller added that the consortium had spent a long time pushing this message and he wasn't sure changing the message now was a good idea.

Pritzlaff (DCC) reported that when this was last discussed a few years prior, a group of member representatives convened to discuss it and came to the conclusion that continuing to push the message "Use 911 for Any Response" was the way to go. Pritzlaff reminded members that doing so also provided dispatch staff with the latitude/longitude which was extremely valuable on cell phone calls where the caller didn't know where they were. Pritzlaff added that the majority of incoming calls were from cell phones now. Pritzlaff reminded members that results of the extensive discussion a few years prior included reaching out to dispatch centers both locally and across the county. Pritzlaff stated that centers locally were using the same "call 911

for everything” protocol and reports across the country were that centers were moving that direction if they weren’t already there.

Jungmann (Burnsville) reminded that after hours, jurisdiction department phones rolled over to the DCC.

King (South St. Paul) noted that South St. Paul had the same experience as Hastings, but noted that he was not sure what the alternative was.

Mesko-Lee (Hastings) recalled one of the outcomes of the previous push was a large scale public education effort and asked if that ever happened. Pritzlaff (DCC) responded that the effort included putting the message on vehicles and agency websites, etc. However, it was also agreed that each jurisdiction would determine to what extent it pushed the message. Pritzlaff stated that some agencies ran with the message while others opted to do nothing.

2. Physical Layout of the Dispatch Center

Folie stated that responders were surprised at the amount of noise on the dispatch floor, along with the need for dispatchers to stand up and yell across the room to their partners. Folie stated that as had been done a couple times previously, supervisors were reviewing the current layout of the center and looking for some form of resolution. Folie noted, however, that because of the workstation structure, under-floor cabling and other hindrances, the group would be limited to body relocation at this time. Folie commented that the 2018 budget did identify dollars for workstation replacement so while it may be cost-prohibitive to do an actual floor layout overhaul, now was the time to be evaluating that. Folie noted that the law enforcement group didn’t feel a need to be involved in that effort but the DCC will report back to them on the efforts.

Lawell (Apple Valley) asked what the benefit would be of a re-evaluation of the floor layout. Folie (DCC) responded that anybody relocations would be to get staff in closer proximity to each other. Folie commented that knowing what staff now knows, there was probably a better workstation design. Folie again acknowledged that may be cost prohibitive, but it was worth a look.

3. ProQA and Other Technology

Folie reported that the Law Enforcement group felt that some of the technology in place was hindering timely call processing. Folie explained that one of those forms of technology was EMD stating that it pulled a lot of unnecessary information into calls that Law Enforcement had issues with. Folie stated that EMD was necessary as member Fire/EMS jurisdictions used it to determine their response. Folie then stated that staff attempted to have the comments removed from the law side of calls, while retaining it for the fire/EMS side however that was not an option. Folie explained that it was “all or nothing”, and due to the necessity for fire/EMS, it needed to be all. Folie added that some other concerns were over the rigidity of the EMD protocols. Folie acknowledged that a 30 year dispatcher would likely get through a medical faster on their own than using a protocol. However, use of protocols brought all dispatchers, seasoned and new, to the same conclusion. Folie added that use of the protocols also allowed dispatchers to provide pre-arrival instructions like CPR.

4. Fostering Relationships

Folie acknowledged this was the easiest of the four main topics and assured that DCC was committed to working with member agencies to host sit-alongs and send staff on ride-alongs whenever possible. Folie added that while this was a law enforcement observation effort, fostering relationships with the fire/EMS jurisdictions was equally as important and he had extended the invitation for sit-alongs to them as well.

Folie (DCC) closed the law observation report stating that when this topic arose, the Law Enforcement sub-committee formed a workgroup tasked with facilitating this review. Folie continued stating that workgroup met about one month prior to this report and suggested bringing the discussion to the Radio Users Group for further discussion. That was done and to date, the group was considering the information and would be reconvening over the coming months to further discuss possible action recommendations.

Other Technology – Folie (DCC) reported that he had received a concern that when member agencies are attempting to contact the supervisors, their call is frequently met with a busy signal not allowing for call waiting nor leaving a message. Folie stated that the DCC was working to rectify this concern via the use of a mobile phone that was already owned by the DCC. Folie noted that this phone would also allow the supervisors to answer calls from other areas in the facility where the cordless phone might not work. Folie noted this was just one of the easy fixes that staff was working to implement.

CAD Stability – Folie (DCC) referred to the CAD instability over the previous months and noted that the issues were related to a number of different causes. Folie noted that if it was consistently one cause, the fix would be easier to identify. Folie stated that one cause was a lightning strike at LOGIS, and others were due to varying contractor or construction accidents. Folie stated that while the TriTech application never went down, it could not withstand this type of interruption. Even when/if a backup picked the connection up, the seconds it took to bring the system back up sent CAD down. Folie then addressed a few options that staff was considering to help address this ongoing problem:

1. Additional redundancy to the DCC – Folie (DCC) stated that he was working with BJ Battig from the County to get a direct connection to County fiber in the right-of-way. Battig clarified that currently, the fiber ran from the DCC to the radio tower then to the Empire Transportation Building and then to the road. Folie noted that this added connection would provide local redundancy that the DCC didn't otherwise have since there would be two fiber routes into the building that are not co-located.
2. Switch location alternative to the Western Service Center – Folie (DCC) noted that the switches at the Western Service Center were problematic. Folie clarified that the current fiber connection went through the Western Service Center and efforts were underway to obtain an additional, separate route that went to Dakota County Technical College and then directly back to the State, circumventing Western Service Center. Folie noted that LOGIS and MNIT were working together in an effort to engage two totally different routes to the State.
3. VDI (Virtual Desktop Infrastructure) – Folie (DCC) explained that staff was working with LOGIS to evaluate the possibility of VDI. Folie clarified that VDI was a way for LOGIS to host the program that was being operated by desktops at the DCC. Folie noted that in the event there was a momentary blip in service, the connection would not go down. Folie stated that preliminary experiments with VDI were returning limited success, but staff and LOGIS were continuing efforts on this option.

Folie (DCC) recapped stating that staff was entertaining every option in an effort to fix this ongoing stability problem.

Jungmann (Burnsville) referred to Citrix and asked if that was different than VDI. Folie (DCC) confirmed that it was similar, but VDI was better in the opinion of TriTech and LOGIS. Folie clarified that Citrix servers could only hold maybe five or six CAD connections resulting in a more expensive product.

Lawell (Apple Valley) asked if Dakota County Technical College and Western Service Center would be using the same route over the river. Battig (Dakota County) responded that he was not sure at this time.

Staffing/Hiring – Folie (DCC) reported that the DCC was in the process of working to fill three positions. Folie noted that two candidates were currently being backgrounded and one former employee was looking to return in January.

Statistics – Folie (DCC) referred to the monthly statistics that were recently sent out, specifically the beginning of the memo that stated that staff was encountering some anomalies in the reports that were leading them to believe statistics were actually better than what had been represented since TriTech was put into place. Folie commented that staff did not have any answers yet as it had just been discovered the day before. Folie stated that a review of the statistics began about a month ago since the DCC was not meeting many of the standards. Folie noted that in reviewing of the medical call data for the month of November, approximately 50% of what had been reviewed was adding additional time to the calls, anywhere from one second to 28 minutes. Folie commented that this sort of thing was not uncommon when switching databases as it was sometimes difficult for the report writer to know if they were pulling the correct times from the database. He assured that staff was working on it and would present an update as soon as more concrete information was available. Miller (Lakeville) asked if the end result would impact the call pickup time statistics. Folie (DCC) responded that was a different issue but was also an issue. Regarding the call pick up times, Folie commented that he went back to 2015 and reviewed stats and what he found was interesting. The DCC met the standards every month up to when the new phone system was installed. Immediately after the new phone system was installed, there was a 20% drop in call pick up times and the DCC has not met the standards since. Pritzlaff (DCC) added that Ramsey County reported the same experience after installing the same phone system. Folie (DCC) continued stating that users are now starting to think the phone system itself may be processing for seconds before calls even presents to the dispatch centers. Folie stated that if this was the case, dispatchers would have to be picking up calls before ½ a ring to meet the standard. Folie reiterated that this review was continuing as stats weren't helpful if they weren't meaningful.

Miller (Lakeville) requested statistics be added as an ongoing agenda item. Folie (DCC) agreed.

Compliments – Folie (DCC) stated that the center had received a number of compliments recently and he wanted to share some of them with the group:

1. A West St. Paul sergeant, after participating in the law observation report, complimented that things were on the upswing, having improved over the past couple of years.
2. Hastings Police Lieutenant Kegley complimented dispatch staff for talking to a suicidal 15 year old male and aiding in a safe resolution.
3. Burnsville Chief Gieseke reported being very happy with how DCC staff handled the law main during the Dollar Tree shooting.
4. Eagan Fire complimented DCC staff for taking an alarm call and upgrading it to a structure fire based on the information received.

Folie (DCC) referred to the Burnsville and Eagan Fire compliments and noted each used the term "our" when describing the dispatcher and dispatch center. This showed a sense of ownership which was gratifying to see. Folie commented that was the partnership he hoped to foster.

OTHER BUSINESS

Miller (Lakeville) reported that he and Executive Director Folie had reviewed the first year goals and expectations document that was developed by Heather Johnston and Dave Osberg, and circulated around the group.

Miller (Lakeville) acknowledged Dwight Johnson, Rosemount Administrator who would be retiring in January. Miller noted that this was Dwight's last meeting and thanked him for all his service to the consortium.

Adjourn

Action: Motion by acclamation. 3:35pm.

Next Regular Meeting:

January 4th, 2017

3:00pm

Dakota Communications Center

Training Room