

**Dakota Communications Center
Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes: 10/03/2018**

Members Present: Tom Lawell – Apple Valley; Matt Smith – Dakota County; Dave Osberg – Eagan; David McKnight – Farmington; Melanie Mesko-Lee – Hastings; Justin Miller – Lakeville; Mark McNeill – Mendota Heights; Logan Martin – Rosemount; Joel Hanson – South St. Paul; Ryan Schroeder – West St. Paul

Members Absent: Dana Hardie – Burnsville; Joe Lynch – Inver Grove Heights

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

Others Present: Tom Folie, Cheryl Pritzlaff, Jen Hildebrandt – DCC; Lakeville Fire Chief Mike Meyer – Fire/EMS Operation Committee; Winbourne Consulting – Julie Heimkes

1. Call the Meeting to Order

Recognizing a quorum, Chair McNeill called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.

2. Roll Call

Members in attendance are noted above.
Chair McNeill called for introductions.

3. Approve Agenda

Discussion:

No Discussion

Action: Motion by McKnight (Farmington) to approve agenda. Second by Miller (Lakeville). Motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

4.

- a. **Approve minutes from the September 5th, 2018 Executive Committee meeting.**
- b. **Approve paid claims.**
 - **August 1st – 31st, 2018**
- c. **Receive Financial Reports**
 - **Unaudited August, 2018 Report**
- d. **Administrative policies & Procedures Modifications**
- e. **2019 Non-Union Personnel Wage Increases**
- f. **Executed Contracts**

Discussion:

Action: Motion by Hanson (South St. Paul) to approve the consent agenda. Second by Battig (Dakota County). Motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

Consultant Report

5. Winbourne Operational Evaluation Report

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) introduced the topic reminding members that when he was first appointed to the DCC Executive Director position, he was directed to engage an outside consultant to administer an operational study. Folie noted that the cost for this study was included in the 2018 budget and the result of the RFP was the selection of Winbourne Consulting. Folie continued stating

that Winbourne Consulting was had done numerous evaluations locally and nation-wide. Folie then introduced Julie Heimkes with Winbourne Consulting.

Heimkes (Winbourne) provided a high-level recap of the operational evaluation report provided to members the week prior to the meeting. Heimkes noted that the areas Winbourne was tasked with evaluating were Operational Efficiencies, Single Stage versus Two Stage Dispatching and Technology Roadmap. Heimkes added that there were some Out of Project Scope items that needed to be addressed because they directly impacted the items they were requested to evaluate.

Single Stage v. Two Stage Dispatching - After explaining the difference between single stage and two stage dispatching, Heimkes (Winbourne) acknowledged that this item had been a topic of discussion among DCC members for some time. Heimkes noted that while single stage dispatching was still more commonly practices nation-wide, two stage dispatching provided numerous advantages that benefited the DCC. Heimkes added that two stage dispatching was recognized locally and should continue to be DCC practice given the size and needs of the center.

Heimkes (Winbourne) complimented the consortium law users group operational observation efforts and commented that Winbourne didn't receive the results of that observation until after developing their report. Heimkes added that many of the Winbourne findings agreed with the group observations.

Varying Protocols – Heimkes (Winbourne) noted that while sitting with staff on the floor, it was noted that there were varying law protocols among the agencies. Heimkes commented that the consultants saw dispatchers physically having to pause and think which agency they were dealing with and how it was expected the call be handled. Heimkes cautioned that this made staff susceptible to errors and inquiries, and likely resulted in a "pause", which was also a delay. Heimkes noted that the Winbourne recommendation was to consider further standardizing response protocols.

Smith (Dakota County) asked of Winbourne had any examples of call centers who had faced this issue and how they handled it. Heimkes (Winbourne) noted that she would work to gather examples.

Heimkes acknowledged that many of the responses were already standardized, and some simply could not be. However, a workgroup should be convened to discuss further protocol standardization.

Proximity and Layout of Floor – Heimkes (Winbourne) noted that Winbourne agreed with the law enforcement observations that the dispatch floor layout needed to be modified to improve communications. Heimkes acknowledged that this effort was currently underway and the Winbourne recommendation would be to have the call takers centrally located.

Use of 911 – Heimkes (Winbourne) acknowledged that the DCC consortium practice was to "call 911 for any response". Heimkes stated that while recognized as an accepted Minnesota practice, the NENA standard remained "911 for emergencies only". Heimkes acknowledged that the DCC was meeting call answering standards, but the center should continue to work towards improved times. Heimkes noted that Winbourne would recommend consideration of directing citizens to online reporting for basic crimes opposed to calling 911. Heimkes added that the consortium could consider discussion of a county-wide 311 effort that would address streets and other needs that may be routing through the dispatch center.

Osberg (Eagan) asked if standardizing protocols and changing the 911 directive to emergencies only would reduce the demand for additional staff. Osberg also asked to what degree either of

those caused added stress on staff. Heimkes (Winbourne) responded that certainly, varying protocols could cause stress on staff. Heimkes noted that neither would decrease the need for increased staffing. Heimkes clarified that if the consortium implemented a full scale 311 that also took basic crime reports, which could potentially decrease the need for 911 staffing. Heimkes agreed to investigate if there was a study that evaluated 311 decreasing 911 staffing needs.

Strategic Operational and Technology Plans – Heimkes (Winbourne) recognized that the DCC had a good mission statement in place, but there were no strategic operational nor technology plans in place.

Battig (Dakota County) referred to the Technology Plan and commented that the DCC had a capital improvements plan. Heimkes (Winbourne) acknowledged that there were elements of technology in the plan, but it needed to be “bundled”. Heimkes clarified that a mission statement needed to be supported by a strategic operational plan, which needed to be supported by a technology plan. Heimkes further clarified that the consortium should ask itself if the technology it budgeted for contributed to what the strategic operational plan for use of that technology was. Heimkes noted that Winbourne recommended the addition of a strategic operational plan that supported the mission statement, and a technology plan that supported the strategic operational plan.

LOGIS Hosting – Heimkes (Winbourne) acknowledged that LOGIS provided numerous services to the DCC including hosting of CAD, Mobiles, and RMS for some agencies, network connectivity, software and network security, servers, switches and firewalls, system monitoring and facilitating upgrades. Heimkes stated that this allowed the DCC to not have full-time staffing of GIS, CAD Mobile, RMS Support and CAD Administration positions. However, it also constrained software features and functionalities available through the CAD software because use determinations were driven by the full LOGIS consortium, many of whom were not DCC members. Some of these constraints were reporting features, geo fencing, fire agency timers, etc. Heimkes noted that some of the TriTech features available may not be known to the consortium because they won’t “work” for the entire LOGIS consortium, or LOGIS had concerns that allowing access to some of these features also opened the consortium to errors that could impact the LOGIS consortium on a larger scale.

Heimkes referred to the LOGIS service ticket practice stating whenever there was a need for LOGIS service, it had to be submitted as a “service ticket”. Heimkes commented that there needed to be better communication on the back side of the service as to why the request could/could not be provided. Heimkes commented that one Winbourne recommendation was to build a better “ticket” follow-up process.

Heimkes referred to TriTech features and noted that the consortium should further investigate available features that may or may not benefit the DCC consortium. Heimkes added that these features included geo fencing/geographical builder and fire agency timer options to name a couple. Heimkes noted that geo fencing allowed dispatchers to draw a map parameter to create hot zones for member agencies. While this is a great available feature that you are paying for, LOGIS had concerns about how allowing access would jeopardize system security so it wasn’t being discussed. Heimkes noted that in discussions with TriTech, they felt strongly that they could lock down security of this and other features to help address LOGIS concerns. Heimkes then referred to fire agency timers and stated that the fire departments had to agree on timer settings. Heimkes noted that standardization was good but the problem with this was that there were some departments that were full-time and others that were volunteer. Heimkes speculated that the volunteer departments couldn’t possibly make the same times as the full-time departments. Heimkes clarified that this impacts the dispatch staff because standardized timers required them to “pause” and thing about the department, if they were full-time or volunteer, and consider either doing the check or ignoring the timer.

Continuity of Operations Plan – Heimkes (Winbourne) complimented the DCC COOP. Heimkes noted that Winbourne recommended the following considerations for inclusion in the plan:

In-Facility Relocation

- In the event of a disaster, how is staff expected to get to work. (i.e. if there are road closures/other)
- The server room backup is enforced with the concrete walls, but it is extremely noisy. Consider either a soundproof section of the room or relocation to another area of the facility.

Off-Site Relocation

- How is staff at the facility supposed to get to the backup location?
- What equipment needs to go with to the backup location?
- Consider a live drill of a level three disaster where the center is shut down and relocated to the backup location.

Future Technology Projects – Heimkes (Winbourne) referred to some of the technology project efforts currently underway and complimented that the DCC seemed very aware of technology needs.

Formal Process for New Projects – Heimkes (Winbourne) noted that there was no formal process for new projects and the Winbourne recommendation was to put this process to paper in either spreadsheet or project software form. Heimkes noted this should help keep the project on schedule and also keep staff and member agencies informed of the status of the project.

Technology Recap – Heimkes represented that Winbourne felt there was no significant technology gaps and that staff does a good job of staying on top of technology through use of resources like LOGIS, MESB, APCO, NENA and national conferences. Heimkes noted that continuing to send staff to the national conferences would be very important as that is where PSAPS and consultants all keep abreast of upcoming technology opportunities.

Operational Efficiencies Assessment - Heimkes (Winbourne) noted that in the operational evaluation, Winbourne determined that DCC staffing levels were not effectively aligned with workloads. Heimkes explained that while center staffing levels remained relatively flat, call volume, member agency populations and first responder levels have all increased. Heimkes added that the overtime costs themselves supported the addition of 3 – 4 full-time positions.

Systems Thinking Perspective – Heimkes (Winbourne) reported that the DCC was not setting targets nor measuring, monitoring and reporting on performance. Heimkes suggested the DCC revisit performance outcomes and measures to drive desired future direction and to effectively assess capacity to meet the mission.

Heimkes commented that the DCC organizational structure does not account for all of the capabilities needed to deliver on the mission statement. Heimkes referred to the HR Coordinator/Executive Assistance role as being overloaded and doing numerous duties not typically grouped together in a single position. Heimkes referred to the Dispatch Supervisor position being diluted by numerous administrative responsibilities and the Supervisor assigned to Administration position being a “fragmented collection of activities”. Heimkes commented that the present mission support infrastructure is not sustainable for operating a stand-alone emergency communications center and proposed an alternate organization structure, a roadmap for the future and allowing full capabilities to effectively carry out the mission statement. Heimkes then provided a recommended list of changes and position additions.

Osberg (Eagan) asked if the addition of any of the three officer-level positions would eliminate the need for the fiscal agency services. Folie (DCC) responded that the Winbourne-

recommended positions would not replace the need for the fiscal agent. McNeill (Mendota Heights) speculated that maybe there would be an opportunity to combine/share positions with the County given the impending affiliation with the Sheriff's Office.

Smith (Dakota County) commented that his take away from this section of the presentation was that the consortium was asking more than what was reasonable from the current staff. Smith then asked how many of the proposed positions really needed to be full-time and if all positions could be kept busy on a full-time basis. Heimkes (Winbourne) acknowledged the question and responded that certainly the HR position could be full-time but that the duties of some of the other positions, like the Management Analyst and Service Performance/Data Quality Officer could potentially be combined. Heimkes noted that the consortium should look at the needs and detail information in the report for further guidance on how to potentially combine some of the positions.

Heimkes (Winbourne) reiterated that during the evaluation, there were some out-of-scope items that were addressed as they impacted the in-scope report. These items were Recruitment, Career Advancement and Mobility and Governance.

Recruitment – Heimkes noted that the current process was not effectively screening out unsuccessful candidates and there were numerous ways to improve recruitment efforts including expanding outreach activities, additional screening methods and tracking statistics on recruitment.

Career Advancement and Mobility – Heimkes acknowledged that there were simply limited opportunities for advancement which could impact employee retention. Heimkes added that requirements of positions also included education that could be revisited to consider credit "in lieu of education/degree".

Governance – Heimkes noted that DCC was involved in two governances. The first is the LOGIS consortium which was previously discussed. The second was the DCC governance which seemed very top heavy. Heimkes acknowledged that the consortium had a strategic planning workgroup that had taken numerous steps to develop a streamlined governance structure. Heimkes recognized this effort was put on hold for the overall DCC governance review, but strongly encouraged the Consortium continue this effort without delay.

Lawell (Apple Valley) referred to the statistics discussed earlier in the presentation and commented that the DCC had adopted standards and was publishing a monthly performance report. Heimkes (Winbourne) acknowledged and noted that some of the metrics uses were difficult to do an analysis on because there were missing pieces. Heimkes stated that staff was reporting on what was available but it needed to be a more holistic evaluation. Folie (DCC) clarified that Winbourne was suggesting evaluation of the entire process, which dispatch was hesitant to do given the potential for member agency performance to come into question.

Miller (Lakeville) referred to a chart on page 40 of the report where it showed call levels spiking while staffing levels remained relatively flat. Miller then asked staff if the schedule was negotiated and if not, maybe consideration should be given to reallocation of scheduling resources. Folie (DCC) clarified that schedules were management prerogative. Pritzlaff (DCC) responded explaining that minimum adjustments were made due to time of year and time of day. Pritzlaff reminded that staffing during this evaluation was at bare minimums pretty much around the clock, similar to agencies throughout the metro area. Pritzlaff added that dispatch staff bid their schedules every 6 months and the October bid reflected schedule modifications that would address this and overtime issues experienced over the summer. Miller (Lakeville) suggested staff continue to monitor staffing levels during peak times.

Jungmann (Burnsville) referred to the analysis that was done on overall dispatching work-load and asked if there was any review of dispatch position workload as it relates to splitting or combining of zones. Heimkes (Winbourne) noted that there was some evaluation of workload based on keystrokes, but there wasn't anything of concern so it wasn't reported on. Heimkes noted that the info and fire positions were evaluated and included in the report. Jungmann (Burnsville) asked if there was a study out there that commented on workload and if there was a point at which splitting of zones should be considered. Heimkes (Winbourne) noted that this was not specifically looked at but she was sure it existed and could be further looked into.

Schroeder (West St. Paul) referred to the recommended additional office positions and clarified that Winbourne was speculating there were an additional 8,000 – 10,000 hours of work a year that might not be getting done. Schroeder commented that he had a really hard time believing that. Schroeder reiterated the question previously presented asking if employees in these additional positions could really be kept busy on a full time basis. Schroeder added that he would like to see if there was any other organization in the area that had this level of staffing structure. Heimkes (Winbourne) noted that because this was out-of-scope, Winbourne did not look at any other organizations that may have this staffing structure. However, this was something the DCC could look into. Heimkes noted that Washington County would be a good comparable and while other dispatch centers in the area don't have quite the same structure, they could be looked at. Heimkes added that there were national studies that supported the structure. Heimkes reminded that the proposed staffing additions reflected a "perfect world" scenario and Winbourne recognized that wasn't always feasible. Heimkes suggested the consortium describe the positions and the needs of the position, identify which were most critical and consider positions from there.

Action: No action. Update only.

Action Items

6. 2019 – 2020 Motorola Service Agreement

Discussion: None.

Action: Motion by Smith (Dakota County) to approve the 2019 – 2020 Motorola Service Agreement. Second by Miller (Lakeville). Motion passed unanimously.

7. Non-Union Personnel Compensation Study

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) reminded members that staff was directed to administer a compensation study every three to five years. Folie noted that the last time non-union compensation was discussed was 2014. This study was administered by Dakota County Compensation Administrator Ray Kennedy, and presented to the Executive Committee and Board at their October, 2014 meetings for implementation as of 1/1/2015. Folie noted that the proposed compensation adjustment was reflective of data requested of Kennedy, four years later. Folie added that it was also based on 2018 data.

Smith (Dakota County) noted that Kennedy provided the data, but did not help compile the proposed compensation adjustments. Folie (DCC) confirmed stating that he would have preferred to have received data and proposed adjustments, but he used the data provided, averaging out comparables for each position which resulted in the proposal. Folie then asked if member agencies hired third party agencies to administer this process as that was what he would prefer to see going forward. However, the findings were pretty consistent that two of the positions, in particular, were falling behind. Folie then referred to the HR Coordinator/Executive Assistant and the Technical Support Specialists.

After further clarification on how the data was compiled, the comps used and the 2018 and 2019 budget impacts Motion was made by Mesko-Lee (Hastings) to approve the structure

adjustments as presented with the understanding that future compensation considerations be made during the budget process. Second by Miller (Lakeville).

Further Discussion:

Schroeder (West St. Paul) expressed concerns noting that the Board of Directors relied on the Executive Committee to make sure the appropriate level of research had been done and it didn't feel as though that had been represented yet. Schroeder commented that this increase, along with cost of living increases coming up in January would result in a pretty large impact. Schroeder added that the data should be consistent and that it may make sense to align with the County. Schroeder questioned if there were similar positions at the County and if so, how to they compare. Schroeder said he would be more comfortable acting on this item after having received more supporting data. Schroeder reiterated that if this gets to the Board of Directors, they will assume this group did was confident in the analysis that was done.

McNeill (Mendota Heights) recapped that the group had concerns about the timing of the proposal, the budget impact, and how the comps were determined. Lawell (Apple Valley) noted that if this continues to the Board of Directors they should, at a minimum, have more to reference. Osberg (Eagan) agreed.

Smith (Dakota County) asked if when the DCC was established, there was a grade study administered. Members confirmed that an HR Task Force made up of member agency HR Directors compiled and proposed the scales based on the Dakota County structure at that time.

Mesko-Lee (Hastings) asked if the recommendation was tied to a grading structure. Hildebrandt (DCC) confirmed that all positions were tied to a pay equity structure and the adjustments, as proposed by the director, had been reviewed to ensure they adhered to that structure.

Smith (Dakota County) suggested Kennedy do a more formalized study and present recommendations.

McNeill (Mendota Heights) commented that a review every three to five years seemed more frequent than necessary.

Miller (Lakeville) noted that recognizing the next Board meeting was scheduled for October 18th, the group may be more comfortable with directing staff to do a deeper analysis based on Committee feedback and bring it back to the next Executive Committee meeting. At that time, if determined there was a need for it to be retroactive, that could be added in the discussion. Schroeder (West St. Paul) agreed.

Action: Motion on the table was denied.

Action: Motion by Miller (Lakeville) to table the discussion to the next Executive Committee meeting pending more information from staff including possible retroactive determination if necessary. Second by Schroeder (West St. Paul)

Further Discussion:

Folie (DCC) asked if the group wanted to see how the information on the proposal was determined. Osberg (Eagan) commented that he didn't think there was issue with the validity of the proposed information as much as there was need for illustration on how the proposal was arrived at and what the impact would be. Lawell (Apple Valley) concurred stating that the work needed to be shown including the 2019 budget impact. Lawell added that he would like to hear more about if the DCC had a position evaluation system. Hanson (South St. Paul)

commented that he would support consideration of retroactive implementation the information supported it.

Osberg (Eagan) noted that there should be clarification on the structure. Mesko-Lee (Hastings) agreed questioning what comps were used, how they were determined to be viable comps and why the same agency comps weren't used for all the non-union positions.

Information Updates/Discussion Items

8. Executive Director Report

Discussion:

Fund Balances – Folie (DCC) reminded that at the previous meeting there was question about the fund balance and if it was for both capital and operating or if they were separate. Folie confirmed they were separate.

Staffing – Folie (DCC) acknowledged that staffing continued to be a problem but there was a promising group currently in backgrounds. Folie reiterated that the DCC was not alone as there were staffing issues in public safety positions in most jurisdictions.

Text to 911 (DCC) noted that Text-to-911 was going live on October 23rd. There will not be an outreach since the public will not notice any difference as Text-to-911 works statewide.

Everbridge Registration Campaign – Update tabled to November meeting.

Board Designations – Reminder that members would be receiving letters reminding of the need for Board designations for 2019.

Lawell (Apple Valley) asked how the Presidential IPAWS text message impacted the DCC. Folie (DCC) acknowledged that there were a few calls but overall it did not present an issue.

Action: No action. Update only.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chair McNeill closed the meeting for personnel discussion, excusing all non-voting guests and DCC staff.

9. Executive Director Evaluation & Wage Recommendation

Discussion:

Chair McNeill (Mendota Heights) informed members that Jen Hildebrandt would be distributing evaluation results, findings and a memo recapping historical practice for wage considerations. Hildebrandt was then also excused from the meeting.

Action: Motion by Miller (Lakeville) to table discussion to the November meeting. Second by Osberg (Eagan). Motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn

Action: Meeting adjourned by Chair Acclamation at 4:57pm.

Next Regular Meeting:

November 7th, 2018
3:00pm
Dakota Communications Center
Training Room