

**Dakota Communications Center
Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes: 09/18/2019**

Members Present: Melanie Mesko-Lee – Burnsville; Matt Smith – Dakota County; David McKnight – Farmington; Justin Miller – Lakeville; Mark McNeill – Mendota Heights; Joel Hanson – South St. Paul; Ryan Schroeder – West St. Paul

Members Absent: Tom Lawell – Apple Valley; Dave Osberg – Eagan; Julie Flaten – Hastings; Joe Lynch – Inver Grove Heights; Logan Martin – Rosemount

Alternates Present: Charles Grawe – Apple Valley; BJ Battig – Dakota County

Others Present: Tom Folie, Cheryl Pritzlaff, Jen Hildebrandt – DCC; Hastings Police Chief Bryan Schafer – Joint Operations Committee Co-Chair; Jessica Parker Carlson, Alex Jermeland – Dakota County OPA.

1. Call the Meeting to Order

Recognizing a quorum, Chair McNeill called the meeting to order at 3:05pm.

2. Roll Call

Members in attendance are noted above.

3. Seeing some new faces in the room, Chair McNeill called for introductions.

4. Approve Agenda

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) requested item 6 under Information Updates/Discussion Items be discussed ahead of Action Item 5 on the agenda so representatives from Dakota County OPA could make their presentation and then be dismissed.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

4.

- a. **Approve minutes from the August 7th, 2019 Executive Committee meeting.**
- b. **Approve paid claims.**
 - **July 1st – 31st, 2019**
- c. **Receive Unaudited Financial Reports**
 - **July, 2019**
- d. **Receive Executed Contracts & Agreements**
- e. **Receive Operations Committee Meeting Minutes**

Discussion:

None

Action: Motion by Mesko-Lee (Burnsville) to approve the consent agenda. Second by Miller (Lakeville). Motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

Action Items

5. Executive Director Evaluation Process

Discussion:

McNeill (Mendota Heights) reminded members that previous executive director performance evaluations involved each member receiving an evaluation packet, discussing it with their elected official and each of their operations chiefs and then returning one completed evaluation on behalf of their organization. McNeill recognized that has maybe not been the most comfortable for participants given the limited interaction that had with the director leading up to the evaluation.

McNeill suggested an alternative that would be the development of a workgroup made up on the Operations Committee chiefs, and a few previous executive committee chairs. McNeill reminded members that Tom Folie was due for his annual performance evaluation in October.

Consensus agreed with this proposed alternative process. McNeill and Justin Miller agreed to participate on the work group. McNeill noted that he would ask Administrators Lawell and Martin to join him. Chief Schafer agreed to participate, representing the Law Enforcement sub-committee and McNeill noted that he would reach out to Chief Meyer and request his participation on behalf of the Fire/EMS sub-committee.

Jen Hildebrandt will send out a poll in an attempt to convene a workgroup meeting. She will also provide copies of the evaluation material for discussion at the meeting.

Action: No action. Group consensus.

Information Updates/Discussion Items**6. Governance Report****Discussion:**

Folie (DCC) recapped governance discussions leading up to the current meeting. Folie noted that representatives from Dakota County OPA were present to review a DCC Research Phase II Project Scope Statement.

Smith (Dakota County) reminded members that the Dakota County Board of Commissioners, while not interested in taking over total control of the DCC operations, suggested DCC Governance work to pose a business case supporting county management. The Board also agreed to engage the OPA to administer a fact-finding effort to evaluate potential benefits and savings related to this business case and from a total tax-payers perspective.

Jesse Parker Carlson and Alex Jermeland, with Dakota County OPA presented the Project Scope Statement that had been finalized and distributed earlier in the week. Jesse reviewed the statement with members and acknowledged that the OPA would be collecting a number of data points from other PSAPs in Minnesota, primarily in the metro area. Jesse clarified that this collection would include data on finance, employment, operations, customization of services and then county-specifics to help put findings into perspective. Jesse explained that the timeline would include an update at the November meeting, followed by a presentation in the first quarter of 2020. Jesse requested members let them know if they were missing anything that should be included.

Hearing no immediate suggestions, McNeill (Mendota Heights) asked if the results of the findings would be shared with the County Board of Commissioners. Smith (Dakota County) confirmed and added that DCC Governance groups would also receive it. Smith added that he was envisioning a continual touchpoint, updated on project progress. McNeill (Mendota Heights) asked if a monthly discussion would be frequent enough for the OPA. Jesse responded that while it was hard to say at this point in time, when they came back for the November meeting, they could request a focus group if needed.

Miller (Lakeville) thanked the County for taking this project on. Miller suggested the OPA interviews include surveying end-user satisfaction in the organizations who they would be interviewing. Miller recognized that while the organizational structure was very important, getting data from the operational perspective was necessary.

Smith (Dakota County) noted that he had come to understand there was a lot of focus put on the center's ability to customize for member agencies. Smith questioned how a county model would be able to satisfy that need, and if customization was as significant of a need as what had been previously represented.

Smith (Dakota County) referred to the second page of the statement stating that the effort was really an attempt to determine if services would be improved under county management. Smith commented that another consideration should be related to efficiencies that may be experienced under county management. Smith clarified stating regardless of who was paying the bill, would it be less expensive under a county-managed model. Smith acknowledged that would be very difficult to answer and the response may come back "inconclusive".

Mesko-Lee (Burnsville) commented that while she wasn't certain how to quantify it, but she would like to see inclusion of costs associated with governance and operational participation in monthly meetings. Mesko-Lee noted that simplifying the structure would allow for cost savings. Smith (Dakota County) agreed noting that it was another dimension of efficiency. McKnight (Farmington) noted that while that did not impact the members' budget, it should still be taken into consideration.

Hansen (South St. Paul) suggested considering political factors. Hansen referred to the Ramsey County model that he came from and noted that Dispatch was under the county, but not under the Sheriff. Hansen added that there was a cost-share that was largely based on both calls for service and tax base.

McNeill (Mendota Heights) asked if the funding formula discussion would be considered in the study. Smith (Dakota County) clarified that OPA would be collecting data on how psaps are financed in other counties. Jesse added that OPA had a plan with a set of data to look at in terms of finance for other organizations, but that did not include specific identification of DCC funding options.

Jesse (OPA) commented that there were clearly a few things that needed to be modified in the scope and that OPA would work with Matt Smith to get the modified scope back to the group for review.

Smith (Dakota County) recapped that he heard the following suggested modifications:

1. Collect end-user satisfaction
2. Quantify amount of management labor.
3. Develop a contextual explanation of why the psaps work the way they do beyond pure numbers.

Jesse – confirmed.

Mesko-Lee (Burnsville) referred to the Winbourne study and noted that it was also referred to during Board of Commissioner discussions. Mesko-Lee questioned if that should be woven into this project. Jesse (OPA) responded that would be Out of Scope. Mesko-Lee (Burnsville) asked if it should be included in the scope. Mesko-Lee acknowledged that it may complicate things. Smith (Dakota County) responded that right now, OPA was just attempting to collect data and understand the "as is" state of each of the county-run psaps which included governance, finance and staffing. Smith cautioned that including the information in the Winbourne study, which was done by a paid professional third-party, would prove to make things more difficult.

Jesse (OPA) agreed stating that OPA was more data/fact gathering and compilation and did not have the expertise to review the study and include it in the recommendation.

Mesko-Lee (Burnsville) acknowledged and noted that the Winbourne study and the DCC governance evaluation have become linked whether the group likes it or not. Smith (Dakota County) suggested there may be pieces in the study that could be identified and used to help interviewing other agencies. Battig (Dakota County) agreed noting that, for example, if IT was a concern identified in the study, the OPA questions could be phrased in a manner to address that asking the organization who provided their IT services. Or, were training resources coordinated within the dispatch center or provided through the HR department. Battig suggested some of the pieces could maybe be pulled out of the Q&A that may not otherwise be identified.

Schroeder (West St. Paul) also suggested OPA ask what the agency was doing more or better than their peers. Schroeder noted that everyone thought they did more or were better. This type of question might draw additional information out.

McNeill (Mendota Heights) informed OPA that the Executive Committee would be meeting again in November, so if there were any issues/concerns that could wait, that would be good. If they couldn't wait, they could be addressed through Executive Director Tom Folie.

OPA representation confirmed having what they needed and left the meeting.

Chair McNeill (Mendota Heights) continued the Governance Discussion recapping that another piece of the County Board of Commissioners discussion in August was how the Consortium should continue efforts to streamline internal governance without making immediate JPA or by-law modifications.

McNeill reported that he, Tom Folie and Board Chair George Tourville met the previous week to discuss some possible streamlining efforts including meeting frequency of the various groups. Folie (DCC) agreed noting that under the current meeting structure, DCC staff was working to develop packet material for 17 scheduled meetings. Folie acknowledged that meetings were often cancelled due to lack of urgency/business. Folie noted that Chair Tourville expressed interest in continuing the quarterly meeting schedule for the Board of Directors, but considering cancelling individual meetings if there is a lack of action items. Folie noted that DCC legal counsel noted that claims needed to go through elected officials and the statute required regular frequent meetings for their approval and that two meeting a year would likely not being seen as making that standard. It would seem necessary to retain the quarterly meeting frequency of the Board of Directors. However, the extensiveness of the meetings could be minimized per DCC by-laws. The Board of Directors responsibilities are to appoint overall policies, approve the budget, act on the Executive Director's performance evaluation, and incur debt but general executive functions were left to the Executive Director and Executive Committee. Folie explained that custom has been that the Board approve nearly everything.

McNeill (Mendota Heights) inquired if the group had any interest in decreasing Executive Committee meeting frequency to quarterly. Miller (Lakeville) noted that he was fine with quarterly meetings. He also noted that Lakeville legal counsel had a bit of a differing opinion on bill payment as most all organizations print and issue payments prior to receiving Council approval. Smith (Dakota County) agreed noting that there must be something specifically stated in the DCC JPA to have gotten that opinion from DCC legal counsel.

Miller (Lakeville) asked what the required meeting frequency was in the by-laws. Folie (DCC) responded that the Executive Committee meeting frequency was a minimum of quarterly. Folie added that the Board meeting frequency, according to DCC by-laws was twice a year.

McNeill (Mendota Heights) commented that it seemed as though, according to the bylaws, the meeting frequency could be decreased. McNeill acknowledged that special meetings could always be called if needed.

McKnight (Farmington) asked if this was an "interim step" in the governance discussion. McNeill (Mendota Heights) clarified that it would be in response to the County Board of Commissioners pushing DCC to streamline internal governance. McNeill continued stating that the DCC Board Chair suggested getting the governance streamlining done this year, and tackling financing after the first of the year. McNeill then asked staff what a quarterly meeting schedule would look like.

Folie (DCC) responded that it would likely mirror a suggested Board schedule meeting in late January or early February, late April (recognizing the annual City Managers conflict), September and November.

Mesko-Lee (Burnsville) questioned how the budget would be handled. Mesko-Lee expressed concern over not having flexibility to send the budget back for changes if it needed to be approved in May. Folie (DCC) acknowledged stating that staff would have to think ahead, identifying the budget workgroup in February so the review could be done in anticipation of presentation in April/May. While not everyone is in that group, the participants usually spend significant time reviewing and making suggestions if needed. McNeill (Mendota Heights) recognized Mesko-Lee's concerns and reminded that an additional meeting could be scheduled if need be. Hildebrandt (DCC) reminded the group that while it was likely later than member agencies would like to receive the DCC numbers, approval of the DCC budget was not required by the JPA until the beginning of September each year.

Hearing no objection, McNeill (Mendota Heights) noted that the 2020 Executive Committee meeting schedule would be quarterly with special meetings as needed. McNeill also noted that there were things that the Board was acting on that could be handled by the Executive Committee going forward and will be taken up at the next Board meeting.

Action: No action. Discussion only.

7. Executive Director Report

Discussion:

Workstation - Folie (DCC) reported that the workstation project came in \$23,000 under budget. Staffing – Folie (DCC) noted that three of the 12 April/May hires had resigned. Folie noted that the DCC re-hired three previous dispatchers, two of which had already started and were contributing to the schedule.

Winbourne Study – Folie (DCC) acknowledged that a request had been made for an update on the status of efforts recommended by the Winbourne study. Folie referred to a handout that provided a matrix of Winbourne recommendations, whether staff was in agreement or disagreement with the report and what the status was. Folie then reviewed the matrix with members.

Smith (Dakota County) referred to item #23 on the matrix, Cyber Security, and asked what the nature of the most cyber security risks at the DCC was. Folie (DCC) responded that it was likely phishing emails. Smith (Dakota County) noted that the county offered online training that may be beneficial to DCC staff. Folie acknowledged online training would be the sort of training he would be looking for. Battig (Dakota County) agreed to get Folie in contact with the appropriate county personnel.

Folie (DCC) referred to the comments at the County Board's committee meeting that resulted from the Winbourne study including, "it sounds like the DCC is a 'mess' and why would the county want to take that on?" Folie expressed concern over the impression the study left on member organizations stating that while there was always room for improvement, the report did the DCC a disservice and in his view not reflective of the organization as a whole. Smith (Dakota County) questioned if there were particular questions the group wanted the OPA group to try and collect feedback on. Folie (DCC) responded that he would have to consider that a bit further. Battig (Dakota County) suggested maybe questions related to the additional management positions recommended by Winbourne to see what other agency structures looked like. Or the IT example referenced previously. "Does your agency have in-house technical support or do you outsource that?" Smith (Dakota County) encouraged any additional thoughts to be routed through him, cc: BJ Battig and Tom Folie. Miller (Lakeville) acknowledged that the report was a year old and this was the first deep dive into the recommendations. Miller suggested revisiting the matrix at the 2nd quarterly meeting of 2020, in particular, the items that DCC staff agreed with or that were in-progress. Folie (DCC) agreed.

McNeill (Mendota Heights) reminded that the next meeting was November 6th at the DCC.

Action: No action. Update only.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Action: Attrition Hearing no new business, the meeting was adjourned by chair declaration at 4:08pm

Next Regular Meeting:

November 6th, 2019
3:00pm
DCC
Training Room