

**Dakota Communications Center
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Minutes: May 21st, 2020**

Members Present: John Bergman – Apple Valley; Mike Slavik – Dakota County; Gary Hansen – Eagan; Joshua Hoyt – Farmington; George Tourville – Inver Grove Heights; Michelle Volk – Lakeville; Ultan Duggan – Mendota Heights; Jeff Weisensel – Rosemount; Lori Hansen – South St. Paul

Members Absent: Cara Schulz – Burnsville; Joe Balsanek – Hastings; Dick Vitelli – West St. Paul

Alternates Present:

Others Present: Logan Martin – Executive Committee Chair; Helen Brosnahan – DCC Legal Counsel; Tom Folie, Cheryl Pritzlaff, Jen Hildebrandt – DCC; Dave Paulsen, Jessie Carlson, Alex Jermeland – Dakota County OPA; Jerilyn Erickson – DCC Fiscal Agent; Tom Lawell, Matt Smith – Executive Committee

1. Call to Order

Recognizing a quorum, Chair Tourville (Inver Grove Heights) called the meeting to order at 8:00am.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Members and staff in attendance are noted above.

4. Approve Agenda

Discussion:

No discussion.

Action: Motion by Weisensel (Rosemount) to approve the agenda. Second by Bergman (Apple Valley).

8 Ayes: Apple Valley, Dakota County, Eagan, Farmington, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Mendota Heights, Rosemount

0 Nays

Motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Consent Agenda – Board of Directors Chair

- a. Approve minutes from the February 20th, 2020 regular meeting**
- b. Adopt and ratify paid claims**
- c. Approve 2019 audited and March, 2020 unaudited financial reports**
- d. Approve direction not to waive monetary limit**

Discussion:

No discussion.

Action: Motion by Slavik (Dakota County) to approve the consent agenda as presented. Second by Hansen (Eagan).

Further Discussion: Slavik (Dakota County) noted that the minutes from the March 27th, 2020 special board meeting were not listed as a consent agenda item on the agenda. Tourville (Inver Grove Heights) confirmed that they were included in the packet.

Action: Motion by Duggan (Mendota Heights) to approve modification of the agenda to include Approval of the March 27th, 2020 Board of Directors special meeting to the consent agenda. Second by Weisensel (Rosemount). Motion passed unanimously.

8 Ayes: Apple Valley, Dakota County, Eagan, Farmington, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Mendota Heights, Rosemount

0 Nays

Motion passed unanimously

Director Hansen from South St. Paul joined the meeting.

Action: Motion by Duggan (Mendota Heights) to approve minutes from the March 27th, 2020 Special Board of Directors meeting. Second by Hoyt (Farmington). Motion passed unanimously.

9 Ayes: Apple Valley, Dakota County, Eagan, Farmington, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Mendota Heights, Rosemount, South St. Paul

0 Nays

Motion passed unanimously

6. Governance OPA

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) recapped governance discussions dating back to 2015 that culminated with a request made by the DCC Board of Directors to Dakota County Board of Commissioners that Dakota County take over control and costs of the DCC. Folie noted

that in response to the request, Dakota County suggested the DCC revisit streamlining governance and operations short of changing the JPA. Folie noted that the County also directed their Office of Performance Analysis to administer a review of how the DCC compares to the various neighboring centers in the metro area. This review was to include operations and funding. Folie introduced Alex Jermeland, Dave Paulsen and Jessie Carlson, staff of the OPA to present their findings.

Jermeland and Paulsen reviewed a PowerPoint presentation recapping the findings of the study and opened the floor for questions.

Weisensel (Rosemount) questioned if there were any take-away from the study that DCC could use to improve operations, or if there was anything else that stood out that should be considered other than the desire for Dakota County to take over operation of the DCC. Paulsen (OPA) responded that there really wasn't anything operationally that they identified that was a concern. Paulsen explained that each dispatch center was very uniquely designed specific to the needs of the jurisdiction(s) they serve. Weisensel then asked Folie if the DCC learned anything from the study that staff should consider. Folie (DCC) responded that he was interested in the budget comparison and how the other PSAPs didn't have rent or location costs accounted for in the "Other" column. He noted that with that subtracted the DCC was much closer to the comparison group. Folie reminded members that the DCC lease ended mid-2022 and he was hopeful that would be a significant savings to members. Folie assured that he and Pritzlaff met with the metro area PSAPS frequently and all agencies operated similarly with the exception of some unique "add-ons" and tailoring to member needs. Folie commented that he believe the DCC was in-line with partnering agencies and nothing leapt out from the study that the DCC should consider.

Tourville (Inver Grove Heights) noted that his first observation was on the costs and how the neighboring PSAP costs didn't include building, legal, financial and administrative costs. Tourville acknowledged that could significantly skew the comparison and it was very possible the costs associated with running the DCC PSAP were more in-line than what was reflected on the presentation. Tourville thanked the OPA for their efforts compiling and presenting the report.

Slavik (Dakota County) agreed that the report was very well done and thanked OPA for their efforts. Slavik commented that there was much value on the information provided in the report, particularly the "Other" category which reflected a significantly higher DCC cost compared to the other PSAPs. Slavik noted that looking closer, there were stark differences between the DCC and other PSAPs that were due to policy directives issues by membership over the years.

Tourville (Inver Grove Heights) asked if the Executive Committee had any comments after having received the OPA report. Martin (Executive Committee) noted that there weren't a lot of additional comments. Martin agreed that the data provided seemed to

have been very well researched and analyzed. Martin noted that the one main concern the Administrators/Managers were feeling and hearing from their elected officials was the desire to move this discussion forward, in whatever capacity that is.

Tourville (Inver Grove Heights) noted that one major difference in the findings was that the DCC was housed in a stand-alone building while others were housed in current county facilities and that was a decision made by membership from the start. Tourville commented that he thought the discussion had come to a point where the direction changes from 100% take over by the County, to consideration of an increased County financial responsibility. Tourville noted that general consensus was that the DCC was very professional and did a great job operationally, and that the main concern seemed to be associated with costs. Tourville then suggested consideration of a workgroup made up of elected officials, administration, staff, etc. to dig into possible funding options including a public safety levy.

Duggan (Mendota Heights) complimented DCC response times reflected in the report, stressing the importance of services that were being experienced. Duggan also noted the rent the DCC was paying and how that was a significant contributor to DCC costs. Duggan also referred to the different responsibilities listed for supervisors of neighboring PSAPs and asked if the DCC supervisors could step in and help answer calls. Folie (DCC) assured that DCC supervisors can and do answer phone calls when needed. Folie noted that when you look at smaller centers, you will often see supervisors who are also dispatchers. As they grow in size, they too will need dedicated supervisors.

Hansen (Eagan) referred to the Executive Committee suggestion to move forward and questioned what that "looked like". Hansen commended the report for being very comprehensive and informative. Hansen noted that the report put the DCC in a very good light in comparison to neighboring PSAPs. Hansen noted that there were two things that stood out. The first was the funding structure. Hansen suggested it was time to revisit that. The second was the committee structure. Hansen noted that the DCC had 5 different governing bodies compared to other PSAPs who had 1 – 4.

Bergman (Apple Valley) agreed with Eagan noting that he firmly believes the DCC governance structure is top-heavy. Bergman added that funding could be revisited but it was time to move on and "enjoy what we have".

Tourville (Inver Grove Heights) noted that he didn't see Dakota County becoming 100% owner of the DCC. Tourville noted that this was not something that was going to be solved today, but that it did need to be moved forward. Tourville again suggested a workgroup that would be tasked to look at the funding structure and the governance structure. In regards to the funding formula, Tourville suggested consideration of a recommendation that would have the County taking on more of the expense of the DCC. Martin (Executive Committee) noted that the Executive Committee would support

the creation of a workgroup that could discuss a couple proposals already being “kicked” around. Martin added that CLEO and the Fire group had been putting much effort into researching the possibility of a public safety levy. Martin noted that while a levy would allow for more transparency, it would also require special legislation. Martin stated that there had also been discussion about a phase-out of the current funding formula over a period of years. Martin noted that he believed the Administrators/Managers would be interested in giving the Board something to consider.

Slavik (Dakota County) agreed with Martin’s comments and added that an “all or nothing” approach was not palatable, but that there was room to consider something operationally or financially or both. Slavik added that a workgroup made up of administrators/managers, elected officials and staff would get more buy-in. Slavik suggested that the group be made up of people on both ends of the spectrum.

Volk (Lakeville) commented that she would be interested in participating on the workgroup. Weisensel (Rosemount) noted that he too would be interested in participating on the workgroup. Tourville (Inver Grove Heights) noted that as Chair, he should also participate on the workgroup.

Duggan (Mendota Heights) asked if there were any goals related to funding that should be revisited and streamlined to use as guidance. Duggan noted that the vision could be related to where membership saw itself in 5 – 8 years. Tourville (Inver Grove Heights) acknowledged that the vision and mission statement could certainly be revisited at any time.

Slavik (Dakota County) noted that he was a little concerned this may head down the wrong path. Slavik reminded that the whole conversation started with the discussions about the organization that led to a consultant and then the OPA. Slavik noted that he was concerned with the workgroup getting too large and addressing too many things at once. Slavik added that a large workgroup was not as effective. Slavik then suggested directing the workgroup to address funding/financing first and then go from there. Slavik reminded that while governance is cumbersome, it worked.

Hansen (South St. Paul) agreed that the biggest concern was financing. Hansen noted that some of the communities with the higher call volumes also had the least amount of resources.

Bergman (Apple Valley) also agreed that it was down to governance structure and funding structure and that there needed to be a drop dead date for this and then move forward.

Weisensel (Rosemount) agreed with keeping the group small and focused. Weisensel also agreed with a timeline that ended in 3 – 4 proposals that could be brought back to

the Board for consideration. Weisensel speculated that it didn't need to take long and that discussions should be started by mid-June with a report at the next Board meeting.

Slavik (Dakota County) noted that there was an opportunity for the County to be a stronger partner, but it would take the majority of Dakota County Commissioners to make that happen. Slavik stated that one person didn't have enough weight to make that happen and suggested a second Commissioner participate on the workgroup.

Martin (Rosemount) commented that because the operations groups have been doing extensive research into a levy option, he felt they should have representation on the workgroup. Tourville (Inver Grove Heights) agreed recognizing that DCC costs were recognized in the member operational budget. Tourville added that the Sheriff should also be a member of the workgroup.

Action: Motion by Bergman (Apple Valley) to convene a workgroup made up of three Board members (Tourville, Volk & Weisensel), two members of the Dakota County Board of Commissioners (Slavik & another designee to be determined), three Executive Committee members (to be determined), one member of each, Fire & Law Ops (to be determined, Dakota County Sheriff or their designee (to be determined) and DCC Executive Director (Tom Folie, ex officio) for a total of eleven voting and one ex officio member. Second by Duggan (Mendota Heights).

8 Ayes: Apple Valley, Dakota County, Eagan, Farmington, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Mendota Heights, South St. Paul

0 Nays:

Director Weisensel's connection dropped during the meeting and he was not able to vote.

Motion passed.

Chair Tourville noted that Martin would be responsible for reporting the Executive Committee representation to DCC and Slavik would be responsible for reporting the second Dakota County Commissioner to the DCC. Folie will work with member Fire and Law Enforcement agencies to identify their representation and the final list of representatives will be shared with the Board of Directors for future reference. Tourville also noted that this group should meet in June and plan to provide an update at the August special Board meeting.

Brosnahan (DCC legal counsel) noted that as long as there is less than majority of any of the governing bodies, there is no need for public notification of meeting.

7. Special Meeting for 2021 Budget Adoption

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) noted that the proposed budget was developed prior to the onset of the COVID-19 emergencies in Dakota County. As a result, recommendation for approval by the Board was tabled until after a special meeting of the Executive Committee in August. Folie noted that the JPA requires approval of the budget by September 1st, so he was requesting the addition of a special meeting of the Board of Directors to consider approval of the 2021 budget. This meeting is recommended to be held the third Thursday of August at 8:00am in keeping with the traditional schedule.

Action: Motion by Duggan (Mendota Heights) to approve scheduling of a special meeting on August 20th at 8:00am to consider adoption of the 2021 budget and to receive a report from the Funding Structure Workgroup. Second by Hansen (South St. Paul). Motion passed unanimously.

9 Ayes: Apple Valley, Dakota County, Eagan, Farmington, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Mendota Heights, Rosemount, South St. Paul

0 Nays

Motion passed unanimously

8. Executive Director Report

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) noted that the meeting had gone long and he would be brief in the updates. He informed members that many steps had been taken to address the COVID-19 outbreak including issuance of individual keyboards, mice and cords. Also, dispatch staff had been moved to a team schedule where they were working 12-hour shifts, and was practicing social distancing on the dispatch floor. A long list of items related to the pandemic had been accomplished in a very short period of time and had been challenging for the DCC administration since we are a flat structure. Folie noted the pace had slackened in the last few weeks. Folie felt the DCC was well positioned to handle any spikes that may come.

Folie (DCC) noted that today was Doris Buls-Lake's final day of employment as she was retiring after 33 years of dispatching for the DCC and Lakeville.

Tourville (Inver Grove Heights) reminded Folie to continue to have staff document any/all expenses related to COVID-19.

Action: No action. Update only.

9. Community Highlights

Discussion: None

Action: No motion. Update only.

ADJOURN

Action: Motion by Duggan to adjourn. Second by Slavik (Dakota County).

9 Ayes: Apple Valley, Dakota County, Eagan, Farmington, Inver Grove Heights,
Lakeville, Mendota Heights, Rosemount, South St. Paul

0 Nays

Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:32am.

**Next Regular Meeting:
September 17th, 2020
8:00am
DCC Training Room**




George Tourville, Board of Directors Chair

11/12/2020



Tom Folie, Executive Director



11/12/2020