

**Dakota Communications Center
Executive Committee
Special Meeting Minutes: September 9th, 2020**

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

Members Absent: Melanie Mesko-Lee – Burnsville; Joe Lynch – Inver Grove Heights;

Alternates Present: BJ Battig – Dakota County

Others Present: Tom Folie, Cheryl Pritzlaff, Jen Hildebrandt – DCC; Chief Bryan Schafer; Helen Brosnahan; Jerilyn Erickson

1. Call to Order

Recognizing a quorum, Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 3:03pm.

2. Roll Call

Members in attendance are noted above.

PRIMARIES	ALTERNATES
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Apple Valley - Lawell	<input type="checkbox"/> Apple Valley - Grawe
<input type="checkbox"/> Burnsville - Mesko-Lee	<input type="checkbox"/> Burnsville - Jungmann
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dakota County - Smith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dakota County - Battig
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eagan - Osberg	<input type="checkbox"/> Eagan - Miller
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Farmington - McKnight	<input type="checkbox"/> Farmington - Rutherford
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hastings - Wietecha	<input type="checkbox"/> Hastings - Flaten
<input type="checkbox"/> Inver Grove Heights - Lynch	<input type="checkbox"/> Inver Grove Heights -
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lakeville - Miller	<input type="checkbox"/> Lakeville - Long
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mendota Heights - McNeill	<input type="checkbox"/> Mendota Heights - Ruzek
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rosemount - Martin	<input type="checkbox"/> Rosemount - Foster
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> South St. Paul - Hanson	<input type="checkbox"/> South St. Paul - Messerich
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> West St. Paul - Schroeder	<input type="checkbox"/> West St. Paul - Sturgeon

3. Approve Agenda

Discussion: No discussion.

Action: Motion by McNeill (Mendota Heights) to approve the agenda. Second by McKnight (Farmington). Motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

4. Consent Agenda – Executive Committee Chair

a. Approve the August 5th, 2020 special meeting minutes

b. Approve paid claims

c. Receive July 2020 Unaudited Financial Report

Discussion: No discussion.

Action: Motion by Miller (Lakeville) to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Second by Smith (Dakota County). Motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

Action Items

5. Executive Director Evaluation Process

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) recapped that some modifications to the executive director evaluation process had been made in 2019 and seemed to streamline the process. Folie noted that a small sub-committee would review feedback from member agencies to develop a recommendation for consideration by the Board of Directors.

Folie explained that the original plan was to have the operations sub-committee chairs join the current executive committee chair and vice-chair and a couple previous chairs of the executive committee in the sub-committee that would prepare a recommendation for the committee of the whole to review and endorse to the Board of Directors. McNeill (Mendota Heights) agreed that it seemed that those who worked more closely with the Executive Director would be better suited to prepare the recommendation.

Martin (Rosemount) recapped that all members of the executive committee were responsible for meeting with their agency representation, completing the provided evaluation for and then forwarding it for compilation. Martin added that to honor the confidentiality of the process, the responses were forwarded to Dakota County for compilation and return to the sub-committee for preparation of a recommendation. Smith (Dakota County) noted that the County would be willing to accommodate compilation of information again this year. Martin noted that if the group saw fit, representation on the sub-committee would be:

Current Chair: Logan Martin (Rosemount)

Current Vice-Chair: Melanie Mesko-Lee (Burnsville)

Current Law Enforcement Sub-Committee Chair: Chief Bryan Schafer (Hastings)

Current Fire/EMS Sub-Committee Chair: Chief Justin Elvestad (Farmington)

Martin then asked if anyone else was willing to participate. Mark McNeill (Mendota Heights) and David McKnight (Farmington) both volunteered.

Martin noted that DCC staff could send out the evaluation form, noting where to send the form to and identifying a deadline for submittal.

Smith (Dakota County) suggested a timeline similar to the previous year be used.

Hildebrandt (DCC) agreed to facilitate the beginning of the process including setting up the timeline and also getting the necessary information to the sub-committee.

Action: No action.

Information Updates/Discussion Items

6. DCC Funding Task Force Recommendation Discussion

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) recapped that the recommendation being discussed was for Dakota County to fund 50% - 100% of DCC fixed costs. Folie reminded that the variable

costs would continue to be split among membership passed on the current funding formula. Folie reported that the recommendation was approved by the Board at their August meeting and Board members agreed to report the status of the proposal back to their respective councils/commission. Folie commented that he wasn't certain if all councils had had an opportunity to receive the report, but the Board of Commissioners had met and discussed the proposal. Folie clarified that this meeting was an opportunity for discovery to ensure the current direction is still acceptable by member agencies.

Smith (Dakota County) confirmed that the Board of Commissioners had discussed the proposal and the outcome of the discussion was a willingness to proceed with the discussion. Smith clarified that in his presentation to the Board of Commissioners, he identified financial implications of a 3 – 5 year phased-in takeover of 50% - 100% of fixed costs. Smith noted that direction from the Board of Commissioners was for Commissioner Slavik to continue discussions.

Martin (Rosemount) asked if the desire of the Board of Commissioners was to have a final proposal from the Board of Directors that they could react to. Smith (Dakota County) noted that he believe Commissioner Slavik would report on the County Commission discussion at the next DCC Board of Directors meeting.

Osberg (Eagan) referred to the August DCC Board of Directors meeting and noted that members were asked to bring the topic back to their respective agencies for further discussion. Osberg asked if there was concern that the members wouldn't support a phased-in approach. Martin (Rosemount) acknowledged the question and noted that he believed the point was just to ensure that the 11 communities were going to see County take-over of fixed costs would satisfy the ongoing discussions related to governance/funding formula. Martin clarified that if that was not the case, it needed to be addressed before the effort got too far down the road.

Schroeder (West St. Paul) noted that West St. Paul Council discussed this topic in a workshop and agreed that 50% would be great, 100% is desirable, and that the effort should proceed.

Wietecha (Hastings) noted that Hastings was glad to see some movement. However, they were questioning if adjustment of the funding formula was it or if discussions were going to continue on the overall governance structure. Smith (Dakota County) noted that overall governance of the DCC was discussed and the County perspective was that there was not the desire to govern the DCC so agreeing to paying fixed expenses would satisfy the discussion.

Martin (Rosemount) noted that he believe the conversation of the sub-committee was to get the funding discussion done first. Martin noted that any governance discussion going forward would be handled separately. Martin clarified that the proposal for the County to pick up more of the DCC expenses was not intended to be a "trap" leading into the County taking over DCC control.

Martin (Rosemount) noted that the funding task force would need to meet again, but that it seemed that needed to wait until Commissioner Slavik provided the official update to the DCC Board of Directors, at which time they could direct the task force to proceed with working out the details of the proposal for Dakota County Board of Commissioners consideration.

Smith (Dakota County) noted that the discussion at the County level included a 3 – 5 year effort that would result in County coverage of 100% of fixed expenses. Smith added that if the County had concerns, a 3 – 5 year effort resulting in County coverage of 50% of fixed expenses could also be considered

Martin (Rosemount) asked if there were any other comments on the topic.

Smith (Dakota County) suggested the Task Force convene, assuming the DCC Board of Directors feedback will be favorable, and work through the particulars for Board consideration. At that point, the proposal can be brought back to the Board of Commissioners for consideration and JPA modification can begin. Smith noted that even a 5 year phased-in takeover of fixed expenses should be sufficient so that all other member fees don't go up, and some would probably go down each year. Smith noted that the presentation he made to the Board of Commissioners was based on the information provided by DCC Fiscal Agent and that it may be a good thing to display for all members at the upcoming DCC Board of Directors meeting.

Martin (Rosemount) commented that he thought the 50% was the starting point and he was a bit surprised by the phase-in proposal that wouldn't be at least 50% until year 3 Miller (Lakeville) responded that if the option was for the County to cover 50% of fixed costs immediately or 100% of fixed costs over 5 years, he would prefer the 100% of fixed costs over 5 years. Miller reminded that the 11 communities would still be seeing savings in years 1 and 2.

Schroeder (West St. Paul) commented that his understanding was the same as Martin's and that was what he represented to his council.

Action: No action. Update only.

7. Executive Director Report

Discussion:

CARES ACT FUNDING – Folie (DCC) noted that this item was not listed on the background, but that it had come up since the packet went out and he wanted to request some discussion on the topic. Folie commented that County Administrator Smith sent an email asking for some dispatch information, specifically salaries and overtime costs. Folie noted that there was some discussion around what qualified as “substantially dedicated” in order to be eligible. Folie questioned what “substantially dedicated” meant. Folie stated that he had done some research on the national

sites as far as using CARES ACT funding for PSAPs as there was nothing out there. Folie added that he reached out directly to discuss PSAP eligibility and hadn't heard back. Folie opined that when the DCC moved to a COVID schedule, incurring 8 hours of OT for every employee, every pay period, it would qualify for CARES ACT funding. Folie noted that the overtime costs during the emergency schedule came to approximately \$90,400, and there were additional expenses coming in just under \$10,000. Folie noted that these expenses had been submitted to FEMA for reimbursement, and preliminary reports were that the expenses did not qualify for FEMA reimbursement. Folie noted that it seemed the expenses would fit better under the CARES ACT than FEMA.

Smith (Dakota County) explained that the reason he made the inquiry of the DCC was because he had discussions with other counties who handle their PSAPs directly, and they were considering their dispatch positions as substantially dedicated. Smith clarified that Scott County estimated 30% of their dispatch hours were dedicated to CARES work so they were going to claim that amount. Smith added that Anoka County was also looking at claiming PSAP expenditures. Smith noted that the County was trying to navigate it's way through treasury guidance on what can be documented and taken for payroll reimbursement. Smith noted that it seemed if there was some way to document it, each member could take some sort of pro rata share and claim reimbursement against their DCC fees.

Miller (Lakeville) commented that he had an in-depth conversation with Lakeville auditors recently after receiving the federal guidance and the auditors opined that if schedules were modified for their public safety positions due to COVID, that met the substantially dedicated test and as long as the time was separately coded in the payroll system, and there was contemporaneous documentation, the auditors would be fine with Lakeville using CARES money for that purpose. Miller noted that Lakeville was most likely going to attribute those expenses to available CARES ACT funds. Miller noted that he would like the Executive Committee to see, in writing, the total number on what the DCC exposures would be including wages and other product purchased as the result of COVID. Folie (DCC) acknowledged.

Martin (Rosemount) added that he would like to see what the delta between the OT budget and actual costs was, and how much could be accounted for in the preexisting budget. Martin then noted that it would be good to see what that split would be. He added that it made sense that it would be "all or nothing".

McKnight (Farmington) noted that Farmington put a place holder in their budget for potential expenditures just to be safe.

– F put a place holder in potential expenditures to be safe. Martin – good to know what that looks like.

Smith (Dakota County) commented that he didn't think "all or nothing" would be necessary. Smith explained that if a documentable methodology could be

developed, it could be sent out to member agencies and each individual member could choose to claim a reimbursement for their share against their own CARES funds or not. Smith noted it seemed to be a policy decision that each governing body would need to make. Smith stated it would be a choice to reimburse ourselves for those costs and that it would be on each of the members to reconcile with their auditors.

Winbourne Report – Folie (DCC) referred to the Winbourne Report that had come out two years prior and revisited numerous times. Folie noted in 2019 the Executive Committee requested the points of the report be revisited in one year. Folie reviewed the findings of the report and the progress the DCC had made since 2019.

Osberg (Eagan) referred to recruiting of candidates and asked if social unrest and COVID, was causing difficulties in DCC recruiting. Folie (DCC) noted that the DCC was in a current hiring process and had received approximately 25 applications. Folie then asked Jen Hildebrandt to provide some additional content. Hildebrandt (DCC) noted that while the number of applicants wasn't necessarily going down, the applications being received weren't reflecting much experience. Hildebrandt added that it seemed as though social unrest was a concern but even more-so was the fact that people were looking for more employment flexibility than ever. Hildebrandt stated that given the inherent need of dispatch centers to have butts in the seats at all times, that wasn't working with the desired flexibility and trend toward working from home. Hildebrandt added that a recent PSAP manager meeting returned some of the same experience.

Action: No action. Update only.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Action: Motion by Lawell (Apple Valley) to adjourn. Second by Martin (Rosemount). Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 3:53pm.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING
November 4th, 2020
3:00pm
Location: TBD