

New River Valley Emergency Communications Regional Authority

Join Advisory Committee Meeting

February 13, 2019 1:00PM

Montgomery County Public Safety Building – NRV 911

Minutes

Attendees:

Members: Mark Sisson, Chair, *Police Chief, Town of Christiansburg*; David English, Vice Chair, *Blacksburg Rescue*; Kevin Foust, *Chief of Police, Virginia Tech*; Billy Hanks, *Fire Chief, Town of Christiansburg*; Michael Mulhare, *Director of Emergency Management, Virginia Tech*; Hank Partin, *Sheriff, Montgomery County*, Anthony Wilson, *Chief of Police, Town of Blacksburg*;

Alternate Members: Kris Weaver; *Captain, Montgomery County Sheriff's Department*

Staff: Brad St. Clair, Interim Executive Director; Deborah Stump, Operations Manager

Recorder: Tiffany Cunningham; Executive Assistant

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM

2. Roll Call of Members

The Recorder performed a silent roll call of members

3. Approval of Agenda

Mark Sisson moved to accept the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Chief Wilson and passed unanimously.

4. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the July 18, 2018 Join Advisory Committee meeting (Attachment A) were presented for corrections. With no corrections requested, Mark Sisson moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Chief Foust and passed unanimously.

5. New Business

a. Updated on the Radio System

Interim Director Brad St. Clair gave an update to the Committee on the Request for Proposals (RFPs) with a decision by next week. The numbers for this are very high, \$30 to \$40 million but nothing lower than \$25 million.

b. VHF/UHF

Vendor replaced switches and things are working like they should be.

This is a learning curve for everyone and everyone is getting used to using the correct channels.

The Radio Channels are presenting issues and not everyone seems to be doing the same thing. Dispatch isn't assign the correct channels and seems to be a lot of confusion for dispatch. Several attendees agreed this needs to be revisited and fix needs to be implemented. Billy Hanks will send an email out to everyone for a meeting to try to formulate a procedure that works for everyone.

c. New Hires

The in house training has been shortened from 3-5 weeks to one week. The new hires need to get on the floor faster and start using/training with CAD. The goal is to have the dispatchers do ride along's with the police once the dispatchers are assigned to their shift. This cannot be done until we are fully staffed. Maybe Police Supervisors can come in during shifts to talk to dispatchers to make a stronger bond. Maybe dispatchers can shadow to see how everything operates/work flow process.

We currently have 3 vacancies. 1 is retiring and 2 will be out on FMLA. We have 2 new workers hitting the floor now and 3 still in trainings. There are 36 dispatchers and we are trying to reduce the turn over. Currently, we are trying to hire 4 new employees but only 3 showed for testing.

Each shift should have 9 dispatchers to cover and that is if there are no call outs, no one out on FMLA, etc. Currently dispatchers are performing dual roles for calls for Fire/Rescue and Police. This may need to be revisited in the near future.

The Police Chiefs need to provide a list of employees that could potentially help assist with dispatching and that have previous dispatching/CAD experience. Deborah will send out an email to all of them letting them know what shifts we need coverage for.

Mr. St. Clair will present to the board at the next meeting the request for additional personnel. Will be asking for 4 new positions in the next 2 years. Hopefully 2 positions this year and 2 the following year. Mr. St. Clair will also present to the board a request for salary adjustments and a higher starting pay for dispatchers. (The over time we have paid out the past years has been increasing. 2017 = \$54,000; 2018 = \$124,000 and YTD for 2019 = \$95,000).

d. EMD

Several attendees agreed that EMD needs to be addressed and discussed in more detail as this is a huge concern for staff as well as Fire and Rescue as this is resulting in a delay in dispatch time. We need a way to dispatch immediately so

there is no delay. Some think this was implemented too quickly with not enough training and this is resulting in dispatch times being all over the map. ISO requires 6 minutes but due to EMD this is showing a longer time. Deborah will look into and see if there is a trending issue.

6. Public Comments

None

7. Committee Member Comments

None

8. Adjourn

At 1:40 PM, Mark Sisson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Chief Wilson and all members were in favor.