

**Dakota Communications Center
Board of Directors
Special Meeting Minutes: February 18th, 2021**

Members Present: Mike Slavik – Dakota County; Mike Supina – Eagan; Jen Fox – Hastings; Rosemary Piekarski-Krech – Inver Grove Heights; Michelle Volk – Lakeville; Jeff Weisensel – Rosemount; Lori Hansen – South St. Paul

Members Absent: John Bergman – Apple Valley; Vince Workman – Burnsville; Katie Porter – Farmington; Dick Vitelli – West St. Paul

Alternates Present: Mary Fasbender – Hastings; Stephanie Levine – Mendota Heights; Julie Eastman – West St. Paul

Others Present: Logan Martin – Executive Committee Chair; Tom Folie, Cheryl Pritzlaff, Jen Hildebrandt – DCC; Helen Brosnahan – DCC Legal Counsel

1. Call to Order

Recognizing a quorum and in the absence of Chair Tourville, Vice-chair Jeff Weisensel (Rosemount) called the meeting to order at 8:02am.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

	Apple Valley	John Bergman		Clint Hooppaw
	Burnsville	Vince Workman		Dan Gustafson
X	Dakota County	Mike Slavik		MaryLiz Holberg
X	Eagan	Mike Supina		Gary Hansen
	Farmington	Katie Porter		Katie Bernhjelm
X	Hastings	Jen Fox	X	Mary Fasbender
X	Inver Grove Heights	Rosemary Piekarski-Krech		John Murphy
X	Lakeville	Michelle Volk		John Bermel
X	Mendota Heights	Ultan Duggan	X	Stephanie Levine
X	Rosemount	Jeff Weisensel		Paul Essler
X	South St. Paul	Lori Hansen		Todd Podgorski
	West St. Paul	Dick Vitelli	X	Julie Eastman

Members and staff in attendance are noted above.

4. Approve Agenda

Discussion:

No discussion.

Action: Motion by Duggan (Mendota Heights) to approve the agenda as presented. Second by Supina (Eagan). Motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Consent Agenda – Board of Directors Chair

- a. Approve Minutes from the November 12th, 2020 meeting
- b. Receive Adopted and Ratified Paid Claims
- c. Receive and Approve Unaudited Financial Report
- d. Receive Executed Contracts and Agreements
- e. Receive 2021 Pay Equity Report
- f. Approve Office Furniture Purchase
- g. Approve PC Replacements through Dell

Discussion:

Weisensel (Rosemount) noted that while many of the members in attendance at this meeting were not present at the previous meeting, approval of the minutes is just to accept them into record so members should feel free to vote.

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

	Apple Valley	John Bergman		Clint Hooppaw
	Burnsville	Vince Workman		Dan Gustafson
Aye	Dakota County	Mike Slavik		MaryLiz Holberg
Aye	Eagan	Mike Supina		Gary Hansen
	Farmington	Katie Porter		Katie Bernhjelm
Aye	Hastings	Jen Fox		Mary Fasbender
Aye	Inver Grove Heights	Rosemary Piekarski-Krech		John Murphy
Aye	Lakeville	Michelle Volk		John Bermel
Aye	Mendota Heights	Ultan Duggan		Stephanie Levine
Aye	Rosemount	Jeff Weisensel		Paul Essler
Aye	South St. Paul	Lori Hansen		Todd Podgorski
	West St. Paul	Dick Vitelli	Aye	Julie Eastman

Motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

Action Items

6. Election of Board Chair Due to Vacancy

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) noted that as Inver Grove Heights Mayor George Tourville did not seek re-election, the DCC Board of Directors Chair position needed to be filled. Folie noted that given the vacancy, Vice-chair Weisensel had been serving as needed. Folie added that

Vice-chair Weisensel had expressed interest in filling the vacancy which is the second half of a 2-year term. Folie added that the appointment would end with the close of the February, 2022 meeting.

Vice-chair Weisensel called for nominations.

Duggan (Mendota Heights) nominated Director Weisensel for appointment to the position of DCC Board of Directors Chair for the remainder of the 2020-2021 term. Hearing no further nominations, Vice-chair entertained motion to close the nominations.

Action: Motion by Duggan (Mendota Heights) to close nominations. Second by Slavik (Dakota County).

Action: Motion by Duggan (Mendota Heights) for unanimous approval of appointment of Director Weisensel to the position of DCC Board of Directors Chair for the remainder of the 2020-2021 term. Second by Piekarski-Krech (Inver Grove Heights).

	Apple Valley	John Bergman		Clint Hooppaw
	Burnsville	Vince Workman		Dan Gustafson
Aye	Dakota County	Mike Slavik		MaryLiz Holberg
Aye	Eagan	Mike Supina		Gary Hansen
	Farmington	Katie Porter		Katie Bernhjelm
Aye	Hastings	Jen Fox		Mary Fasbender
Aye	Inver Grove Heights	Rosemary Piekarski-Krech		John Murphy
Aye	Lakeville	Michelle Volk		John Bermel
Aye	Mendota Heights	Ultan Duggan		Stephanie Levine
Aye	Rosemount	Jeff Weisensel		Paul Essler
Aye	South St. Paul	Lori Hansen		Todd Podgorski
	West St. Paul	Dick Vitelli	Aye	Julie Eastman

Further discussion: Vice-chair Weisensel asked if there also needed to be an election and appointment of the Vice-chair. Folie (DCC) acknowledged that per DCC by-laws, the Vice-chair appointment would need to be made at the next meeting.

Action: Motion by Duggan (Mendota Heights) to temporarily appoint Director Slavik as temporary Vice-chair until official appointment at the May, 2021 meeting. Director Slavik (Dakota County) accepted the nomination. Second by Hansen (South St. Paul).

	Apple Valley	John Bergman		Clint Hooppaw
	Burnsville	Vince Workman		Dan Gustafson
Aye	Dakota County	Mike Slavik		MaryLiz Holberg
Aye	Eagan	Mike Supina		Gary Hansen
	Farmington	Katie Porter		Katie Bernhjelm
Aye	Hastings	Jen Fox		Mary Fasbender
Aye	Inver Grove Heights	Rosemary Piekarski-Krech		John Murphy
Aye	Lakeville	Michelle Volk		John Bermel
Aye	Mendota Heights	Ultan Duggan		Stephanie Levine

Aye	Rosemount	Jeff Weisensel		Paul Essler
Aye	South St. Paul	Lori Hansen		Todd Podgorski
	West St. Paul	Dick Vitelli	Aye	Julie Eastman

Both motions passed unanimously.

7. 2021 Goals

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) informed members that each year he was tasked with developing a set of organizational goals. Folie explained that goals are presented in February and periodic updates are provided throughout the year.

Folie noted that for 2021 there were three main goal “themes”:

- Business Efficiencies to better serve stakeholders
- Make DCC a better place to work
- Emergency response improvements.

Folie acknowledged that the list of goals was ambitious and thanked Executive Committee Chair Martin and Vice-Chair Mesko-Lee for their participation in development of the goals. Folie then reviewed the goals in each theme with members.

Supina (Eagan) referred to the “Check-up from the Neck Up” goal and suggested it seemed to be a higher priority that may necessitate more prompt action than the notes quarter 3. Folie (DCC) noted that the only reason it was noted as quarter 3 was because the goals list was ambitious and he was working to spread them out over the year. Folie clarified that staff needed to engage different providers to help ensure a good fit. Folie assured that if the effort could be completed sooner, it would.

Duggan (Mendota Heights) asked what role, if any, the initial psychological evaluation played in the “Check-up from the Neck Up” goal. Folie (DCC) noted that all employment candidates go through a lengthy psychological evaluation as part of their employment consideration. This evaluation results in a “recommend” or “do not recommend” for employment. Martin (Executive Committee) added clarification stating that the “Check-up from the Neck Up” effort was a fairly private process that allowed the employee a safe opportunity to meet with a mental health professional. Martin suggested that there would be little to no report back to the DCC as the employer.

Weisensel (Rosemount) referred to the “Check-up from the Neck Up” goal and asked if the DCC had any sort of traumatic program in place. Folie (DCC) confirmed stating that the DCC had a great working relationship with members Fire/EMS and Police who always invited DCC staff to debriefings for traumatic calls. Folie added that the DCC offered an Employee Assistance Program. Folie explained that while the “Check-up from the Neck Up” goal was not currently funded, the DCC wanted to be one of the first

dispatch centers to offer the program in an effort to get ahead of the influx of PTSD claims in the public safety world.

Weisensel (Rosemount) referred to the Emergency Fire Dispatch (EFD) standards and expectations and asked if Director Folie might provide a bit more clarification on that effort working with the Fire Chiefs. Folie (DCC) explained that the NFPA had an identified set of standards for fires that included a requirement that 90% of the time, dispatch centers needed to notify fire departments of a structure fire within 64 seconds. Folie clarified that that the "clock" started when the phone began ringing and ran until the department was notified. Folie continued, stating that member fire departments acknowledged that the standard was not easy to attain but that centers should strive to meet it. Folie noted that prior to implementation of EFD, the DCC only occasionally met the standard, and after implementation of EFD, the DCC was not meeting the goal at all. Folie commented that part of the problem was that there weren't many structure fires, so one fire could drag stats down significantly. Folie acknowledged that the benefit of EFD was that it didn't matter who the dispatcher was, using the protocols helped ensure the appropriate left of response to all calls. Folie reiterated that staff was working to improve this practice but he didn't see the DCC meeting the standards as currently stated while using EFD. Folie noted that using protocols makes the response less subjective and allows for a correct response rather than an over or under response. Folie noted that work with the fire chiefs is ongoing.

Folie noted that in the Emergency Response Improvements area there is consideration of a better back up plan noting that if the dispatch floor needed to be evacuated, the server room was to be used. This is a very loud room and could only be maintained as a back up for a short period of time. Ramsey County is the designated back up when the entire building needs to be evacuate. Washington County's PSAP director said they have money to look at backup center but no room in county. Folie advised her that the DCC would have interest but that no funding was designated. Folie opined that this would be a good discussion point amongst the metro area PSAPs to avoid unnecessary duplication.

Weisensel (Rosemount) referred to the JPA and By-laws review and asked Folie if he needed a work group to assist with that effort. Folie (DCC) explained that the current effort involved just reviewing the documents and considering what was directed versus what was actually happening. Folie provided an example stating that the DCC Board of Directors was only required to meet twice a year. Current practice was to meet four times a year. Folie added that in previous professional organizational reviews, it was suggested the Board should have two formal actions. Accept the budget and approve the executive director review and salary. The studies added that beyond that, the Executive Committee should be taking care of contract and other routine considerations. Folie suggested following the JPA and By-laws as written would be a great place to start before re-writing them. Folie noted that he hadn't considered a task

force but he was open to anything. Weisensel (Rosemount) recognized that the timing for the JPA and By-laws review was quarter one. Weisensel suggested any potential considerations be compiled and brought back to the Board of Directors for consideration at the May, 2021 meeting and involvement of the chair and vice chair would be a good idea in the interim.

Action: Motion by Duggan (Mendota Heights) to approve the Dakota Communications Center 2021 Goals as presented. Second by Supina (Eagan).

	Apple Valley	John Bergman	Clint Hooppaw
	Burnsville	Vince Workman	Dan Gustafson
A	Dakota County	Mike Slavik	MaryLiz Holberg
A	Eagan	Mike Supina	Gary Hansen
	Farmington	Katie Porter	Katie Bernhjelm
A	Hastings	Jen Fox	Mary Fasbender
A	Inver Grove Heights	Rosemary Piekarski-Krech	John Murphy
A	Lakeville	Michelle Volk	John Bermel
A	Mendota Heights	Ultan Duggan	Stephanie Levine
A	Rosemount	Jeff Weisensel	Paul Essler
A	South St. Paul	Lori Hansen	Todd Podgorski
A	West St. Paul	Dick Vitelli	Julie Eastman

Motion passed unanimously.

Information Updates/Discussion

8. 2022 Budget Process

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) reported that the DCC budget process would be the same as was done in 2020, slightly different than previous years. Folie stated that members could expect to receive the 2022 budget in August rather than in May. Folie reminded that the budget must be approved by September 1st annually.

Duggan (Mendota Heights) asked if there were any significant budget changes being proposed, they be provided to the group prior to August 19th governance meeting. Folie (DCC) acknowledged, stating the 2022 budget looked pretty standard for expenses, but the big unknowns were the labor agreements which likely wouldn't be finalized in time for budget consideration. Folie added that the other topic that may have progressed prior to budget presentation was the overall DCC funding. Folie assured that information would be shared as soon as available.

Action: No action.

9. DCC Funding Workgroup Update

Discussion:

Folie (DCC) noted that it seemed as though discussions about DCC funding had been going on for many years, certainly since before he joined the DCC in 2016.

Folie recapped that the most recent effort began about a year prior to this meeting with the DCC requesting Dakota County consider funding the DCC in its entirety. Folie reported that the County Board was not amenable to taking over the DCC operation nor funding the DCC in its entirety. As such, a subcommittee reconvened to discuss other options.

Recognizing the current funding formula is based 100% on use, and not all costs were the result of member use, a sub-committee worked with the DCC fiscal agent to identify fixed and variable costs in the DCC budget. Folie explained that fixed costs were necessary expenditures regardless of call volume, and variable costs were costs that may vary based on call volume. The sub-committee then proposed Dakota County consider taking over all fixed costs. Folie noted that the subcommittee reasoning for moving the fixed/variable direction was based on the belief that fixed costs should be spread across the entire county tax base, while variable costs should be charged directly to each jurisdiction based on how it uses the DCC services. Folie clarified that the Dakota County Board of Commissioners is currently considering the idea of a phased in allocation of the DCC fixed costs beginning in 2022. All fixed costs would be spread across Dakota County by 2026.

Folie noted that the current capital budget fund had enough reserves in it to cover planned expenditures through 2025 so there was also the potential for members to cease contributions to that fund immediately. Folie cautioned, however, that there were some significant anticipated expenditures after that point. Folie clarified that the capital reserve was not part of the current proposal, but just a side discussion being held as part of the overall funding topic.

Folie noted that the Dakota County Board of Commissioners had a workshop on February 16th. Folie then deferred to Director Slavik for further update.

Slavik (Dakota County) noted that the DCC funding proposal was one part of the recent Dakota County Commissioner workshop. Slavik reiterated that in DCC governance discussions regarding the funding formula it became glaringly apparent that member cities were not only paying their allocated percentage of costs by jurisdiction, but they were also paying towards the Dakota County rural area costs. Slavik reported that Dakota County was in the process of developing a legislative draft that would allow creation of a public safety service district. This would allow the costs for DCC services in the Sheriff's patrol district to be paid for by the individual townships. Acknowledging that legislation moves slowly, the Board of Commissioners was unanimously in support of a public safety service district, similar to how 80 of the 87 counties in Minnesota already operate. Slavik cautioned that while he believed the majority of commissioners

supported Dakota County also paying for DCC fixed costs, it was not unanimous. Slavik assured that he would continue to advocate for this effort and asked that members also reach out to their local commissioner in support of the effort. Slavik added that another piece of the discussion at the commission level agreed that DCC governance was very cumbersome and there were modifications that could be made to current practices that would be more efficient and save staff time. Slavik noted that he was hopeful members would keep open minds to conversations about efficiencies as they are presented. Slavik closed noting that he was also hopeful that there would be legislative progress the end of May that would provide direction necessary for JPA revisions.

Action: No action. Update only.

10. Executive Director Report

Discussion:

Electrical Issues – Folie (DCC) reported that the DCC encountered electrical issues during a scheduled UPS replacement attempt in December, 2020. Folie noted that upon further investigation it was determined that some of the DCC major vendors plugged their systems into the UPS so when it was replaced, those services went down. Folie commented that while it was unfortunate, the DCC was better for it as vendors had traced and labeled all circuits for future reference. Folie added that upon second attempt to replace UPS units in January, the effort was successful without incident.

Fire Statistics – Folie (DCC) acknowledged this topic had already been discussed as part of the Goals item and that members could expect continued monthly statistical reports and continued efforts toward issue resolution.

Media/Data Wall – Folie (DCC) noted that this 2020 effort had been delayed due to COVID, but progress was being made. Folie noted that wiring would begin the week of February 22nd and monitors would be installed the following week. Folie speculated the wall would be up and running in early March.

FEMA Grants – Folie (DCC) informed members that the DCC had applied for and been awarded two grants for reimbursement totaling over \$95,000 for overtime expenses incurred due to COVID emergency scheduling. Folie noted that an additional \$26,500 was pending approval and at a recent Governor's conference it was announced that the State would be covering its portion of the costs it previously stated would not be reimbursed.

COVID Leave Extension – Folie (DCC) reported that similar to numerous member agencies, executive action was taken to extend use of COVID leave, identified in 2020, through the end of March, 2021. Folie noted that as DCC staff was not yet scheduled to

receive the vaccine, it was possible that deadline would again be extended to get staff through their vaccination period.

Staffing/Hiring – Folie (DCC) noted that two of the three new hires who started on 12/30 were pilots expecting to be on furlough for a number of years. Folie reported that they were both already called back to the airlines. Folie noted that the DCC announced a hiring process had been started on February 17th with hopes of having new hires on staff in May.

Action: No action. Update only.

OTHER BUSINESS

Recognizing many new faces, Weisensel (Rosemount) called for introductions.

Hearing no further business, Weisensel (Rosemount) called for adjournment.

ADJOURN

Action: Motion by Duggan (Mendota Heights) to adjourn. Second by Piekarski-Krech (Inver Grove Heights). Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:05am.

Next Regular Meeting:

May 20th, 2021

8:00am

Tentatively Planned as a Remote Meeting



Jeff Weisensel, Board of Directors Chair

05/20/2021



Tom Folie, Executive Director

5/24/2021

05/20/2021