

**Dakota 911
Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes: May 3rd, 2023**

Members Present: Tom Lawell – Apple Valley; Matt Smith – Dakota County; Dianne Miller – Eagan; Dan Wietecha – Hastings; Kris Wilson – Inver Grove Heights; Cheryl Jacobson – Mendota Heights; Logan Martin – Rosemount; Ryan Garcia – South St. Paul

Members Absent: Gregg Lindberg – Burnsville; Lynn Gorski – Farmington; Justin Miller – Lakeville; Nathan Burkett – West St. Paul

Alternates Present: BJ Jungmann – Burnsville; Brian Sturgeon – West St. Paul

Others Present: Heidi Hieserich, Brent Anderson, Jen Hildebrandt – Dakota 911; Jerilyn Erickson – Dakota 911 Fiscal Agent; Dain Olson – Dakota 911 Legal Counsel

1. Call to Order

Recognizing a quorum, Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 3:01 pm.

2. Roll Call

Members in attendance are noted above. Chair Martin called for introductions.

3. Approve Agenda

Discussion: No discussion.

Action: Motion by Miller (Eagan) to approve the agenda. Second by Jungmann (Burnsville). Motion passed.

CONSENT AGENDA

4. Consent Agenda – Executive Committee Chair

- a. **Approve minutes from the February 1st, 2023 regular meeting**
- b. **Approve January, February and March, 2023 paid claims**
- c. **Recommend approval of March 2023 unaudited financial report**
- d. **Receive executed contracts & agreements**
- e. **Receive operations committee meeting minutes**
- f. **Recommend approval of audited 2022 financial report**
- g. **Recommend monetary limit for the 6/26/2023 – 6/26/2024 coverage period not be waived.**

Discussion: No discussion.

Action: Motion by Garcia (South St. Paul) to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Second by Jacobson (Mendota Heights). Motion passed.

REGULAR AGENDA

Action Items

5. 2024 Operating and Capital Budget

Discussion:

Hieserich (Dakota 911) informed members that there was a lot of information to get through with the 2024 Operating and Capital Budget.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) recapped the budget process and shared that, guided by City of Lakeville as Dakota 911's Fiscal Agent, Dakota 911 staff began drafting the 2024 Operating and Capital Budget in February. Hieserich continued stating that the draft document was reviewed by members of the Budget Review Workgroup on April 6th. Hieserich noted that Executive Committee representatives on the workgroup included Hastings City Administrator Dan Wietecha, Rosemount City Administrator Logan Martin, and South St. Paul City Administrator Ryan Garcia. Hieserich added that the workgroup was joined by fiscal agent representatives Jerilyn Erickson, David Lang and Laura Miller, and herself in these preliminary budget reviews. Hieserich noted that suggested modifications were made and then re-considered by the workgroup prior to compilation of the finalized document, which was what was presented to the group today with a request for recommendation of adoption by the Board of Directors at their May 18th, meeting.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that the proposed 2024 Operating and Capital Budget reflected \$11,184,028 in expenditures in the general fund, and \$583,500 in the capital expenditures for a total proposed budget of \$11,767,528. Referring specifically to the Operating Budget, Hieserich noted that contractual expenses make up \$2,551,487 of the budget. Hieserich further noted that 80% of contractual expenses are attributed to technology services through LOGIS (48%), building maintenance (19%) and Equipment Maintenance (13%).

Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that increased activity levels and retention rates are the primary drivers behind the increased personnel budget, which reflects an increase in full-time employee (FTE) positions. Hieserich noted that the authorized staffing level of 54 public safety telecommunicators had not changed since 2011. Since that time, Dakota 911 has experienced a 34% increase in calls for service and a 95% increase in call processing times due to added complexities over the years. Hieserich added that member agency public safety departments had experienced significant growth since 2011 as well. Hieserich shared that Dakota 911 is perpetually understaffed due to an 80% retention rate and advocated for an adapted staffing strategy that includes the impacts of expected retention. Hieserich shared proposed staffing increases over a four-year period that would support Dakota 911's ability to achieve the required net staffing minimums needed to maintain service level expectations. Hieserich commented that the staffing shortages not only result in significant overtime costs to members, but also require a high volume of forced overtime and denied time off for staff, which has contributed to telecommunicator stress and burn-out. Hieserich noted that it would take time to achieve the targeted staffing levels, and that the adapted strategy would accommodate practice modifications as the organization works toward that goal. Hieserich noted that vacancy positions were built into the personnel budget to

reflect the expected budget impact of retention and therefore, a more realistic personnel budget. She shared that this practice is used in other public safety organizations and offered Lakeville as an example.

Smith (Dakota County) referred to vacancy positions and asked for clarification on how authorized, but unfilled FTE positions contributed to the budget. Erickson (Dakota 911 Fiscal Agent) clarified that vacancy positions are built-into the budget in an effort to reflect a realistic personnel budget. Erickson noted that this is how the City of Lakeville budgeted for their police department staffing. Smith (Dakota County) commented that the County did the same. Hieserich added that the 2027 staffing target of 65 telecommunicator positions, based on Dakota 911's past retention rates, should result in achieving the net goal of 54, which is the minimum number of public safety telecommunicators needed to support operations. Hieserich noted that members would start to see the benefit in overtime savings over the years, but clarified that overtime will still be needed to support time off, training, leave or other variables. Hieserich shared that management monitors retention rates on a regular basis and that the staffing targets could be adapted based on Dakota 911's current experience.

Martin (Rosemount) referred to budget workgroup conversations and asked staff to talk a bit more about Dakota 911's comfort with onboarding and training capacity. Hieserich (Dakota 911) acknowledged that training is a continuous challenge for the team. Hieserich noted that Dakota 911 typically onboards 2 – 3 new hires at a time and consistently has 6 – 8 people in training at a time. Currently, Dakota 911 has 6 employees in various phases of training. Capacity of the training team is limited by how many trainers are actively training and supporting the program, which fluctuates due to the stress and demands of the position. Hieserich commented that the training process is currently under evaluation and staff are working with the team to better understand capacity, and improve the process. Hieserich commented that it will take a few years to achieve the staffing goal of 65 FTE.. However, it is a goal that staff is committed to working towards with governance support.

Smith (Dakota County) commented that the operating budget increase reflected a big number, but he was not surprised at all.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) referred to the Capital budget which reflected \$583,500 in proposed expenditures. Hieserich explained that \$419,000 of the budget is allocated to replacement of the audio logger, and \$100,000 is allocated to data analytics/integrations. Hieserich explained that Dakota 911 data analytics needed to be improved as it was currently a very manual effort. Hieserich added that a metro area CAD to CAD data sharing solution was also being considered and Dakota 911 should be prepared for this opportunity. The Metropolitan Emergency Services Board currently has an RFP for a CAD to CAD solution, the implications of which were yet to be determined. As such, the \$100,000 was allocated to 2024 and 2025 to be prepared for these future opportunities.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) referred to capital expenditures in 2025 and future years, acknowledging there would be discussion on how to fund the capital budget

going forward. Hieserich reminded members that there were no member contributions in 2024, and there would be the need to issue debt for the Radio Console replacement in 2026 and the Computer-aided Dispatch in 2027. Smith (Dakota County) asked if the expenditures were considered fixed costs. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that specific to the capital project fund, yes, they were fixed costs. Erickson (Lakeville) added that if the decision were to move to a subscription-based product, the expenditure would move to the general fund and remove the debt component. However, it would still be a fixed cost. Smith (Dakota County) noted that the County would be responsible for a larger portion of that cost then. Hieserich (Dakota 911) confirmed.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) referred to fixed costs in the general fund and noted that the 2024 general fund fixed cost total would be \$2,242,643. Hieserich noted that State 911 fund contributions would cover \$594,961 of that cost and mass telephone notification system partnerships would cover another \$18,000, bringing the proposed balance to \$1,629,683. With Dakota County covering 50% of those costs in 2024, \$814,841, that would leave a balance of \$814,841 which would be covered by member agencies.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) reviewed discussions stating that the 2024 operating budget increase reflected a 9.3% increase, and member fees would see an 8.25% increase in 2024. Hieserich noted that forecasting budget expenditures out, member fees would be increasing 8.25% in 2025, 6% in 2026, 4% in 2027 and 3.5% in 2028.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) extended gratitude to Dakota 911 fiscal agent representatives Jerilyn Erickson, Laura Miller and particularly David Lang whom worked through numerous scenarios with her. Hieserich also extended thanks to executive committee volunteers on the budget review workgroup, Logan Martin, Dan Wietecha and Ryan Garcia for their guidance through the budget process.

Martin (Rosemount) noted that Executive Director Hieserich picked things up quickly and was very prepared for this discussion. Martin added that it was nice to hear Hieserich speak the truth and push the discussion that there needed to be movement in this budget to get where the organization needed to be. Martin continued, stating that while Lynn Gorski from Farmington and Justin Miller from Lakeville were unable to attend the meeting, they had both expressed support for the proposed budget.

Miller (Eagan) acknowledged Dakota County for picking up the added costs. Smith (Dakota County) noted that the increase to the County was going to be higher, but it looked to be in range with what was expected so it shouldn't be a surprise to anyone.

Jungmann (Burnsville) commented that he appreciated the forethought involved in the proposed budget. Jungmann acknowledged this is a difficult market and a difficult job and he was pleased to hear staff is addressing those needs.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) requested that if the group were to recommend approval today, members help to share the information with their board representatives and feel free to reach out to her in advance of the Board meeting with any questions.

Action: Motion by Wietecha (Hastings) to recommend approval of the 2024 Operating and Capital Budget as presented. Second by Garcia (South St. Paul).

Further Discussion:

Lawell (Apple Valley) referred to the reference to call processing times increasing by 95% and cautioned that there be some clarifying context to that. Hieserich (Dakota 911) acknowledged, assuring that Dakota 911 was still meeting the minimum thresholds established for call answer times, which would be clarified for the Board of Directors.

Motion passed unanimously.

Information Updates/Discussion Items

6. Financial Reporting

Discussion:

Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that Dakota 911 Fiscal Agent requested discussion on the frequency and quality of the monthly financial reports. Hieserich explained that currently, the fiscal agency provided, and staff distributed, monthly reports with the exception of the first couple of months in the year while working on the previous year audited report. Hieserich inquired if it would make sense to align reporting with the quarterly meeting schedule.

Wilson (Inver Grove Heights) asked if the elected officials received reports on the same schedule as the executive committee. Hieserich (Dakota 911) confirmed and noted that there were rarely, if ever, any questions.

Wietecha (Hastings) asked if the reports took a lot of time. Erickson (Dakota 911 Fiscal Agent) responded that the time it took was not extensive, but was time that may be put elsewhere if the reports weren't being utilized. Erickson also questioned if there were any changes the group would like to see with the report itself. Martin commented that the reports were easy to read.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) commented that from the staff perspective, Dakota 911 would also be ok with quarterly reports. Hieserich noted that once the City of Lakeville ERP effort was up and running, Dakota 911 staff could pull reports any time of day as needed, which was very important.

Smith (Dakota County) commented that County Board representatives weren't receiving financial reports more frequently than quarterly from the County and he supported moving forward with quarterly reporting.

Hearing no further discussion, Martin commented that it sounded as though the group would be OK with receiving quarterly reports and no changes to report contents were needed.

7. Executive Director Report

Discussion:

911 System Upgrade – Hieserich (Dakota 911) informed members that Dakota 911 would be moving to a cloud-hosted 911 system this summer of 2023 and there were no anticipated interruptions to service.

Encryption of Law Mains – Hieserich (Dakota 911) deferred to Operations Director Anderson for this report. Anderson (Dakota 911) reported that right now, law enforcement was on track to encrypt law channels by September of 2023. Anderson noted that the BCA had brought forward concerns about adherence to FBI requirements stating that non-criminal justice agencies should not have access to criminal justice information. This would result in significant interoperability concerns between law and fire partners. Anderson stated that in working with the operations committees, the tentative decision was to allow fire access to all law main channels, but not the info channel which is where criminal justice information is communicated.

Anderson acknowledged that if this were to become an issue, the operations committees understood there may need to be further adjustments. However, this will help to maintain interoperability, which is vitally important to both groups.

Metro Region CAD to CAD RFP – Hieserich (Dakota 911) shared that the Metro Emergency Services Board had a CAD to CAD RFP underway and while cost implications are unknown, that information should be available soon. Hieserich noted that the intent was to support interoperability at the emergency communication center level and improve situational awareness for all. Hieserich noted that the need for a situational awareness and collaborative platform was prioritized after the 2020 civil unrest and that the goal would be to have a metro platform that all emergency communications centers are connected to.

Legislative 911 Funding Update – Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that staff are keeping an eye on a legislative bill that passed the Public Safety Finance Committee and been referred to the Ways and Means Committee. Hieserich noted that the bill would provide an additional \$7,000,000 of 911 funding to emergency communication centers throughout the state in 2023. Hieserich suggested that Dakota 911 could potentially use funds for cyber security, mitigation and NextGen 911 costs. Hieserich noted that she would keep membership updated on the bill.

Wilson (Inver Grove Heights) clarified that the \$7,000,000 was in total for all centers. Hieserich (Dakota 911) confirmed, and clarified that she did not know how that would be disseminated. Smith (Dakota County) asked if it would be a one-time distribution. Hieserich (Dakota 911) responded that she understood this would be one-time disbursement.

911 Telecommunicator Certification Requirements – Hieserich (Dakota 911) deferred to Dakota 911 Operations Director Anderson for this update. Anderson (Dakota 911) informed members that there was an effort underway to implement 911

telecommunicator certification requirements, similar to the post-board. Anderson explained that the effort would include formation of a committee made up of 23 – 24 representatives from the State, public safety, fire, and law organizations. The committee would be tasked with setting rules, standards and objectives of the certification itself. Anderson commented that there were no specifics of what the requirements of the certification would be yet, but there is little impact expected for Dakota 911. This certification would be a formality for Dakota 911, as the organization already adheres to all local and national training standards. Anderson speculated this could prove to be more challenging for some PSAPs that do not have the resources Dakota 911 has. Anderson explained that the next step would be to push the draft out to participants this coming summer with a request for feedback. Hieserich added that there are close to 40 states with 911 training certification already in place. Anderson added that the Minnesota Emergency Communications Network was going to be pushing out a public safety telecommunicator recruitment video by the end of June. In addition, Minnesota had purchased advertisement space across all types of media to help drive recruitment efforts. Anderson reported that in the metro area alone, there were approximately 60 Public Safety Telecommunicator position vacancies. Hieserich (Dakota 911) commented that this is why it is so important for Dakota 911 to remain competitive when it comes to recruitment and retention.

Garcia (South St. Paul) referred to the certification requirements and asked if they would be considered prerequisites to becoming a public safety telecommunicator. Anderson (Dakota 911) responded that the training to obtain the certification would be on the job and part of the first few weeks of classroom training already in place. This would be obtained before taking any live calls. Garcia (South St. Paul) asked if current employees would be eligible. Anderson (Dakota 911) clarified that the effort would basically be a review to make sure they met any requirements set, and then check the boxes to make it official.

Staffing Update – Hieserich (Dakota 911) reported that as of the meeting the Dakota 911 public safety telecommunicator gross staffing level was at 50 of the authorized 54 FTEs. Hieserich noted that with six in training and one out on leave, Dakota 911 was operating on a net staffing level of 43, and staff was feeling the pressure of mandatory overtime. Hieserich shared that staff are exploring efficiencies, including schedule changes and other operational practice modifications that may help with this experience. Hieserich added that there were three new hires scheduled to start on May 10th.

Action: None

Other Business

Administrator Wilson (Inver Grove Heights) thanked Dakota 911 and membership for their support through the recent loss of one of their police officers.

Adjourn

Action: Motion by Miller (Eagan) to adjourn. Second by Wilson (Inver Grove Heights).
Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:01pm.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

September 6th, 2023

3:00pm

Dakota 911 Training Room