

**Dakota 911
Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes: November 1st, 2023**

Members Present: Tom Lawell – Apple Valley; Dianne Miller – Eagan; Dan Wietecha – Hastings; Kris Wilson – Inver Grove Heights; Justin Miller – Lakeville; Cheryl Jacobson – Mendota Heights; Logan Martin – Rosemount

Members Absent: Gregg Lindberg – Burnsville; Matt Smith – Dakota County; Lynn Gorski – Farmington; Ryan Garcia – South St. Paul; Nathan Burkett – West St. Paul

Alternates Present: BJ Jungmann

Others Present: Dakota County – David McKnight; Rosemount Police Chief Dahlstrom – Law Enforcement Operations Committee Chair; Heidi Hieserich, Brent Anderson, Jen Hildebrandt – Dakota 911; Julie Stahl – Dakota 911 Fiscal Agent; Dain Olson – Dakota 911 Legal Counsel

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

Acknowledging a new face at the meeting Chair Martin called for introductions. Lakeville Finance Director Julie Stahl was introduced as the new Dakota 911 Fiscal Agent representative.

3. Approve Agenda

Discussion: No discussion.

Action: No motion.

CONSENT AGENDA

4. Consent Agenda – Executive Committee Chair

- a. Approve minutes from the September 6th, 2023 regular meeting
- b. Approve July, August, September 2023 paid claims
- c. Receive Unaudited September 2023 financial report
- d. Receive executed contracts & agreements
- e. Receive operations committee meeting minutes
- f. Recommend approval of 2024 Depository Appointment Resolution
- g. Recommend approval of audit engagement agreement
- h. Approve 2024 Executive Committee meeting schedule
- i. Recommend approval of 2023-2024 General Fund Budget Amendment for ERP Costs
- j. Recommend approval of 2023 General Fund Budget amendments

k. Recommend approval of 2023 budget amendment for NG911 funding received

l. Recommend approval of 2023 capital budget amendment

Discussion:

Hieserich (Dakota 911) referred to Items 4i and 4j and provided added context stating that any identified budget overages were being absorbed by savings in other line items. Hieserich continued stating that personnel expenses were projected to be 10-15% under budget and the estimated year-end fund balance was expected to be 16-17%. Hieserich commented that because policy called for an 8 – 14% fund balance, she would be working with the Dakota 911 fiscal agent to develop some possible options for consideration at upcoming governance meetings.

Action: Motion by Miller (Lakeville) to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Second by Miller (Eagan). Motion passed.

REGULAR AGENDA

Action Items

5. LELS Local 336 Public Safety Telecommunicator Contract

Discussion:

Hieserich (Dakota 911) provided an overview of the LELS Local 336 Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST) contract stating that most of the PSTs would be receiving a 10 – 14% increase over the 2-year term of the contract. Hieserich added that the top of the scale would be seeing an additional 3%. Hieserich reminded the group that, as discussed in the May and September meetings, these unprecedented increases were to move Dakota 911 from the lower 25% metro wage market to the upper 25%. Hieserich cautioned, however, that this was dependent on other PSAP contract negotiations over the next several months. Hieserich noted that she was confident the adjustments would aid in attracting and retaining staff.

Martin (Rosemount) commented that in reflecting on the wage discussions he realized two things. First, the PST industry is very competitive. Second, the PST union came in asking for a substantial increase because they realized Dakota 911 was behind and not keeping pace with other metro area PSAPs. Martin noted that the negotiations team was able to make some great advancements, and both sides came out feeling as though they had won.

Miller (Eagan) asked if there had been any conversation about a goal where Dakota 911 wanted wages to be, among the competition. Hieserich (Dakota 911) confirmed stating that in recent governance meetings staff represented the desire to be in the upper 25% to stay competitive. Hieserich reminded that staffing reports over the past couple months reflected over 90 PST openings in the metro area, and Dakota 911 was competing hard for qualified staff right now.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) reported that a couple other notable changes to the contract included an added holiday for Juneteenth, increased training incentive, health insurance premium improvements, and an increase to PTO roll-over limits.

Miller (Lakeville) referred to the insurance and asked for clarification. Hieserich (Dakota 911) explained that Dakota 911 budgeted for a 12-13% increase because 2022 claims experience had come in well over 100%. Hieserich noted that in June, Dakota 911 staff were pleased to receive increases that were much more favorable than anticipated, which allowed flexibility to revisit premiums. Hieserich further explained that in covering the 6.5% overall increase, Dakota 911 was able to address some plan needs being closely monitored by staff and our broker. Hieserich assured that the adjustments were minor, but went a long way with staff.

Referring to the PTO carry-over, Miller (Lakeville) asked what happened with the PTO when an employee separated employment, and if there was any sort of deferred leave account that housed those funds. Hieserich (Dakota 911) explained that if an employee provided reasonable notice of their departure, their leave was paid out. Hieserich continued stating that the funds were reflected in the budget, but she was uncertain if they were housed in a specific account. Miller (Lakeville) noted that if an employee were to leave mid-year, that could be a large sum of money. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that compensated absences were accounted for and reported in the financial report balance sheet. Of the 57 employees currently on staff the average PTO bank was 200 hours. Hieserich added that it was very rare for staff to receive a large payout when leaving the organization.

Jacobson (Mendota Heights) asked if the desire for an increased PTO carry-over limit was because employees weren't getting their time off. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that was a contributing factor, but it was more to sync with what the supervisors were already receiving.

Action: Motion by Jacobson (Mendota Heights) to recommend approval of the LELS Local 336 Public Safety Telecommunicator 2024-2025 Collective Bargaining Agreement. Second by Miller (Eagan). Motion passed.

6. LELS Local 368 Public Safety Telecommunicator Supervisor

Discussion:

Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that the Public Safety Telecommunicator Supervisor (PSTS) contract negotiations reflected an experience that was very similar to the PST contract. Hieserich clarified that negotiations settled on a 13.5% increase over the life of the 2-year contract.

Action: Motion by Wilson (Inver Grove Heights) to recommend approval of the LELS Local 368 Public Safety Telecommunicator Supervisor 2024-2025 Collective Bargaining Agreement. Second by Jungmann (Burnsville).

Further Discussion:

Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that in conversations with Chair Martin while working through the wage increases, and recognizing past “me too” practices, the compensation structure also recognized general increases to the administrative and technical support team compensation structures. Hieserich clarified that while these teams did not receive the market adjustment the two unions received in September 2023, the 2024 and 2025 compensation structures would reflect increases of 6.5% in 2024 and 3.5% in 2025. Hieserich noted that there may be the need for future discussion about compression and pay equity implications, specifically between the PSTS and Operations Director positions, but that could take place in the compensation study planned for 2025. Hieserich assured that all proposed wage increases were accounted for in the budget.

Motion passed unanimously.

7. Executive Committee Chair and Vice-chair Nominations

Discussion:

Martin (Rosemount) noted that the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) called for the election of a new chair and vice-chair at the first meeting of even-numbered years. Martin added that typically the last meeting of the year included a call for nominations, preceding the formal action. Recognizing he had hit his term limit; Martin opened the floor for nominations.

Nomination by Miller (Lakeville) of Dan Wietecha for appointment to the seat of Executive Committee Chair for the 2024-2025 term. Second by Lawell (Apple Valley). Hearing no other nominations Chair Martin (Rosemount) closed nominations for the Executive Committee Chair appointment and noted that formal appointment would take place at the February, 2024 meeting.

Martin (Rosemount) referred to the appointment to the seat of Executive Committee Vice-chair for the 2024-2025 term and asked if anyone in attendance was interested in that appointment. Hearing no response, a recommendation was made to see if Farmington City Administrator Gorski might be interested. Chair Martin agreed to reach out to her in advance of the February meeting.

Action: No action.

Information Updates/Discussion Items

8. LELS Local 336 Memorandum of Agreement for Part-time Public Safety Telecommunicator Trial

Discussion:

Hieserich (Dakota 911) reported that Dakota 911 was currently staffed at 80% and was experiencing difficulties identifying qualified candidates to fill the PST vacancies. Hieserich continued, stating that of the PSTs who left Dakota 911 employment in 2023, 50% stated that schedule requirements were a contributing factor to their decision to leave.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) referred to the Memorandum of Agreement for Part-time Public Safety Telecommunicator Trial and reported that staff and union representation came together to work through an agreement to implement a trial of part-time Public Safety Telecommunicators (PST) that might help alleviate some of the staffing issues. Hieserich noted that the intent of the MOA was to entice previous Dakota 911 employees, and potentially other PSTs in surrounding organizations to return to the career with a little more flexibility than what the full-time position might offer. Hieserich noted that she was very optimistic and excited about this opportunity that may provide expedited relief to the full-time PST group. Hieserich noted that the MOA was written to require candidates to work a minimum of 14 hours a week, which would satisfy requirements to remain a public employee, and a maximum of 29 hours a week, which would keep insurance eligibility off the table. Hieserich stated that there were concerns about internal status transfers that would further exasperate staffing issues, so the MOA was also written as to not allow internal status transfers at this time. Hieserich noted that staff was ready to push this opportunity out publicly in November but wanted to allow governance an opportunity to consider it and provide feedback before moving forward.

Wilson (Inver Grove Heights) referred to the agreement being a MOA which gave Dakota 911 the ability to run the trial for the 2-year contract term. Hieserich (Dakota 911) confirmed, adding that Dakota 911 had the right to terminate the program at any time.

Lawell (Apple Valley) referred to training and asked how much time that would take. Hieserich (Dakota 911) acknowledged that there would be a learning curve with this being a trial and said that training time would be relative to the experience of the PST coming on board. Hieserich assured that continuing education and certifications required of full-time staff would also be required of the part-time staff.

Martin (Rosemount) recognized the current PST team for their support of this trial program and commented that they were clearly feeling staffing pressures and in need of some relief.

Action: No action. Update only.

9. Executive Director Report

Discussion:

911 phone system migration – Hieserich (Dakota 911) reported that the 911 phone system migration that was delayed due to backup 911 circuit issues was back on track for completion on November 29th.

Microsoft Office 365 – Hieserich (Dakota 911) informed members that all staff had been moved to the Office 365 platform to improve communications among the team.

Administrative/Non-emergency Telephone System Improvements – Hieserich (Dakota 911) referred to the outages reported at the previous meeting and assured that staff was continuing to work on solutions for redundancy improvement solutions.

Logging Recorder – Hieserich (Dakota 911) informed members that the project to replace the current audio logger was scheduled to begin in 2024.

NG911 – Hieserich (Dakota 911) gave an update on the one-time appropriation of state 911 funds accepted through consent earlier in the agenda. She stated there are limitations to how the funds can be used, and that staff identified some priority eligible expenses. The priority would be implementation of a training management platform which would improve training program efficiencies and provide analytics and compliance tracking. Hieserich noted the cost for this platform was \$15,029. The second priority Hieserich identified was cybersecurity prevention and mitigation which would provide vulnerability management, threat detection and response/monitoring. The cost of this was yet to be determined. A third priority was improving operational efficiencies that included alternative options for non-emergency call reporting. Hieserich noted that staff met with a couple of innovative PSAPs outside of Minnesota to learn more about their web-based citizen reporting options for non-emergency service requests. Solutions like this can help to free up the PSTs time to focus on priority calls. Hieserich added that these meetings also included discussions involving potential remote call processing solutions. Hieserich commented that there was lots of excitement about these operational improvements as the PSAPs that implemented them were reporting a significant decrease in their non-emergency call volume. Dakota 911 is working with its CAD consortium partners on the initiative.

Dahlstrom (Law Enforcement Operations Committee Chair) inquired which training platform Dakota 911 was implementing. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that it was Power Ready through PowerDMS, a NEOGOV product.

MESB Cost Study – Hieserich (Dakota 911) informed members that this effort was still in progress with hopes that the result would help the region understand the collective cost of providing public safety communications for PSAPs and radio Systems in the 10-county metropolitan region.

Policy Updates – Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that staff was working to review several internal policies, a report of which would be provided in the first quarter of 2024.

HR Services – Hieserich (Dakota 911) referred to the HR Services agreement with Dakota County and reported that Dakota 911 had received notification that Dakota County would be discontinuing that agreement. Hieserich explained that when needed, Dakota 911 was using Dakota County as a resource for guidance on HR-related actions. Hieserich noted that there was an hourly fee tied to this service and the annual costs were approximately \$300. Hieserich noted that she may be reaching out to member agencies to see if they would be willing to fill that need.

Larson (Inver Grove Heights) referred to the nominal cost and asked if there was a reason for the notice of separation. Hieserich (Dakota 911) responded that Dakota County had several affiliates they provided this service to, and while Dakota 911 needs were nominal, the need was causing high demand on employee relations staff.

McKnight (Dakota County) noted that Dakota County had 8 – 9 JPAs for HR services and Dakota 911 was the least amount of work. However, there was discussion about JPA HR services. McKnight acknowledged the apparent frustrations amongst the group and noted that it sent a bad message, particularly coming on the heels of recent discussions between the County and member cities.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that the County decision to sever these JPAs for HR services relations was not being voted on by the County Board until November but notice of this being the likely outcome was given.

Miller (Lakeville) noted that the other organizations likely paid the same amount as Dakota 911 and asked if the County was considering floating staff. McKnight (Dakota County) speculated that the county was not getting rich on this effort and that it was more of a workload capacity issue.

Lawell (Apple Valley) asked if the County played a role in labor relations or if Dakota 911 was tied to the County compensation system. Hieserich (Dakota 911) responded that Dakota County did not play a role in labor relations and that Dakota 911 was not tied to the County compensation system.

Martin (Rosemount) inquired as to what the report would be at the upcoming Dakota 911 Board meeting as he had concerns this may cause added frustration to an already complex conversation. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that she did plan on providing an update. McKnight (Dakota County) agreed that it should be mentioned.

Staff Training – Hieserich (Dakota 911) reported that staff recently had fall training. Hieserich thanked Burnsville Fire Department for providing the training, noting that it was well-received. Hieserich added that in the training she and Operations Director Anderson had the pleasure of issuing 22 awards of merit to their team. Hieserich stated that this recognition effort would continue to be part of all spring and fall training moving forward.

Action: No action.

10. Dakota County Updates

Discussion:

Martin (Rosemount) referred to a recent email that members received regarding a change of course in the Dakota County proposal for townships to join the Dakota 911 consortium and asked McKnight to provide some context.

McKnight (Dakota County) recapped how the Dakota County Board of Commissioners had discussed at their October meeting, tying the costs for the addition of 3 deputies to Dakota 911. McKnight noted that while he wasn't certain how that got tied together, he did know the roll-out did not go as intended. McKnight stated that the County was no longer requesting consideration to add township and small cities representation on the Dakota 911 Board and would be pursuing a special service taxing district through the legislature. McKnight acknowledged the strain on relationships between the county and member cities.

Martin (Rosemount) referred to the relationship strain and commented that Slavik's mentioning that he would hold firm to township and small cities on the Dakota 911 JPA as the only way for the county to take over 100% of fixed costs was what led to the frustration. McKnight (Dakota County) acknowledged there were issues between the cities and the County, and those issues needed to be addressed to repair relationships. Martin (Rosemount) noted that there had been conversations about activating a committee to represent Dakota 911 stakeholders. Hieserich (Dakota 911) reminded members that the county was paying 50% of fixed costs in 2024 and the JPA called out that the county would be evaluating the opportunity for increased fixed cost contributions for 2025 and beyond. Hieserich reminded that the 2025 Dakota 911 budget season was tight and started in January, so it was imperative these conversations started sooner than later.

Lawell (Apple Valley) clarified that the special taxing district was to help pay for the addition of the 3 deputies. McKnight (Dakota County) clarified that the special taxing district was to address the townships need to help pay for costs that may include increased deputies along the way. Lawell (Apple Valley) noted that regardless of how that worked out, it should be between the County and townships with no impact to governance of Dakota 911. Lawell suggested the group originally tasked with representing Dakota 911 in county fixed cost contributions continue that effort. Martin (Rosemount) noted that the group was Jeff Weisensel, Mike Slavik, Justin Miller, and himself. Group consensus noted that there should also be county administrative representation on that committee. County representative who has time to participate. McKnight will note.

Action: No action.

OTHER BUSINESS

Lawell (Apple Valley) referred to the Operations Committees' minutes that were sent out earlier in the week and asked Director Hieserich to expand on the reference to the medical emergency story where staff was able to ping a victim's phone.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) explained when someone calls 911 today from a mobile device, the location information sent with the 911 call is not always accurate as it uses triangulation and approximation based off cell towers. Hieserich noted that earlier in the year Dakota 911 began using a next generation mapping tool called Radius Mapping by RapidDeploy, a product capable of providing precise location information based on GIS information from the location of the device. Hieserich continued stating that in this story, a lady called 911 to report that her brother had called her, incoherent and unable to tell her where he was. Using the Radius tool, the public safety telecommunicator was able to text a link to the brother's phone to request his exact location. He was able to click on the link which allowed Radius to identify his location, only seconds before he passed out. Responders found him in a large park in Egan and confirmed he was having a medical emergency. Hieserich noted that the Radius mapping platform is a tool that is available through and paid for by the state. Hieserich noted that RapidDeploy was also coming out with a responder-specific platform called RapidLightning that supports sharing image and video data with responders in the field. Hieserich noted that Dakota 911 hosted RapidLightning presentations as part of the recent Operations Committee meetings to gather feedback and gauge interest from responders. Initial feedback from the operations group identified interest, but also the need for some platform improvements. Hieserich explained that the ability to receive image and video data in the PSAP is currently available, but this is new territory and Dakota 911 is taking a cautious approach and exploring use cases, as there are significant policy and procedure considerations.

ADJOURN

Action: Motion by Miller (Egan) to adjourn. Second by Jacobson (Mendota Heights). Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 3:57pm.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING
February 7th 2024
3:00pm
Dakota 911 Training Room