

**Dakota 911  
Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes: May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024**

**Members Present:** John Bergman – Apple Valley; Cara Schulz – Burnsville; Mike Slavik – Dakota County; Mike Supina – Eagan; Nick Lien – Farmington; John Bermel – Lakeville; Joel Paper – Mendota Heights; Jeff Weisensel – Rosemount; Lori Hansen – South St. Paul; Pat Armon – West St. Paul

**Members Absent:** Jen Fox – Hastings; John Murphy – Inver Grove Heights

**Alternates Present:**

**Others Present:** Dan Wietecha, Lynn Gorski – Executive Committee; Heidi Hieserich, Brent Anderson, Jen Hildebrandt – Dakota 911; Laura Miller – Dakota 911 Fiscal Agent; Dain Olson – Dakota 911 Legal Counsel

**1. Call to Order**

Recognizing a quorum Chair Weisensel (Rosemount) called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Roll Call**

X	Apple Valley	John Bergman	Clint Hooppaw
	Burnsville	Cara Schulz	Dan Gustafson
X	Dakota County	Mike Slavik	Bill Droste
X	Eagan	Mike Supina	Gary Hansen
X	Farmington	Nick Lien	Steve Wilson
	Hastings	Jen Fox	Mary Fasbender
	Inver Grove Heights	John Murphy	
X	Lakeville	John Bermel	Dan Wolter
X	Mendota Heights	Joel Paper	Stephanie Levine
X	Rosemount	Jeff Weisensel	Paul Theisen
X	South St. Paul	Lori Hansen	Todd Podgorski
X	West St. Paul	Pat Armon	Julie Eastman

**4. Approve Agenda**

**Discussion:** No discussion.

**Action:** Motion by Weisensel (Rosemount) to approve the agenda. Second by Supina (Eagan). Motion approved.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**5. Consent Agenda – Board of Directors Chair**

- a. **Approve minutes from the February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, regular meeting.**
- b. **Adopt and ratify January, February and March 2024 paid claims.**
- c. **Receive First Quarter 2024 Unaudited Financial Report**
- d. **Receive and approve 2023 Audited Financial Report**
- e. **Consider Monetary Limit**

**Discussion:** No discussion.

**Action:** Motion by Weisensel (Rosemount) to approve the consent agenda. Second by Bermel (Lakeville).

Aye	Apple Valley
	Burnsville
Aye	Dakota County
Aye	Eagan
Aye	Farmington
	Hastings
	Inver Grove Heights
Aye	Lakeville
Aye	Mendota Heights
Aye	Rosemount
Aye	South St. Paul
Aye	West St. Paul

Motion passed.

Director Schulz (Burnsville) arrived.

**REGULAR AGENDA**

***Action Items***

**6. 2025 Operating & Capital Budget**

**a. Fixed Costs Workgroup Report**

**Discussion:**

Hieserich (Dakota 911) acknowledged that in 2023 membership discussions about increased Dakota County contributions resurfaced with direction to reconvene the workgroup tasked with identifying fixed costs. Hieserich reminded that language in the Joint Powers Agreement states that in 2025 the county would consider increasing its contribution toward Dakota 911 fixed costs. Hieserich noted that the workgroup, made up of Directors Jeff Weisensel and Mike Slavik, Executive Committee members Logan Martin, Justin Miller and Matt Smith, Dakota 911 Director Hieserich and Dakota 911 Fiscal agent representatives Julie Stahl and Laura Miller, met in March and determined that 100% of the capital budget expenses were considered fixed costs. In addition to discussing numerous funding scenarios, the workgroup considered the benefit of providing an operational update to the County Board. Hieserich confirmed that staff hosted the County Board for an operational presentation and tour in early April.

Hieserich noted that the event was well-attended and had great conversation. Hieserich added that she attended the County Board work session on May 7<sup>th</sup> to support the funding discussion where she was able to continue to answer any questions about Dakota 911. Hieserich commented, however, that the majority of the questions were related to an operational study that had taken place in 2018. Hieserich clarified that there were actually two studies administered in 2018. The first was by an outside firm by the name of Winbourne, and the second was by Dakota County Office of Performance and Analysis (OPA). Hieserich commented that at the May 7<sup>th</sup> work session she was requested to prepare a report detailing operational efforts and actions that had been taken since the 2018 study. Hieserich noted that she would be working to prepare that report over the next few weeks.

Bergman (Apple Valley) asked if the demeanor of the County Board had changed at all after the two recent interactions. Slavik (Dakota County) stated that the tour was very helpful, and he didn't think the demeanor was ever completely unwilling to consider increased contributions. Slavik explained that there were some questions about progress since the study, which is what Director Hieserich was going to continue to work on. Slavik further explained that the County Board wanted to do its due diligence in evaluating how Dakota County contributions across all projects county-wide compared to other Counties. Slavik noted that all seven members of the County Board were amenable to continuing conversations about increased contributions toward Dakota 911 funding. However, Dakota 911 funding was just one piece of a much larger puzzle. Slavik reported that the County budget was starting earlier than ever this year and that increased Dakota 911 funding would be one piece of the overall evaluation and budget prioritization effort. Slavik noted that the desire was to have the county budget close to finalized in September. Slavik then referred to communications among the varying governmental bodies and encouraged membership to ensure their organizations shared communications and information with the necessary officials to ensure everyone had the same information.

Weisensel (Rosemount) asked if there was any staff concern related to the information the County was digging into. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that the questions asked by County representation focused more on operations than governance. Hieserich commented that one concern was related to standardization, and how Dakota 911 may be customizing operations too much to individual member agencies. Hieserich acknowledged that the technology in place at Dakota 911 afforded members quite a bit of customization, which was important. Hieserich continued that she believed Dakota 911 operations were appropriately standardized, and that staff and the operations committees were not expressing anything otherwise. Slavik (Dakota County) agreed that most of the questions were related to the 2018 study and standardization. Slavik noted that the study seemed to represent that some of the internal operational improvements recommended would be very spendy, which was not necessarily the case.

Weisensel (Rosemount) reminded members that when the initial report came out, many of the issues were already being resolved. Slavik (Dakota County) agreed.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) assured that she would comb through the 2018 studies and prepare a report. Hieserich cautioned that some of the items in the report, like performance consistencies, were ever- evolving. Hieserich added that one item in the report identified overloading of staff in certain positions, which was not an immediate fix. Hieserich reminded the group that recent staffing additions and responsibility realignments would address some of the issues identified in the report. Hieserich noted that she did not think the organization would have a problem demonstrating that it was meeting the recommendations of the study.

Wietecha (Executive Committee Chair) asked if this 2018 studies report request made by the County Board was the last of the questions that needed to be satisfied in the effort toward increased contributions. Slavik (Dakota County) reminded that there was another set of questions related to streamlining of governance. Slavik noted that he and Director Weisensel sat on that workgroup, and it was the belief of the group that the request had been satisfied a couple years ago already. Slavik reminded that the reality was that the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) still said the County would “consider” increased contributions, and that it was not a slam dunk regardless of satisfaction of the information requests. Slavik reiterated that the Board was trying to figure out where increased funding of Dakota 911 fit in with all the other budgetary considerations and constraints. Slavik stated that he didn’t believe the spectrum of questions was moving.

## **b. Budget**

### **Discussion:**

Hieserich (Dakota 911) recapped efforts leading up to the 2025 budget recommendation stating that the preliminary budget was developed by staff and the fiscal agent, and then reviewed by a budget review workgroup made up of members of the Executive Committee before being brought to the Executive Committee in April, and ultimately the Board of Directors. Hieserich thanked members of the budget work group, including Executive Committee members Dan Wietecha, Lynn Gorski, Dianne Miller, Cheryl Jacobson, and fiscal agent representatives Julie Stahl and Laura Miller for their guidance and support through the 2025 budget preparation effort. Hieserich then presented an overview of the 2025 operating and capital budget.

Supina (Eagan) referred to the one-time \$50,000 facility and space needs planning expense and inquired how frequently that would need to be done. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that in 17 years in operation, there had never been a facility and space needs study done. Hieserich speculated that the plan would look out ten years, but that there were some modifications that would need to be made in the 3 to 5-year range. Hieserich provided one example, stating that the administrative and support staff space was maxed out. Hieserich stated that there were some areas of the facility that were currently being utilized by the County, and that could be considered for expansion, but a professional study would identify the most effective and efficient plan.

Paper (Mendota Heights) referred to the \$60,000 anticipated cost for Cybersecurity. Paper noted that cybersecurity seemed to be a foremost concern. Paper asked where funding would come from, and if \$60,000 was enough. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that Next Generation 911 appropriations could be used to help fund this expense. Hieserich agreed that cybersecurity was a top concern for an organization that was at the heart of public safety. Hieserich explained that the \$60,000 would be enough for an assessment and program support to identify vulnerabilities and needs. Hieserich speculated that ongoing program support could be in the range of \$40,000 a year , along with the cost of an assessment every couple of years. Lien (Farmington) asked if Dakota 911 staffed for cybersecurity. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that there was no current staffing for this item and that Dakota 911 would rely on contracted support at this time. Hieserich noted that Dakota 911 also relied on the partnership with LOGIS to provide IT systems support, and clarified that a professional study would help determine and recommend changes for improvement. .

Weisensel (Rosemount) asked if the budget allowed anything for Artificial Intelligence (AI) efforts. Hieserich (Dakota 911) stated that Next Generation 911 funding appropriations would be used to help fund AI initiatives. Hieserich noted that in 2025 there would be an initiative to implement a web-based citizen reporting portal which, although not AI itself, would allow for the next level of a possible AI-assisted non-emergency reporting portal. Hieserich noted that staff was monitoring the industry and keeping an eye on innovative PSAPs across the country. Hieserich noted that one of the PSAPs was reporting a 40% reduction in non-emergency calls. Armon (West St. Paul) expressed the importance of doing it right. Hieserich agreed stating Dakota 911 needed to ensure that callers who wanted to speak to a person weren't buried in AI technology.

Hieserich noted that it really went back to using the highly trained and qualified staff at Dakota 911 to support emergency activity and exploring solutions that would let AI assist with the non-emergency routine stuff. Hieserich continued, stating that AI could also be used to help monitor the quality of service, possibly as soon as 2024 with the audio logger procurement. Lien (Farmington) inquired if there was an opportunity for AI call processing at the state level. Lien explained that if there are commonalities between counties, maybe those calls could be handled at a higher level. Hieserich (Dakota 911) acknowledged that could always be considered, but right now the State of Minnesota was focused on other priorities including a statewide data sharing initiative between Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) and NG911 system development. Hieserich noted that there had been some leadership changes at the state that have significantly slowed project efforts.

Armon (West St. Paul) referred to member fees and noted that West St. Paul member fees were significantly higher than a comparative city. Armon requested a recap of how member fees were calculated. Hieserich (Dakota 911) reminded governance that the member fee funding formula was based on the jurisdictions 3-year Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) events average.

Supina (Eagan) noted that the member percentage allocations on the presentation differed from the allocations in the agenda packet. Miller (Fiscal Agent) noted that the allocation percentages depicted on page 56 of the packet were for 2024, but the percentages displayed in the presentation were correct. Miller clarified that aside from the percentages displayed, all the numbers were correct and members would see the correct information on page 74 of the packet.

Weisensel (Rosemount) referred to the 2026 – 2027 member fees and reminded that those numbers were projections based on current activity percentages. Hieserich (Dakota 911) confirmed, stating that increases would adjust based on the funding formula.

Slavik (Dakota County) referred to personnel cost and suggested that when the time comes for benefits renewal, the organization consider other pools. Slavik then referred to community funding and the possibility of cities and the county banding together as a competitive congressional district for bigger ticket items. Slavik noted that with the same representative in congress, this may be an opportunity worth exploring. Weisensel (Rosemount) asked if Dakota 911 had contact information for the local house representative. Hieserich (Dakota 911) responded that she did not. Weisensel (Rosemount) noted that he would initiate an introductory email. Slavik referred to capital expenses and asked if debt service was considered. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that at the recommendation of the fiscal agent, funding was set up as pay as you go cash flow, avoiding debt as much as possible. Hieserich clarified that the \$3,000,000 CAD procurement was broken down over a 10-year payment plan. Slavik (Dakota County) acknowledged and commented that he supported paying cash for anything that would be 5 years or less, and it was just a question. Slavik thanked the staff, the fiscal agent and members of the budget work group for their efforts on the 2025 budget process.

**Action:** Motion by Bergman (Apple Valley) to approve the 2025 Operating & Capital Budget as presented. Second by Hansen (South St. Paul).

Member	Aye	Nay
Apple Valley	9.83%	
Burnsville	14.26%	
Dakota County	6.45%	
Eagan	15.61%	
Farmington	3.96%	
Hastings	NA	
Inver Grove Heights	NA	
Lakeville	11.12%	
Mendota Heights	3.07%	
Rosemount	4.94%	
South St. Paul	6.80%	
West St. Paul	7.44%	

Total	83.48%	0%
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**Motion passed.**

### ***Information Updates/Discussion Items***

#### **7. Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (MESB) Cost Study Report**

##### **Discussion:**

Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that the Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (MESB) cost study report was provided in the packet for informational purposes. Hieserich reminded that the report was an effort to identify what emergency communications costs were at a regional level. Hieserich noted that there were some common themes among centers who responded, including staffing struggles, personnel costs, training costs etc. Hieserich reiterated that the Dakota 911 vacancy rate average of 20% over the past five years was right on par with similar PSAPs. Hieserich referred to training costs and acknowledged that most of those costs were related to new service training. Hieserich referred to technology solutions and affirmed that Dakota 911 was very open to possible shared technology solutions and was talking with neighboring centers about possible opportunities.

Weisensel (Rosemount) referred to the 2 PSAPs that weren't included in the study. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that she was unable to obtain information on which centers they were, so depending on their size the results could be skewed.

Bermel (Lakeville) noted that he appreciated investigating possible cost savings but also noted that Dakota 911 members needed the ability to keep as much in-house as possible. Bermel noted "the more you save the less control you have over content". Hieserich (Dakota 911) assured that while partnerships are very important, Dakota 911 did not want to lose that level of control.

Supina (Eagan) referred to new hire training costs and asked if Dakota 911 experienced a big drop-off in the first year. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that there was so much that went into keeping retention rates where they needed to be. Hieserich confirmed that a good portion of loss was in the first year, but Dakota 911 also lost employees to other disciplines at the 2 to 3-year mark. Hieserich noted that Dakota 911 needed to stay competitive in wages and benefits and continue to consider strategies that ensured a careful balance of employee engagement and growth, and compensation to ensure comparable benefits to other public safety partners.

**Action:** No action. Update only.

#### **8. Executive Director Report**

##### **Discussion:**

##### **911 Outage & System Report – February 8<sup>th</sup>**

Hieserich (Dakota 911) informed members that on February 8<sup>th</sup>, Dakota 911 experienced the complete loss of emergency and administrative phones as the result of

a weather event in another state. Hieserich explained how multiple points of failure went into this event involving the call handling provider (Motorola) and the State of Minnesota 911 network provider (Lumen).

Hieserich informed members that after extensive research and meetings with top officials at Motorola and the State of Minnesota, Dakota 911 had a good understanding of contributing factors for the failure. Hieserich noted that the issues were much bigger than Dakota 911 and went back to the State of Minnesota and its Next Generation 911 network provider. Hieserich assured that she was having ongoing communications with the Emergency Communications Network (ECN), MN Information Technology (MNIT), Motorola, and the Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (MESB) to address the network issues between Motorola and Lumen.

Weisensel (Rosemount) referred to the 4 centers impacted by the outage on February 8<sup>th</sup> and asked if it was known why these centers were the only ones. Hieserich (Dakota 911) stated that she was unable to answer that yet given the complexity of the networking. Hieserich reiterated that Dakota 911 and the other three centers, Martin County, Murray County and LeSueur County, were 4 of 41 of the centers on the MN hosted Motorola cloud solution approved by the state. Hieserich added that Dakota 911 was by far the largest center on the platform, and the bottom line was that the platform was flawed. Hieserich assured that she was persistent in working through the issues and the State of Minnesota to resolve issues with their network provider.

Armon (West St. Paul) inquired if there was any potential recourse on the service providers. Hieserich (Dakota 911) commented that she wasn't certain yet, but she was investigating it. Hieserich acknowledged that while Motorola had made some technology improvements since the 2/8 outage, Motorola did not own the circuits. Hieserich clarified that the circuits were provided by Lumen partnership, the State's network provider. Hieserich stated that the recourse right now was to give a 30-day notice to conduct failover testing, and if that wasn't satisfied, Dakota 911 would explore other solutions.

Bergman (Apple Valley) asked if it was viable to get a hold of federal and state representatives and bring their attention to the matter. Hieserich (Dakota 911) agreed that it may be helpful. Hieserich noted that the FCC may also be a resource to ensure progress. Hieserich reported that the 911 Program Manager and the 911 Program Director, who were both strong advocates for the 911 issues, had recently separated from the State of Minnesota. Hieserich commented that these losses were troubling and could delay the State of Minnesota effort to administer a third-party independent review of the outage. Hieserich noted that she had not yet received any report from the State of Minnesota.

Weisensel (Rosemount) suggested local legislators be contacted and asked to put pressure on the State. Hieserich (Dakota 911) stated that while there had been some consistent improvement, the service and system was not where it needed to be. Weisensel (Rosemount) asked if any of the directors were opposed to having Director



Hieserich reach out to local legislators. Bermel (Lakeville) noted that he supported reaching out to legislators and suggested the size of the Dakota 911 PSAP may help to put pressure on the State. Bergman (Apple Valley) added that the FAA was prevalent in aviation, and this was a safety issue.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that with the support of membership she would escalate this effort by reaching out to legislation with a request for support in putting pressure on the State. Hieserich added that working with Motorola on this effort has been tough but acknowledged that Motorola's hands were tied by the Lumen/State of Minnesota ownership of the circuits. Hieserich continued, stating that the Motorola platform was solid, but the hosted solution was maybe not the right fit for Dakota 911. Hieserich agreed to provide updates prior to the next governance meeting. Hieserich noted that the February 8<sup>th</sup> outage also resulted in some internal operational lessons learned, which included:

1. Dakota 911 technology risks – Having 911 and administrative lines on the same call handling platform proved problematic. Staff are actively working on possible solutions that will help prevent a full-scale failure of both emergency and non-emergency lines going forward. There may be costs associated with this, but options are still being considered.
2. Contingency plans – Dakota 911 contingency plans are outdated and lack clear direction for staff. While this is already in progress as a strategic goal for 2024, the experience emphasized the need for improvements, which included working with the Dakota 911 backup center, Ramsey County on a transition plan.
3. Public alert and warning notifications – The State of MN is scheduled to provide in-house integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) training later in the week. The system is challenging for 911 centers to navigate and recent experiences at other centers will help Dakota 911 to be more prepared for in-the-moment situations.
4. Stakeholder notification – Timely operational notifications were made, and stakeholder notifications were made as quickly as possible (approximately 45 minutes after the event), but there were gaps. Staff have already updated notification lists to include chiefs and emergency preparedness partners.

Hieserich reiterated that this effort was being given top priority and thanked membership for their support in Dakota 911 engaging legislators.

### **Legislative Updates –**

Hieserich (Dakota 911) referred to the effort to implement public safety telecommunicator certification requirements and noted that it was unlikely to pass due to opposition from the Sheriff's Association. Hieserich explained that the objection was related to the structure of the governing board that would oversee the certification.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) referred to the effort to move public safety telecommunicators out of the coordinated PERA fund and join them with Corrections. Hieserich noted that

the bill was met with optimism and the next step was for PERA to conduct an actuary study. Hieserich noted that this bill will likely come back in 2025.

**Goals & Project Status Update –**

Hieserich (Dakota 911) provided a quarterly update on 2024 projects and goals.

**Action:** No action. Update only.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Armon (West St. Paul) referred to the malicious calling that occurred earlier in the year and asked if there was any updated on that. Hieserich (Dakota 911) reported that law enforcement was able to identify the source, who was being investigated for abuse of the 911 system. Hieserich assured that the experience was not an attack that impacted the environment, and it was not related to the outage. Hieserich stated that the experience was still being investigated.

**ADJOURN**

**Action:** Motion by Bermel (Lakeville) to adjourn. Second by Slavik (Dakota County). Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:21am.

**Next Regular Meeting:  
September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
8:00am  
Dakota 911 Training Room  
2860 160<sup>th</sup> Street W, Rosemount, MN 55068**

  
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Jeffery D. Weisensel, Board of Directors Chair

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09/19/2024  
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Heidi Hieserich, Executive Director

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