

**Dakota 911
Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes: September 4th, 2024**

Members Present: Tom Lawell – Apple Valley; Heidi Welsch – Dakota County; Dianne Miller – Eagan; Lynn Gorski – Farmington; Dan Wietecha – Hastings; Kris Wilson – Inver Grove Heights; Justin Miller – Lakeville; Cheryl Jacobson – Mendota Heights; Logan Martin – Rosemount; Ryan Garcia – South St. Paul;

Members Absent: Gregg Lindberg – Burnsville; Nathan Burkett – West St. Paul

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

Others Present: Apple Valley Fire Chief Matt Nelson – Fire/EMS Operations Subcommittee Chair; Rosemount Police Chief Dahlstrom – Law Enforcement Operations Sub-Committee Chair; Julie Stahl – Dakota 911 Fiscal Agent; Dain Olson – Dakota 911 Legal Counsel; Heidi Hieserich, Brent Anderson, Jen Hildebrandt – Dakota 911

1. Call to Order

Recognizing a quorum, Chair Wietecha (Hastings) called the meeting to order at 3:01 pm.

2. Roll Call

3. Approve Agenda

Discussion: No discussion.

Action: Motion by Martin (Rosemount) to approve the agenda. Second by Gorski (Farmington). Motion passed.

CONSENT AGENDA

4. Consent Agenda – Executive Committee Chair

- a. Approve minutes from the April 24th, 2024, regular meeting
- b. Approve April, May, June 2024 paid claims
- c. Receive Q2 2024 unaudited financial report
- d. Receive executed contracts
- e. Receive operations committee meeting minutes

Discussion: No discussion.

Action: Motion by Miller (Lakeville) to approve the consent agenda as presented. Second by Martin (Rosemount).

Further Discussion: Wietecha (Hastings) referred to item 4d and inquired why there were two vendors providing mental health services. Hieserich (Dakota 911) informed members that Dakota 911 had a standing annual contract with Ellie Family Services for mental health check-ups. Hieserich explained that over the couple of years this contract

with in place, staff formed relationships with Ellie Family Services representative, some of whom had branched off into a new company called Wellness That Fits. Hieserich noted that because the costs associated are on an “as needed” basis, Dakota 911 felt it important to establish this alternate option. Wilson (Inver Grove Heights) and Sturgeon (West St. Paull) both noted that did the same thing for the same reasons.

Motion passed.

REGULAR AGENDA

Action Items

5. Executive Director Evaluation Committee Formation

Discussion:

Hieserich (Dakota 911) informed members that it was time to start the 2024 executive director evaluation process. Hieserich recapped the timeline, and noted that the process was typically handled by a workgroup made up of the Chair and Vice-chair of the Executive Committee, the Chairs of the Operations Sub-committees, and one additional Executive Committee volunteer. Hieserich noted that the Executive Committee could expect a request in coming days soliciting feedback specific to a number of experiences. Hieserich added that members would be tasked with engaging their agency stakeholders and developing one response. Hieserich acknowledged that the method of providing the feedback was still being discussed, but had been previously via hard copy or Survey Monkey. Hieserich noted that all feedback received would be compiled and presented to the workgroup who would meet with the executive director to develop and discuss the results and ultimately provide a report and recommendation to governance. Hieserich noted that she was currently working with the Committee chair to identify ways to improve the process, and hopefully receive more responses than had been received in the 2023 review effort.

Wietecha (Hastings) noted that the 2023 effort only received responses from 7 of the 12 agencies. Wietecha reminded members that Dakota 911 represented all members and the intent was to receive feedback from all 12 agencies. Wietecha acknowledged that some of the questions proved difficult for members to respond to as they didn't work with the executive director in that capacity. Wietecha reiterated that he and the executive director would work to improve that experience.

Gorski (Farmington) noted that she agreed with changing the format in some way to ensure the experience and information was more conducive to the people the feedback is being requested of.

Wilson (Inver Grove Heights) inquired if the organization had considered a 360 evaluations, engaging the people who work with the director on a daily basis. Wilson clarified that it maybe didn't need to be done annually, but giving those people the opportunity to provide input would be valuable. Hieserich (Dakota 911) commented that she was open to all options, including surveying the operations committees to ensure Dakota 911 is meeting their needs. Hieserich added that staff was currently working to

administer an employee engagement survey that could also be a piece of the evaluation. Hieserich noted, however, that there was a need to help craft the right questions. Garcia (South St. Paul) volunteered to participate on the executive director performance evaluation workgroup.

Action: Motion by Lawell (Apple Valley) to appoint Ryan Garcia to the 2024 executive director performance evaluation workgroup. Second by Miller (Eagan). Motion passed.

Information Updates/Discussion Items

6. 911 System Updates

Discussion:

Hieserich (Dakota 911) referred to the February massive Dakota 911 phone outage that lasted many hours. Hieserich stated that during the outage, there were many points of failure with the 911 network and call handling equipment provider. Hieserich noted that an update in June, summarized the event and identified improvements that were in the works. Hieserich noted that since that update, call handling equipment failover improvements and equipment adjustments to minimize service impact had been made, and were proven to be working. Hieserich acknowledged that there were some continuing issues related to the primary 911 fiber circuit network, and there were still instances where the system would experience small glitches when the system failover went to the backup. Hieserich assured that Dakota 911 was working with the State to build a new fiber connection that would shorten call delivery paths and eliminate legacy T1 copper lines. Hieserich noted that the cost for this build would be covered by the State of Minnesota, and this was likely the most important fix in the works. Hieserich continued stating staff was working closely with state leadership to assess gaps and risks, and address contractual changes needed between the State and their 911 provider. Hieserich stated that while the state originally committed to a third party independent evaluation of the February outage, focus shifted to looking at it from a more holistic systems point of view. Hieserich stated that local survivability for the PSAP equipment to maintain console connectivity for non-emergency lines was also in the works. Hieserich noted that in the event there was another loss of connectivity with the Motorola system, Dakota 911 could at least maintain connectivity for the non-emergency lines. Hieserich noted that this network design flaw was a miss and efforts continued to correct it.

Action: No action. Report only.

7. County Fixed Cost Contributions

Discussion:

Hieserich (Dakota 911) reminded members that conversations about the County picking up an increased percentage of fixed costs resurfaced late 2023. Hieserich continued, stating that a workgroup was created in early 2024, and met in March to start formulating various funding scenarios for presentation to the County. Hieserich stated that after providing three scenarios, then County Administrator Matt Smith presented them to the Board of Commissioners in May. Hieserich noted that she was in

attendance at the meeting, as a resource for any questions, which focused particularly on the two operational assessments done in 2018 (Winbourne) and 2019 (County OPA). Hieserich noted that in response to the questions, she prepared a status report update, which was shared with the chairs of the Dakota 911 Board of Directors and Executive Committee before sending back to the County. Hieserich stated that the next step would be for her to attend a County Board work session meeting on September 10th, when she could hopefully satisfy all the questions. Hieserich commented that the consortium had satisfied all the asks from the County in consideration of increased contributions toward fixed costs

Recognizing that Matt Smith was no longer the County Administrator, and that his successor Heidi Welsch was present, Miller (Lakeville) suggested introductions. After making introductions, Welsch (Dakota County) commented that she had the sense this request for increased contributions to Dakota 911 fixed costs would be met with a relative warm reception. Welsch acknowledged that she was on most member agency calendars in a County attempt to seek increased collaboration. Welsch clarified that this discussion one just one piece of the collaboration effort, along with roads, elections and other topics.

Martin (Rosemount) asked what the County Board was asking for at the upcoming meeting that Executive Director Hieserich was attending. Hieserich (Dakota 911) explained that she was asked to attend the meeting to represent the status report, and any questions that may come out of the report. Hieserich noted that the funding discussion would continue from there. Hieserich stated that in addition to questions on the report, she was anticipating questions about the funding scenarios, so the Dakota 911 Fiscal Agent would also be in remote attendance.

Welsh (Dakota County) commented that the County Board would be considering taking on all fixed costs, some of which lived in the capital budget and some of which lived on the operating budget.

Wietecha (Hastings) asked is the Executive Director would be able to send an update on how the meeting went sooner than the next governance meetings in November.

Hieserich (Dakota 911) confirmed, stating she would work to provide a report by the end of the workgroup meeting week.

Action: No action. Report only.

8. Dakota 911 Project and Goals Update

Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that she provided a narrative on the status of Dakota 911 projects and goals so she was only going to focus on a couple this meeting. Hieserich reiterated that she was happy to discuss any project or goal individually if members of the group desired it.

Goal 2 - Improve Operational Efficiency and Emergency Response. Hieserich (Dakota 911) stated that after a soft-launch with member police department reception staff, and discussion at the operations sub-committees, staff was ready to implement a citizen web-based reporting capability. Hieserich noted that there had been great feedback from users and staff, stating it would make their roles much smoother. Hieserich noted that the plan was to add the capability on the Dakota 911 website within the next week,

and also promote it on social media. Hieserich acknowledged that the effort would be a slow roll-out, and once comfortable, the Dakota 911 team would do one-on-one follow-up with member agencies. Hieserich noted that some member agencies expressed concern that they already have an online reporting product, and that this may cause confusion. Hieserich assured that business rules could be implemented into this product to ensure clarity.

Martin (Rosemount) asked what the product was. Hieserich (Dakota 911) responded that the product was called SPARK, and it was something that caught staff's attention at a conference where a PSAP in Colorado was promoting it after having experienced up to a 40% reduction in non-emergency calls by incorporating it along with some other initiatives. Hieserich explained this was just one opportunity staff had identified in discussing operational efficiencies. Hieserich noted that this product fed directly into CAD, allowed for direct text conversation between the reporting party and CAD, and offered a built-in language translation tool which staff was very excited about. Hieserich continued, stating that this was the first step in a larger effort toward possible use of artificial intelligence. Garcia (South St. Paul) asked if there was an integration that could be used with local partners who already had non-emergency reporting tools in place. Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that the project offered robust workaround fixes that could be tailored to the agency's desired experience.

Action: No action. Update only.

9. Executive Director Report

PST Staffing – Hieserich (Dakota 911) reported that the PST gross staffing level was at 52 FTEs. Acknowledging there were 9 in training and 2 on leave, Hieserich clarified that the net staffing was at 41. Hieserich stated that the YTD average was coming in at 52 FTEs, close to the goal of 53. Hieserich cautioned however that there is always a risk of losing new hires during training.

Hieserich referred to the trial part-time positions and stated that there were 4 part-time PSTs who were covering hours equivalent to 1.5 full-time position. Hieserich noted that the 4 part-time employees were all previous Dakota 911 employees.

Hieserich acknowledged that it had been a rough year for the supervisory team. Hieserich explained that 7 of the 9-member supervisory team were operationally focused. Hieserich continued explaining that three of those 7 were on leave and one was just recently hired. Miller (Lakeville) asked what the leaves were for. Hieserich (Dakota 911) explained that 2 of them were on long term military assignments and one was on intermittent leave working an alternate work assignment pending an upcoming retirement.

State/ECN Updates – Hieserich (Dakota 911) reminded that late in 2023 the metro area PSAPs put a regional CAD to CAD solution discussion on hold, pending the outcome of a statewide data sharing initiative that the State/ECN was considering funding. Unfortunately, ECN lost their director and 911 program manager in early 2024 so the initiative was stalled. Hieserich noted that with the leadership changes, the data sharing

initiative was derailed and focus changed to other efforts, like Next Gen Mapping. Hieserich stated that the State just recently awarded to contracts for Next Gen Mapping, and with those contract options came optional add-ons including interoperability and data sharing. Hieserich explained that while the options were available for procurement to PSAPs on the State contract, it was not yet determined if the State would fund it. Hieserich noted that she is the metro region representative who would be participating in the information gathering sessions and providing feedback to the State as it gauges interest in consideration of funding. Hieserich continued, stating that if this initiative didn't go anywhere, the metro region was already considering other options for data sharing in the region.

Lawell (Apple Valley) asked if the delay was related to staffing issues at the state level, and if member agencies could help to motivate that effort. Hieserich (Dakota 911) responded that her understanding was that it was lack of leadership. Hieserich continued, stating that the State wanted the new ECN Director on board to take a good look at ECN strategic planning. Hieserich recapped stating that the lack of a strategic plan to support PSAPs was priority 1, while the metro region was advocating for data sharing. Lawell (Apple Valley) encouraged Dakota 911 to let the Committee know if there needed to be a legislative push. Dahlstrom (Rosemount) inquired if there was any idea on what the cost would be. Hieserich (Dakota 911) commented that it would probably in the \$100,000 - \$150,000/year range, but assured there would be more to come. Hieserich stated that conversations were shifting toward regional data sharing via a CAD to CAD fix and the group was hoping to learn through others currently going through the CAD procurement experience. Hieserich commented that it was early to say but ideally if everyone was on the same CAD system, interoperability would be an option.

Next Gen 911 System – Hieserich (Dakota 911) informed members that the State's Next Gen procurement had been put on hold and would likely experience a couple year setback. In the meantime, Dakota 911 continued to bring on Next Gen features offered by 3rd parties. Hieserich noted that it's there, PSAPs just aren't getting it through their State network.

Coop Planning – Hieserich (Dakota 911) noted that in addition to data sharing and CAD to CAD, a regional effort was underway to discuss COOP planning and contingency plans. Hieserich clarified that the currently agreements were basically handshakes and the region realizes the need for more formalized planning.

School Mapping – Hieserich (Dakota 911) commented that if members weren't already aware, ECN had received a \$7 million grant to support GIS mapping for school facilities. Hieserich stated that no determination had been made on how the funding would be awarded to the regions, and PSAPs were working with the MESB to get clarification on what to expect as far as what each region gets and the timeline for receiving the funds. Hieserich noted that while it is a large sum of money, it's not much considering how much it costs per school.

Action: No action. Report only.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Action: Motion by Miller (Lakeville) to adjourn. Second by Garcia (South St. Pau.
Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 3:42pm.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

November 6th, 2024

3:00pm

Dakota 911 Training Room