



MINUTES

QCOMM911 BOARD

MEETING

Wednesday, July 9, 2025
9:00 am

Present

City/Village Administrator: Steve Seiver, Milan
Mark Rothert, East Moline
Bob Vitas, Moline
Jerry Leibovitz, Silvis

Public Safety Representatives: Chief Ramsey, East Moline PD
Chief Johnson, Milan PD
Chief VanKlaveren, Silvis PD
Chief Regenwether, Moline FD

QCOMM911 Director: Scott Ryckeghem

Others: Margo Sparbel, QCOMM
Cindy Parchert, QCOMM
Darren Gault, City of Moline Police Chief
Jason Kratt, East Moline Police Captain

1. Meeting called to order - Chairman Bob Vitas called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Roll call of members – Roll call was taken with Steve Seiver, Mark Rothert, Bob Vitas, Jerry Leibovitz, Chief Ramsey, Chief Johnson, Chief VanKlaveren and Chief Regenwether present.

3. Approval of Executive Session Minutes from the April 9, 2025 Meeting and Regular Minutes from the May 2, 2025 Meeting– Jerry Leibovitz made a motion to approve the minutes. Mark Rothert seconded the motion, all in favor, the motion passes.

4. QCOMM 911 Expenses

Director Ryckeghem provided a copy of the expense report as well as the budget report. Ryckeghem noted that major expenses include accounting fees and the invoice from Lauterbach for the 2023 audit otherwise includes standard expenses. Accounts payable has \$200,000, insurance claims account has \$117,383.83. Pool cash has \$1,230,690.01. All second quarter invoices have been paid minus one volunteer fire agency. Jerry Leibovitz made a motion to approve the expenses. Mark Rothert seconded the motion. Motion carried on roll call with the following vote: ayes: Seiver, Rothert, Leibovitz, and Vitas; nays: none.

5. Lease Agreement

Ryckeghem shared a copy of the lease agreement for approval and signature as well as the certificate of liability for insurance that is mentioned in the contract.

Seiver provided bullet points that had been approved and noted that additional requirement of insurance was not spelt out. Seiver asked if the board would like him to sustain a vote on the agreement. The board had no concerns.

Steve Seiver made a motion to approve the lease agreement as presented. Mark Rothert seconded the motion. Motion carried on roll call with the following vote: ayes: Seiver, Rothert, Leibovitz, and Vitas; nays: none.

6. Executive Director Report

Ryckeghem apologized about an email that was sent by a shift lead. They thought they were going to have to go down to three people in the room. Email was sent about abstaining from self-initiated calls. Ryckeghem was not aware of the email. Ryckeghem shared that he took care of the problem.

Staffing:

Ryckeghem noted that staffing is currently at 24 out of 27, 20 are fully operational and 3 in training. The 24th starts on Monday. QCOMM lost one employee to the Moline Police Records Department. One left at training. The one that left during training had an exit interview and the big reason for leaving was the negative attitude by another. Administration met with shift leads for that day and laid out some expectations in the room to herd some of the negativity. An email was sent to staff about the employee leaving and addressed the comments and concerns so everyone has the same expectations. The leads meeting was a "sit and listen" kind of meeting. Ryckeghem tasked them with coming up with ideas to improve morale on their shifts. No one knows the shift better than the lead, waiting to hear back on that feedback. They all agreed that there was a lot of negativity floating around.

Ramsey asked if the issues are from the staffing shortage or overtime.

Ryckeghem explained that it is nothing specific, just very negative vibes and conversations in the room.

Regenwether asked if the shift leads are part of the negativity.

Ryckeghem shared that they were being part of it, which is why they had the shift lead meeting. Ryckeghem told them they need to curve the negativity and be the leader in the room. We have to get to a place where we can retain people. It takes 4-6 months to get people trained. This employee was very close to being operational so it was a big hit.

Regenwether added that those specifics have to be addressed. There have been months of negativity and someone has to know what is being said.

Ryckeghem added that the employee had left Genesis ambulance for the same negative vibe, so he left and came to QCOMM and had the same thing. Ryckeghem added that there was an issue with his trainer and another employee and that is being addressed but the general negativity is likely due to overtime and staffing. There is one employee going through background and one was lost in background. The Training Coordinator has been moved back out on the floor to help fill the gaps. We are also in prime vacation season. Normally QCOMM runs with 5 on a shift, if someone calls in, we are not forcing overtime to 5 but we are forcing to get to 4. QCOMM has been running on 4 for 2-3 months.

Ramsey asked if the overtime is due to restrictions.

Ryckeghem confirmed and they have cut back on the time off requests, allowing only one-time off request. Day shift has the restrictions, are volunteering to cover the time off slips for people but when someone calls in sick, there is nobody to force to stay so some people were getting forced to stay a couple days in a row which is not favorable.

Ramsey asked if those that are on restrictions are volunteering to work when they can't normally work.

Ryckeghem explained that there are some restrictions that allow for 12 hours of overtime so for time-off requests, they are volunteering to work that overtime but then when someone calls in sick after, now someone needs to be forced but there is no one available to.

Leibovitz mentioned that we just passed the contract and asked if that was positive.

Ryckeghem explained that the contract should have been very positive for them. They were given the things that they said would make it better but now we are on to the next problem. There is one employee starting Monday, coming from another agency, she is a lateral and we have another lateral that is currently working for us so there is some movement from that.

Rothert asked if there is any regular discussion with labor management.

Ryckeghem confirmed, there have been a lot of discussions about staffing and how to get to the 12 hours shifts.

Rothert asked if they have brought up the issues with morale.

Ryckeghem noted that they haven't brought it up. No one wants to put their name out there.

Johnson mentioned that he would question what the union is getting back to their membership because several of them sat in the room saying, if they got a big raise and allow lateral transfers and part time employees to fill in, that would solve all the problems. Johnson added that he would question if that is what truly came from their membership or if it came from their three minds because they were given all those things and continue to have the same discussion over and over.

Ryckeghem added that historically with this union, it is the three people at the table that drive the negotiations. The members really don't get a lot of input. They don't go back and update on the offers. There is one union steward that is actively working with Administration to help figure out ideas on how to solve some of that. There were a couple grievances with forcing people more than one day but nothing currently.

VanKlaveren mentioned that they want to go to 12 hours shifts but the restrictions are not allowing that to work.

Ryckeghem confirmed, the restrictions have to go away before he can think about asking the board to move to 12 hours shifts.

Operations:

Ryckeghem shared that calls for service increased 2% from last year. The second shift supervisor was asked by the MABAS group to take over as the coordinator for the MABAS 43 Peer Support Team. Ryckeghem had asked Regenwether if there is any financial obligation and he confirmed there is not. We are proud to have her on that team. Silvis Fire has a new Fire Chief, former Hampton Fire, Dave Johnson. As of June 1, Coal Valley Fire now has three full time ambulances. The new training program now focuses on phones and fire dispatching. The goal is to get the employee to an operational level rather than getting them to ace everything. This gives them the opportunity to fill a role while still moving forward with the CTO on the other days to focus on police training which generally takes longer than fire. Some of the team, participated in the active shooter training on June 23. Ryckeghem added that Bettendorf Assistant Chief McDonald provided feedback, thanking the dispatchers and said the dispatchers did an amazing job while they were there. It was a more realistic training with the dispatchers there. The two portable radios are at RACOM and they are working on programming. Once they are done, the other radios will be returned to

Moline Fire. Ryckeghem asked for input from the board on a potential phone tree to direct the admin calls to the cities, police records, police administration.

VanKlaveren asked for an example.

Ryckeghem explained that if someone calls asking for a specific detective, that could be set on the phone tree rather than the dispatcher having to transfer them. Ryckeghem added he isn't sure how intricate they can make a phone tree.

VanKlaveren noted that he doesn't see how it could work.

Johnson added that he thinks there would be confusion with choosing the police department when they truly need an officer to come and make a report and would be sent right back to QCOMM.

Seiver asked Scott to come back with some specifics on how it would be laid out.

VanKlaveren added that we have tried phone trees and people will push zero and just want to talk to someone. He mentioned that he understands trying to alleviate some of those calls but just didn't work past practice.

Ryckeghem will do more work on the phone tree and potentially bring it back. Lastly, for operations, Ryckeghem asked the board to look at an outside option for risk management stuff, FMLA, ADA, Workers Comp. type of scenarios. Ryckeghem added that he would like to see what other options are out there. Ryckeghem mentioned working with Annette Roby with the City of Moline a lot and potentially the City of Moline could handle that portion. These scenarios are detracting from the other stuff that needs to be focused on. Ryckeghem will bring that back with some numbers.

Investment Policy:

Ryckeghem shared an investment policy with the board. It is standard based off of other Cities. Has the basic parameters with what we can invest in. All of the money is currently at Blackhawk Bank and does have a pretty good return on it, about 4%.

Vitas mentioned that this is an alternative to look at.

Seiver mentioned that it does not address any kind of collateral deposits for institutions.

Rothert suggested a fund balance policy as well.

Vitas agreed and added that he doesn't believe QCOMM has one now.

Ryckeghem will look into that as well.

Meeting Calendar:

Vitas explained that we have had quarterly meetings for a while and doesn't think the board is meeting often enough with the issues and challenges that QCOMM is facing, whether that is monthly or every two months. Vitas asked for feedback.

Seiver agreed that he would like to see monthly meetings for a while.

Vitas added that the board will start meeting monthly, beginning in August. The board agrees to meet monthly going forward.

IRS Tax Liability Reimbursement:

Ryckeghem explained that he drafted a letter for the board to approve to send to the Village of Milan, believed that we are owed the \$92,066 from the tax issue that we had in Q1 of 2021. Ryckeghem added that Cindy is in attendance if there are any questions for her.

Seiver noted that he has extremely strong feelings on it. This goes back to errors made in the foundational years of QCOMM in which no one stepped up to provide back office services. There was no provision to staff QCOMM with its own personnel department, payroll functions, HR. The intergovernmental agreement for the four cities did not address those issues. The Village of Milan was asked to perform some of those back-service functions, on an interim basis. There was a catastrophic failure of staff in Milan during that period of time that affected payroll functions in which withholdings were calculated, the transfers were made and were not paid to the federal agencies. The mistake was not caught by Milan until after, well into it. Village of Milan also, in 2017/2018, hired the first Director, Kim Hankins, who was later dismissed because he was not performing his responsibilities. The Deputy Director, in first quarter of 2021, assumed all payroll functions, Doris Moreno, and they were taken from the Village of Milan. The Village of Milan was to continue the work for a period of 2 years, or until notice was given to Milan. That began with negotiations with AFSCME, in 2018 and didn't conclude until halfway through 2019. There were not contracts in place to specify how things were being paid. At the direction of Doris Moreno, Milan was given conflicting information to our payroll people as far as their contract. These were after the fact and the corrections had to be done by the payroll department. It was a nightmare and was constantly being revised and resubmitted. In 2020, there was staff that wasn't here due to the pandemic and the Finance Director quit. The person that was doing the payroll had to step in as the Finance Director. That is when the ball was dropped. These mistakes were made and shared with the board. Seiver added that he voted for Milan to pay the amount, \$39,000, in payroll taxes. Milan absorbed that for the mistakes that Milan made. The penalties that QCOMM is now up against was for not knowing and not paying on a timely basis and having additional charges. That is not Milan, the only thing that Milan was doing at that time, was the mail being delivered. Doris Moreno would come down and pick up the mail 2-3 times a week at most. Seiver added that Cindy (Parchert) made the assertion to us and really object to it, we live in the same building, and she never had the curtesy to have the Village of Milan come down and try to work through these things and ask for any context or perspective. Then all of a sudden, in the agenda packet, there is a letter for the board's approval, to bill Milan for over \$90,000, not for what was done through 2021, but because no one at QCOMM carried the fault. They are alleging a mishandling of mail and Milan; the presumption has to be because someone in Milan was covering their tracks and thought they could escape responsibility by not giving IRS mail to QCOMM. Seiver added that these obligations are ludicrous and he has talked to his staff about it. If it was for QCOMM, it would have been put in QCOMM mail. What happened to the mail after that is unknown. Seiver added that it is not Milan's responsibility, Milan has never taken advantage of this organization. Milan fronted the money and was out over \$200,000 because Moline was not paying its contribution to the Director salary and benefits. They were on Milan's insurance who is self-funded. Milan has helped front the agency since day 1. Milan did not take advantage of QCOMM with the lease agreement, for \$7,500 a month, Milan is providing the space, utilities, parking, roof maintenance, etc. For the convenience of the QCOMM staff, to send an invoice to the Village of Milan for \$90,000. Seiver added that he is not going to stand for it. If the board votes to send the letter to Milan, Seiver will advise the council not to pay the bill and then go to court and cut services. Milan was not responsible for it. What happened in first quarter of 2021, was Doris and Kim's responsibility, not the Village of Milan.

VanKlaveren asked if the Village of Milan did not pay their own IRS.

Seiver confirmed that Village of Milan did not pay for 2021. Milan had the same issues to work through but Milan was not involved in payroll or resolving problems.

VanKlaveren noted that it was the same mistake by the same people. If there was an issue, Milan should have come back and said they couldn't handle it.

Seiver added that Milan did see the mail, it went to Doris. Milan was never asked to be apart of it, that is the responsibility of QCOMM.

Ramsey mentioned that Terry McMaster was heavily involved in this. Ramsey suggested reaching out to him.

Seiver added that in November of 2021, the board said it was resolved. Now that we are receiving more bills, it is coming back to Milan.

Rothert asked when we were made aware of the penalties.

Seiver responded that it would have been sometime in 2021.

Parchert mentioned that there are dates within the documents.

Seiver added that the board did not have knowledge of it until 2021.

Rothert mentioned that the IRS allows for first time penalty abatement and asked if Milan pursued that.

Seiver confirmed, yes, at that time in 2020 and 2021, when Milan received the notice. He added that on the second page of the document, it says that QCOMM notices were being mailed to their address which is also the Village of Milan's address, yet QCOMM was not receiving it. These are assertions of, it was either properly addressed and Milan ignored it but the stuff was coming to QCOMM at 405 1st Street, all of QCOMM's mail was coming to that address. He added that he doesn't believe that someone was placing the mail elsewhere. There is no reason to believe that. QCOMM was taking over the payroll responsibilities but the dates are unknown. The current payroll person, came in the first quarter, January of 2021. She was not doing QCOMM payroll at that time. Why would Milan be on the hook for QCOMM not following up. When QCOMM assumed payroll responsibilities, that point going forward, not to say that in 2025, Milan needs to pay \$90,000.

Ramsey added that we are making the assertion that if Milan is saying they didn't receive the mail, then Doris threw the mail away?

Seiver added that he thinks, during that time, all the mail was delivered to the Clerk's office and there was a separate box for QCOMM and Doris would come down periodically but not every day. Did someone from Milan go through and filter out, and take only the IRS stuff? Doubtful.

Ramsey added that some of the board members were not here, Terry McMaster had a lot of work on this and would have some input on it.

Seiver confirmed and added that in November 2021, he supported Milan taking responsibility but can not go along with, what has happened since that. The research had been done and the board said the issue was resolved and since then, staff has determined that there is additional cost incurred by QCOMM and that is QCOMM's problem not Milan's.

Vitas added that he remembers Milan paying \$30,000. If the IRS was made whole in November of 2021, how has the problem persisted? It should have been resolved when Terry McMaster took the action in November of 2021. The real issue is what did Milan do, what did Terry McMaster do and perhaps the staff before Terry. There was a reliance on Milan to do things that Milan agreed to do. It is unknown if it is in writing or not. Now there is an outstanding obligation to the IRS that never went away and as a board, we thought this was done in 2021. This is going to stop whether or not everyone agrees with the letter. We will have to launch an investigation and bring people in. We are arguing about obligations that go back to errors that happened. There were problems with the Milan staff and they didn't do their job which resulted in the penalties happening. We thought the penalties were resolved in November of 2021 and yet somehow, they were not and we continue to have this IRS problem. Whose problem it is, really goes back to when it

happened. Who made the mistakes. It needs to be traced to when it happened. The reports have to be filed and the penalty needs to be paid or ask for an abatement.

Seiver added that there was a partial abatement after November 2021. Seiver had come back to board and explained that the \$39,000 had been paid and was entitled to a portion of that abatement which was addressed to QCOMM. The QCOMM board had said that Milan was not entitled to the abatement.

Vitas asked if Cindy Parchert would walk the board through the timeline.

Parchert added that her firm got involved with QCOMM because Iowa had called Terry or Doris because QCOMM had been unresponsive to the tax notices. Parchert was brought in to get everything caught up. The problem that continued was the first quarter of 2021, did not get filed. The firm came in and did the first two-year audits, they realized that there was money owed to Milan and to Moline for various services. Parchert was then hired to do payroll and has not incurred any interest or penalties on any reports since doing payroll. Any that were received goes back to 2020, 2021.

Rothert asked if the board should go into closed session for pending litigation.

Seiver added that this will be in the open minutes and he is not the one that is suggesting litigation, instead suggesting that the Village of Milan not to pay.

Rothert added that there is enough cause to go into executive session.

Vitas added that he would concur.

Seiver mentioned that in fall of 2020, when Milan was down a person, he had authorized a temp employee and that person had proved to be excellent and then after about 3-4 months, she was hired to be the payroll clerk. She first started in January 2021 so she did not prepare...

Rother asked if the board could go into executive session.

Vitas asked if there was any other business to take care of in open sessions.

7. Other Business –

Ryckeghem confirmed that he has a couple of items. Ryckeghem has some letters that he would like to get the chair and vice chair to sign. An abduction that occurred, he was praising the dispatchers so Ryckeghem put together letters for them. Ryckeghem also mentioned going on vacation the week of the 28th and the following week with limited connection in Montana.

8. Public Comment – None

9. Executive Session –

Vitas asked for a motion to go into executive session per section 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(1) for appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees as well as 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(11) for pending, probable, imminent litigation. Steve Seiver made a motion to go into executive session. Mark Rothert seconded the motion. Motion carried on roll call with the following vote: ayes: Seiver, Rothert, Leibovitz, and Vitas; nays: none.

QCOMM911 Board convened in Executive Session at 10:09 a.m.

QCOMM911 Board reconvened in Open Session at 12:01 p.m.

10. Action from Executive Session –

Gault asked if there was a dollar amount that the board wanted to authorize for IRS Tax Investigation.

Seiver recommended bringing a proposal back to next month's regular session.

Vitas recommended working with Cindy to prepare a scope of work.

11. Adjournment - Having no further business to discuss, Steve Seiver made a motion to adjourn. Jerry Leibovitz seconded that motion, all in favor, the motion passes and the meeting is adjourned at 12:04 p.m.