

Cowlitz 911 Public Authority Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday April 15th, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Hybrid – Cowlitz 911 & ZOOM

Attendance

Board Members: Rich Fletcher (alternate, voting); Alan Headley; Brad Thurman; Charlie Worley; Bill LeMonds; Robert Huhta; Rick Dahl; Jen Wills; Wayne Nichols

Staff: Briana Graham; Jerry Jensen; Michelle Arrowsmith; Jessica Weygandt; Don Turrentine; Jennifer Johnson (general counsel); Tim Hanigan (general counsel)

Guests: Brad Hannig; Robbie Satterly; Ralph Herrera; Vic Leatzow; Scott Goldstein

Board Members Absent and No Alternate:

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Huhta called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Recommended Action: A motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Headley made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Wills seconded; all in favor, motion carried.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A. March 18, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Recommended Action: A motion to approve the meeting minutes from 03/18/25, meeting minutes.

Worley made a motion to approve the 03/18/2026 meeting minutes as presented. LeMonds seconded; all in favor, motion carried.

4. Public Comment

The public comment period allows any member of the public to speak to any item that is not on the regular agenda.

5. 911 Proclamation – Huhta read and signed the Proclamation for Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.

6. Payables:

ACCOUNT	TRANS NUMBER	AMOUNT
Payroll 03/19/26	286 – 326	\$219,522.66
Payroll 04/02/26	369 – 407	\$148,289.75
Claims 03/16/26	267 – 285	\$132,178.09
Claims 03/25/26	366 – 368	\$58,390.55
TOTAL		\$558,381.05

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the payables as presented.

LeMonds made a motion to approve payables as presented. Headley seconded; all in favor, motion carried.

7. Finance Report – 2nd quarter user fees have been sent out. Looking at site leases from 2006-2009 as we are entering the final term of the renewed 5-year term of these leases.

8. Board Comments/Board Committee Reports

A. **LAW TAC Update:** No update

B. **FIRE TAC Update:** No update

C. Budget Committee Update:

- i. **IT Position:** We are evaluating our IT support structure to better align with increasing operational demands and long-term stability. Similar to the approach we have taken with other positions, we are looking to bring more of this work in-house. This allows for greater day-to-day responsiveness, stronger system familiarity, and increased internal control over critical public safety systems. The option under development is to transition away from our current managed IT services vendor contract and hire an in-house IT technician to support daily operations and growing system needs. Also, having a lower cost agreement with a vendor that has public safety and local government expertise for just specialized or emergent support needs. The estimated savings is about \$320,000 annually and would cost about \$160,000 annually.
- ii. **Relief Position:** We remain focused on retention and workforce sustainability. The budget committee supports exploring an option to add up to two part-time relief telecommunicator positions, limited to internal candidates. These positions are intended to improve retention, reduce burnout, and increase coverage flexibility. We will meet with the Guild to gather input before bringing a formal recommendation forward.
- iii. **Hall of Justice:** As part of our ongoing operational and budget review, we have been evaluating the effectiveness and cost of maintaining the Hall of Justice (HOJ) as a backup dispatch site. Through real-world incidents and internal testing, we've identified that the current configuration of our Motorola Emergency CallWorks (ECW) system does create operational disruptions when power or connectivity is lost at HOJ. While intended to function as a fully redundant backup, it has not consistently performed at that level. We currently spend about \$140,000 annually to maintain HOJ as a backup site. Industry trends show agencies of similar size moving away from fully duplicated backup centers and instead relying on failure partnerships with neighboring PSAPs. We have tested this locally and calls successfully fail over to Clark County Regional Emergency Services Agency when needed. As we approach the end of our current call handling contract, maintaining HOJ as a backup site will significantly increase future costs – regardless of the system selected. We are preparing some options for the Board that include an option to eliminate HOJ as a backup site, reducing ongoing costs, relocating the backup server to the Columbia Heights site, where fiber is already in place, and a clear outline of failover options that maintain continuity and safety. No decisions are being made at this time – these are just options for Board consideration as part of the budget process.

9. Director's Report

- A. Staffing Update:** This week (April 12-18, 2026) is National Telecommunicators Week. We have spent the week celebrating our dispatchers through a Wild West-themed celebration, including dress up days, team events, and prize giveaways. We also held peer-nominated awards, including Dispatcher of the Year and Supervisor of the Year. We have received strong support from our partner agencies and vendors, who have provided food and messages of

appreciation – reflecting the strength of those partnerships. While one week can't fully capture the value of this work, we hope it serves as a reminder of how appreciated our telecommunicators are every day. We currently have 3 in training, with our two newest completing the state-required Telecommunicators 2 course later this month. We have extended conditional offers to three candidates, now in the background process, and remain on track for a June start date, pending completion of hiring requirements.

B. Radio Update: We continue to make strong progress on radio system improvements. Main network links and new voting and radio equipment are installed. The system is in the fine-tuning phase. Work is now focused on sub-links, including Castle Rock, Mt. Solo, St. Johns, Hall of Justice, Bakers Corner and Woodland. Woodland had a critical system failure, and repaired work went underway this week. We will bring forward a scalable radio system plan later this year aligned with budget priorities, including: a plan without grant funding and an expanded option if grant funding is received. Our goal is to provide clear options to support informed decision-making.

10. Old Business: Dahl has asked for AI stats

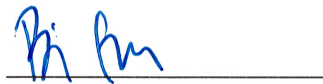
11. Executive Session: N/A

12. Adjournment: 10:23 AM



Robert Huhta, Board Chair

Attest:



Briana Graham, Clerk of the Board