

Cedar County Joint 911 Service Board
1410 Cedar Street
Tipton, IA 52772
(563) 886-3355

The July 12, 2018 regular quarterly meeting of the Cedar County Joint 911 Service Board was held at the Cedar County EMA Administrative Offices at 1410 Cedar Street, Tipton. Those attending included Jon Bell, Cedar County Board of Supervisors; Warren Wethington, Cedar County Sheriff; Greg Wagner, Mayor of Stanwood; Ashley Hansen, Mayor of Lowden; David Furry, Mayor of Mechanicsville; West Branch Fire Chief Kevin Stoolman; Mechanicsville Fire Assistant Chief Jacob Koch; West Branch Fire Member Josh Warrell; Cedar County GIS Coordinator Nathan Teut; Sue Hall, Press; Tim Malott, Director Cedar County EMA/911; Jodi Freet, Cedar County EMA/911.

Chair Wethington called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Mayor Wagner/Stanwood made a motion to approve the agenda; motion seconded by Mayor Hansen/Lowden. Motion carried.

Mayor Wagner/Stanwood made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2018 meeting; motion seconded by Mayor Hansen/Lowden. Motion carried.

Chair Wethington yielded the floor to EMA Director Malott to summarize expenditures of the previous quarter. There were no questions regarding the expenditures. Mayor Wagner/Stanwood made the motion to approve the expenditures as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Hansen/Lowden. Motion carried.

Chair Wethington yielded the floor to Malott to address old business. Malott addressed the following:

- a. Work on the tower at I-80 and Hwy 38 should start this fall. The 28E agreement has been completed, and Malott will request bids for completing electrical work at the site and the building will need to be put up. Chair Wethington asked for verification that the building had been purchased. Malott confirmed that the building has been purchased.
- b. Malott continues to work with Mechanicsville telephone on the Cedar Bluff Agreement. The next step will be the 28E Agreement and then bidding for the equipment.

- c. We are still on track for Fire and EMS to go Digital in October 2018. Malott stated that he has been asked if existing equipment can be added as well as new equipment. Only P25 equipment will be allowed on the new system as the traffic/communications would become too congested with both types of equipment.
- d. Massillon's addressing will be updated beginning late summer/early fall.
- e. Malott stated that he has the 10KW generator for West Branch, but has been waiting on West Branch Public Works. Discussion regarding type of generator, transfer switch and other physical characteristics of the generator. Fire Chief Stoolman advised that he had spoken with public works, and they are awaiting the arrival of the generator in order to fabricate a building for the generator. Malott was not aware of this. After further discussion, Chair Wethington stated and Malott agreed that the generator will be delivered the following day.
- f. Malott will begin soliciting bids for a cage in the IT room at the Law Center to protect 911 assets and equipment as a means to protect against cyber crime.

Chair Wethington yielded the floor to Malott to discuss the items of new business. Malott discussed the following:

- a. 911's contract with GeoComm will be due for renewal in August. The question at hand is whether or not to renew the contract with GeoComm, or to use Cedar County's GIS Department. On Tuesday, July 10th, Malott attended the Cedar County Board of Supervisors Meeting to discuss the possibilities of whether or not Cedar County GIS Department will want to take on additional GIS duties for 911. Malott advised that Nathan Teut, GIS Coordinator for Cedar County was present due to this question. Malott stated that if Teut chooses to add this to his duties, a MOU will be completed as Malott will apply for a grant to pay for this service. Malott clarified that the 911 Board would then pay Cedar County for the services of the GIS Coordinator, rather than paying GeoComm for their service. A question was raised as to whether or not there would be any savings with the utilization of Cedar County GIS services; Malott advised that GeoComm has been less expensive than using Cedar County. Board of Supervisors representative Bell stated that they will offer the services of the GIS Coordinator if the Coordinator wishes. GIS Coordinator Teut stated that he already has duties to GeoComm per the existing contract and feels that it would be foolish to sign another contract with GeoComm; Teut also expressed that he felt it was foolish to contract with GeoComm in previous years. Chair Wethington stated that he was concerned that there might be tension or friction between GIS and EMA and wants to ensure that the relationship will run smoothly. Malott stated that the MOU will address the specific duties of the GIS Coordinator, and outline the duties that will be continued to be performed through

EMA. There will also be a caveat in the MOU outlining failure to perform; this is due to the fact that this activity will be funded through grant funds, and thus a requirement of said grant. After additional discussion, Mayor Furry/Mechanicsville made the motion to contract with GIS for the next twelve months at a rate of \$5000; motion was seconded by Mayor Wagner/Stanwood. Motion carried.

- b. Malott provided statistics on the number of addresses issued in the previous quarter: April, 11; May, 1; June, 2; Total, 14.
- c. Malott advised that Office Coordinator Freet has completed the addressing of Cedar County cemeteries and has created a plan for the VFW to assist with putting in posts and signs. Teut advised that GIS data is correct for the cemeteries; however, the information for the Assessor's data may not be correct as this information still needs to be updated. Malott then advised that the 911 markers for the cemeteries will be a combination of both blue and green, indicating that the cemetery might be on private land, or access to the cemetery might be through private land.
- d. Malott discussed the upcoming need to purchase radios. He stated that there is typically a 5-6 year life for the radios, and it has been six years since these radios were installed. Malott explained that radios have gone bad, and due to the age of the radios, we no longer have 24-72 hour turnaround. While the system is redundant to ensure communication, vendors are stating that it will now take 30-45 days to receive a new radio. Malott proposes that the Service Board begin to replace these radios in sets of two, which will cost approximately \$50K - \$60K per tower (as each tower has two radios). This would increase our warranty repair time to 24-72 hours. Malott stated that once we get the first two radios replaced, then we will have two on hand that will be serviceable, but he believes that the most prudent decision would be to gradually replace radios in order to avoid a mass failure at some point in the future. Discussion was held on the purpose of these radios, which relay radio communications. Malott explained that the county has been fortunate as the dispatch center has been replaced three times so far, yet costs have been low due to beta testing. Mayor Wagner/Stanwood stated that Dragonwave, the manufacturer of the microwave system, does not have any certified repair services in the United States and feels that the Service Board should call for bids on radio replacement. Mayor Furry/Mechanicsville suggested soliciting vendors through the State of Iowa's bidding system. Discussion ensued. It was suggested that an RFI be completed. Chair Wethington expressed a concern with having several different vendors working on the project. A request was made for volunteers to sit on a fact finding committee; Wethington and Warrell will do so.

Chair Wethington yielded the floor to Malott, who advised that the five year plan will be updated.

Malott then discussed training that had been completed in the past quarter.

- a. Training was completed with GeoComm for a total of approximately 4.5 hours. He advised that GeoComm had provided examples of various SOP documents, and he was pleased with those.

The floor was then opened to questions or concerns from both the public and emergency responders. Chair Wethington had addressed a 911 service issue that had occurred the previous weekend. The dispatcher was on a domestic violence call where the calling party asked her to stay on the line. A second, unrelated medical emergency call was received by 911 at the same time, but the call went unanswered. The party reporting the medical issue then waited a short time and attempted the call again. The reporting party then called West Branch Fire Chief Stoolman at home, and he then called dispatch's admin line for assistance. Chief Wethington advised that there were three issues happening: a domestic violence call where the calling party asked the dispatcher to stay on the line; decreased staffing levels in Dispatch; the assumption that unanswered 911 calls were transferred to Jones County (which was not happening). Chair Wethington explained that Malott and Chief Deputy Kevin Knoche are working to resolve the issue.

Chair Wethington then discussed a communications issue experienced by Mechanicsville Fire Department. Assistant Fire Chief Koch/Mechanicsville explained that in an area on Delta Avenue (near the curve), there was no handheld/portable or truck radio coverage. Malott advised that he will check into this.

Chair Wethington explained that 911 Dispatch has gotten to a point where it is so busy that it is becoming difficult to manage. In many municipalities, the Sheriff's Office no longer runs the dispatch, and other entities are responsible for dispatch activities. He explained that his staff is stretched thin, and he believes that as a county, the time is coming to have a dedicated 911 Manager. He explained that the Joint Service Board has the ability to levy a surcharge to pay for this service, and Malott explained that 911 Surcharge funds cannot be used to pay salaries and thus cannot hire. In that case, either the County would need to establish a new tax. Supervisor Bell indicated that the tax would be rolled back out to the local municipalities. Wethington advised that takes approximately 5.7 individuals to adequately staff one dispatch station, and Cedar County has had difficulties in hiring, training and retaining some dispatch staff. Discussion was held to indicate that Cedar County is currently paying for the dispatch and at a cost of \$600K per year. Additional discussion was held regarding using other counties to provide dispatch service, and Malott then explained that there are additional costs to doing so including access costs and the requirement to obtain new radios. Malott advised that he has already completed a new job description for this position, and it has been rated by the Compensation Board. He discussed the fact that the municipalities are not being billed for dispatch services, and the budget for this is coming out of the Sheriff's budget. Malott also advised that the State

of Iowa is in the process of consolidating wireline service under the wireless service in the State of Iowa. This means that there will no longer be a cost for dispatch equipment with this future consolidation. Malott also explained how advanced the Cedar County Dispatch is, compared to surrounding counties. Chair Wethington explained that this is not an urgent matter, but he wanted to bring this to the attention of all. Further discussion was held; no action was taken at this time.

Chair Wethington then announced the next meeting of the Cedar County Joint 911 Service Board at 6:30pm on October 11, 2018. A draft budget for the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year will be presented at that time.

Mayor Hansen/Lowden made a motion to adjourn the meeting; motion seconded by Mayor Wagner/Stanwood. Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:13pm.

