

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

**Regular Quarterly Meeting:**

**Thursday, January 14, 2021**

The Cedar County Joint 911 Service Board meeting was held on January 14, 2021. The meeting was held both in-person and by telephone conference with the call originating from the Cedar County EMA Administrative Offices at 1410 Cedar Street, Tipton, IA 52772, with social distancing guidelines in place to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Those attending by teleconference were Linda Coppess, Stanwood Ambulance; Andrew Oberbreckling, Mayor of Mechanicsville; Dustin McAtee, Mayor of Stanwood. Those attending in-person included: Warren Wethington, Cedar County Sheriff; Steve Agne, Cedar County Board of Supervisors; Brenda Johnson, Office Manager with Cedar County Sheriff's office; Kevin Knoche, Cedar County Sheriff's Office; Bode Korranda, Cedar County Sheriff's Office; Jill Cinkovich, Mayor of Lowden; Jake Koch, Mechanicsville Fire Chief; William Wagner, Mechanicsville Police Chief; Mike Anderson, Bennett Fire Chief; Kevin Rasdon, Bennett Fire Department; Roger Laughlin, Mayor of West Branch; John Hanna, West Branch Police Chief; Kevin Stoolman, West Branch Fire Chief; Tanya Havlik-Smith, West Branch Fire; Jodi Freet, Director Cedar County EMA/911; Sue Hall, Press.

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

Mayor Laughlin/West Branch made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Chief Koch/Mechanicsville; Motion carried.

Mayor Laughlin/West Branch made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 8, 2020 911 Service Board regular meeting, seconded by Chief Koch/Mechanicsville; Motion carried.

Chair Wethington yielded the floor to EMA Director Freet to discuss expenditures of the previous quarter. Freet discussed atypical expenditures that included membership and dues for NENA and APCO, two associations that Cedar County 911 belongs to. In December, milage was paid to Freet for radio testing due to the EMA truck being unavailable. In November, a payment was made to Graybill Communications for \$59,668.59, which represents payment in full for the first year of the five-year support maintenance/agreement (previously signed). Other payments made to Graybill included \$500 for alarm monitoring and \$4400 for tower climbs. There were no questions regarding expenditures or revenue. Mayor Laughlin/West Branch made a motion to approve the expenditures; seconded by Mayor McAtee/Stanwood. Motion carried.

Chair Wethington yielded the floor to EMA Director for discussion of old business:

- The Executive committee under 28E for 911 will continue to be listed on the agendas as the process of new network discussions are ongoing.

- The Network Study by MCM Consulting updates are as follows.
  - Mayor Laughlin reported that the Grounding issue at West Branch Tower are still pending, the electrician has been contacted and will renew efforts to get this completed.
  - Director Freet gave update that the installation of the lightning rods and lowering of the antennas has been completed. This was done in December. The invoice for \$5200 has been submitted for payment.
- Director Freet stressed importance of reporting any radio troubles/feedback. Stated that while she hears and reports some issues heard through radio system during regular office hours, however, help is needed from first responders as she does not know where you are located or what type of equipment you are using. If you need information on where to submit a trouble report, please contact Freet for information. Wethington reiterated that these reports need to be completed so that the problems are documented, and we can follow through with whether or not a resolution was found.
- Freet reported that the lighting on the Sheriff's Office tower was replaced in December at a previously approved cost of just under \$15,700.
- Freet advised that the Annual PSAP Data Collection report has been completed and she thanked Brenda Johnson for her assistance in getting this report completed. She also noted that this was the earliest that this report has been completed in recent memory. Wethington gave additional information about the history and background of this report and shared the reasoning behind this mandate. Discussion was held. Freet also advised that she has filed the 911 annual membership form, and Fire Chiefs have been listed as the primary members of the 911 Service Boards.
- Freet presented the final budget for FY 2021-2022. She advised that overall, she did increase expenses \$2300 for a projected increase in phone costs for a total expense budget of \$329,550.00. The revenue budget remains the same as proposed in October for a total projected revenue of \$277,100. Funds will likely need to be taken from reserve to balance the budget. Freet advised that the public hearing for the budget will be held on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 8:15am. A teleconference option is available due to COVID. Freet will send a reminder.
- Freet advised that the repairs have been made to both the West Branch and Mechanicsville towers due to damages received during the derecho. The antennas were repaired in West Branch and the microwave was re-pointed in Mechanicsville. She is waiting on the bill and will submit to insurance for storm-related damage.
- Freet advised that signage and address updates in Sunbury and Downey will now occur in FY 2021-2022 due to increased demands with EMA.

Chair Wethington again yielded the floor to Freet for discussion of new business:

- Freet advised that an election needed to be held for the Chair/Vice Chair of the 911 Service Board. Chief Anderson/Bennett made the motion to dispense with a written ballot and to re-elect Warren Wethington as Chair of the 911 Service Board and Jon Bell as Vice-Chair of the 911 Service Board; Motion seconded by Chief Koch/Mechanicsville. Motion carried.
- Freet and Wethington provided an update on the Request for Budgetary Estimates received from Motorola and RACOM. Freet advised that the bids were opened on December 31<sup>st</sup> and that the two proposals were not equal. She reiterated that the Board of Supervisors is considering using the General Service Essential Bond to fund the system, and stressed that there is a need to communicate with Cedar County taxpayers as this is something that will show up on their tax roll for the next several years. She advised that the numbers are very preliminary, and as budgetary estimates, are typically very high numbers. Freet further advised that one vendor was over \$6 million dollars, the other vendor was over \$8 million dollars, but these numbers will change. She explained that one vendor quoted 10-year maintenance (as requested), one quoted 6 years. One vendor proposed all new towers, the other did not. One vendor can provide paging in-house, the other vendor would rely on another vendor for paging. Wethington stated that his thought is to possibly hire MCM Consulting to compare the two proposals as they are subject matter experts. He shared that this is a huge project that is really over our heads. MCM Consulting will take both proposals and lay the two proposals on the same laying field. This initial assessment/comparison is just over \$12,000. Going further, once we make a final decision, MCM (with the assistance of Assistant County Attorney Blank) will negotiate a contract for the new network and service proposal. The cost for the contract negotiations could range from \$12,000 - \$25,000, depending on vendor chosen. Wethington reiterated that in speaking with MCM, they believe they can save the County at least 5 times that amount. In his opinion, he would like to pursue hiring MCM for assistance with this project. Freet stated that there are funds available in reserve to pay for these services, and feels that this is the logical step to show due diligence and proper stewardship of public funds. Wethington advised that we are under a time-crunch from the Board of Supervisors, who need a more final number prior to February 28<sup>th</sup>. MCM has advised that they can get a better financial estimate by February 14<sup>th</sup>. Wethington shared that we won't be able to get a decision made by this time without some outside help. Freet advised that this expenditure needs to be approved by the 911 Service Board. Additional discussion was held. Freet stated that help is going to be needed from all First Responders to help tell the story of the 911 network to the residents of Cedar County. Mayor Laughlin/West Branch made the motion to hire MCM Consulting to compare the proposals and provide further recommendation to the 911 service board and to negotiate a final contract, as necessary; Motion seconded by Chief Koch/West Branch. Motion carried.

- Freet advised that she is still missing letters of support from several agencies. Letters of support can still be submitted. She is missing letters from Durant Fire, Durant EMS, Lowden Fire, Lowden First Responders, Stanwood Fire, Tipton Fire. Freet will still work to get these letters and stated that we need to have full support of this system, otherwise it is hard to sell this to the Board of Supervisors. Wethington asked that if members have relationships with other Chiefs/EMS, please use that relationship to get individuals to meetings and to help us with the safety of our first responders/networks.
- Freet shared that the bylaws for 911 were included as part of the overall packet for this meeting. She advised that we need to start the process of updating the bylaws, especially a section to include electronic meetings. These bylaws have not been updated since 2010. She asked that if members have ideas for updates to share those with her prior to the next meeting. We will discuss these bylaws at the next meeting.
- Freet wanted to express concern with the current vendor, Graybill Communications. There seems to be a lack of response at times from Graybill, and this is concerning to her. The current maintenance contract was discussed, and Freet advised that per the maintenance agreement, a hardware refresh was supposed to be completed this year. It has not been done and Graybill has advised that his vendors are unresponsive to him. Wethington asked who Graybill's vendor is, Freet advised that it is Motorola. She is not getting responses in a timely manner (one of the last requests took 14 days for an update). If members are calling Graybill for assistance, and not receiving help, please report these to Freet.
- Freet did not have a number of addresses assigned to date; this will be presented at next meeting.

Chair Wethington and Manager Johnson/Cedar County Sheriff's Office gave updates regarding dispatch:

- Wethington shared that Freet and Johnson had spent several hours in dispatch on a project earlier that day. Freet elaborated on the current project to migrate all PSAPs to a State based database that will provide telephone and location information when someone calls 911. She expressed concern that this project has been in the process for months; she and Johnson had received an email the previous day from Graybill indicating that they would not have support from Motorola (Emergency Call Works) to complete this project. Freet shared that she had spoken with Graybill and he first told her that that a new part was needed to complete this project. When she called him for status, he then advised that it was software support that was needed, and he was not sure he could get Motorola to assist with this transition. There were several reasons why Motorola could not finish the project and Freet and Johnson received an email less than 24 hours stating that the transition could not be done. The transition finally went

ahead after the State of Iowa 911 Coordinator became involved. Freet asked for patience from the first responders when calling dispatch; Johnson advised that all information is not coming through correctly, and it may take the dispatcher a little time to manually type the information that is typically automatically completed. Wethington asked for further information regarding Motorola Emergency Call Works; Johnson explained that the vendor was very responsive prior to Motorola purchasing the company.

- Johnson advised that Dispatch Station 3 is still pending.
- Johnson shared that they are looking to hire two new dispatchers
- Wethington wanted to share information regarding a call received during a snowstorm. An ambulance was stuck in the snow due to the weather. Wethington asked all responders to be clear about their location in this type of a situation; be precise. Wethington discussed the call in detail, and wanted to remind responders to be specific about their needs in response. Dispatch should be told what you need; they cannot infer the resource that you may need. Wethington also reminded all that Secondary Roads cannot plow a private driveway.

Chair Wethington yielded the floor to Freet to provide updates on training.

- Director Freet informed that certification training is still in development due to COVID 19.

Chair Wethington announced that the next regular meeting of the 911 Service Board will be the Public Hearing for the FY 2021 – 2021 Budget on January 19, 2021 at 8:15am at the Cedar County Courthouse, Small Meeting Room. The next regular meeting will be held April 8, 2021 at 6:30pm at 1410 Cedar Street, Tipton, IA 52772, there will be a teleconference option due to COVID-19 limitations. Wethington reiterated that the budget hearings are very quick, and can be attended by phone.

Chief Anderson/Bennett made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Chief Koch/Mechanicsville. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:14pm.