

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

The July 11, 2019 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 Warren Wethington, Chair, Cedar County Sheriff; Jon Bell, Cedar County Board of Supervisors; David Furry, Mayor of Mechanicsville; Greg Wagner, Mayor of Stanwood; Roger Laughlin, Mayor of West Branch; Brenda Johnson, Cedar County Sheriff's Office; Mike Anderson, Bennett Fire; Brian Meyer, Clarence Police; Jared Semsch, Durant Fire Chief; Lonni Koch, Mechanicsville Ambulance; Jacob Koch, West Branch Fire; Linda Coppess, Stanwood Ambulance; Bill Klawiter, Stanwood Fire Chief; Brad Ratliff, Tipton Ambulance Service; Kevin Stoolman, West Branch Fire Chief; Brian Flake, West Liberty Fire Department; 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 Chief Semsch/Durant. Motion carried.

Ratliff/Tipton Ambulance made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2019 regular meeting and the May 6, 2019 special meeting; motion seconded by Mayor Wagner/Stanwood. Motion carried.

Chair Wethington yielded the floor to EMA Office Coordinator Freet to discuss expenditures of the previous quarter. There were no questions regarding the expenditures. Mayor Laughlin/West Branch made the motion to approve the expenditures as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Wagner/Stanwood. Motion carried.

Chair Wethington yielded the floor to EMA Director Malott and Freet to discuss old business. Malott reported on the following old business:

- a. Malott reported that the equipment has been installed for the tower at I-80 and Hwy 38. At this point, we are waiting on a tower crew to install the antennas/dishes. Once the crew starts, they will likely do the installation in phases over a couple of days.
- b. Freet advised that the most recent update to the analog transmission removal report is in the attendees' packets. Discussion was held regarding West Liberty and Flake

discussed their concerns. It was shared that West Liberty is not removing analog transmit as they are requesting the service board to pay for that programming. Malott advised paying for radio programming is up to the board; however, 911 funds cannot be used for radio programming. Flake relayed that Chief Siebels did not want to pay someone to come in and remove those channels from the radio. Chair Wethington discussed the reasoning why analog transmit needed to be removed; Flake advised that West Liberty is not sure whether or not they would be able to program all of the portable radios as there may be too many radios in the field. It was shared that MUSCOM is continuing with a point-to-point solution for transmission to other fire stations, as a patch was not created with Cedar County through MUSCOM. Flake clarified that they can hear Cedar County digital transmission on their digital pagers, but cannot transmit on the digital pagers. Semsch/Durant Fire shared that he has a similar problem with Wilton as they do not have any Cedar County radios. He advised that they use MUSCOM radios when on scene with Wilton to prevent any communication difficulties. Additionally, several departments shared that their severe weather sirens have been removed from County Fire Analog.

- c. Moving paging to a separate channel was discussed. Wethington clarified that all other issues were being addressed prior to paging being moved to its own channel.
- d. Freet advised that there were 25 new addresses assigned within the county during the past fiscal year; 5 addresses have been issued during the current fiscal year. She advised that work continues on the MSAG, and advised that there are still issues that are being addressed with the state.
- e. Malott advised that we have been finally approved to install a state radio at dispatch, and the radio is in transport at this time. This will be an 800 Radio installed in dispatch for monitoring of state radio traffic.

Chair Wethington then turned to new business to be presented to the board.

- a. Freet advised that representatives from both Johnson County and Des Moines County were invited to this meeting to discuss their respective dispatch operations. Johnson County was unable to attend. Freet introduced Shanna Krogmeier, Executive Director of DESCOM. Krogmeier provided a presentation on DESCOM operations, and answered several questions from those present regarding administration, governance, funding, operations, staffing, equipment, challenges, technology and other concerns.
- b. Discussion was held regarding the proposed coverage study. Malott reminded the board that there was only one response received from our request for a coverage study. He advised that a proposal was received from MCM of State College, PA, but did not receive any other companies. Discussion was held as to the background of MCM; Malott advised that the company had excellent references. Wethington advised that he had heard

concerns that there was only one bid received. Discussion was held regarding True North Companies, and it was stated that they are currently doing a study in Scott County. Malott advised that he has no idea as to why True North did not respond further, noting that the company may be overwhelmed at this time. Discussion was held as to the reasonability of the bid and the scope of the study. It was decided that the study needs to be done. Mayor Wagner/Stanwood asked if the funds were available and budgeted for this study; Malott advised that a budget amendment would need to be done. Discussion was held as to whether or not the proposal should be accepted, or all proposals thrown out in attempt to obtain additional proposals. Motion was made by Ratliff/Tipton Ambulance Service to accept proposal; motion seconded by Mayor Wagner/Stanwood. Mayor Furry/Mechanicsville believes that this is a good step forward. Motion carried.

- c. Malott advised the group that there are new standards with GIS compliance and receiving funds for GIS funding. He shared that we are finding issues where phone companies are not updating their records when street names/addresses changes; we are also finding situations where certain roads actually belong to another PSAP, but are in Cedar County MSAG. He advised that he has brought these issues to the attention of the state, but until it is resolved, these issues are causing errors and counting against Cedar County. Mayors Laughlin and Furry asked for examples involving their phone companies, and they will contact their local telephone companies. Freet will follow-up with this information.
- d. Malott reported that the process of starting the annual PSAP Expenditure Data Collection will be starting. This is an annual report to advise legislators where funds are being spent on the 911 program.
- e. Freet advised that she and Malott will be spending a good part of the week at the Cedar County Fair refurbishing 911 address markers. This is being done to give the address markers a facelift, and to hopefully assist first responders locate addresses more easily.

Chair Wethington asked if there were any issues for dispatch from Emergency Responders or the Community. He addressed a recent fatality accident near Mechanicsville where departments could not talk to each other with their portables. J. Koch/Mechanicsville Fire advised that there was no signal from the bottom of the hill to the top of the hill on digital or TAC channels. Koch was using the radio in the Mechanicsville brush truck to talk to Dispatch. Wethington stated that he was told that cell phone service did not work in the area; Koch concurred. The radio problems were likely due to coverage. Wethington asked if there is anything that the responders thought could be done in the area; Koch will likely need to drive the area again and will talk to Tipton Fire to determine what options might be available.

Mayor Wagner/Stanwood brought up the issue of inconsistent paging for A5 (Stanwood) and A3 (Mechanicsville). It appears that the dual paging is working only a portion of the time. Wethington asked for examples of when this happened. Wagner referred to Coppess/Stanwood Ambulance. She stated that if the call is in Mechanicsville, then there is a dual page the majority of the time. If the call is in the Stanwood city limits, then there is a dual page with Clarence, but nothing with Mechanicsville. Coppess also stated that pages aren't being received when a call is in the Mechanicsville or Stanwood Fire Districts. Malott advised that EMS and Fire Districts are not the same, so there will be differences in pagings, thus different ESNs. Wagner stated that the paging seemed to be working fine with Stanwood First Responders; he believes that the system began to fail when the Stanwood Ambulance Service started. Lonni Koch/Mechanicsville explained that Mechanicsville and Stanwood are affiliated to provide back-up service to one another, and during the Mechanicsville fatality accident, Stanwood was the service on duty. She stated that Stanwood did not receive a page for the roll-over; Coppess found out about the call because she was monitoring Mechanicsville traffic. Lonni Koch advised that it is her understanding that if there is a call within Stanwood or Mechanicsville areas, both A3 and A5 will be paged, and if one service is not needed, they will disregard the non-needed service. Johnson/Dispatch will research the paging as it pertained to the fatality accident in question.

Wethington/Chair yielded the floor to Malott to discuss training.

- a. Johnson/Dispatch will be attending a webinar regarding changes to PSAP dispatcher training. Malott advised that there is a new set of certifications/standards being addressed and developed.

Wethington/Chair asked if there is anything else. Stoolman/West Branch asked what the next steps will be regarding the possibility of the development of the 28E Executive Committee. Ratliff/Tipton Ambulance reminded the group that he suggested that the service board meet more often to discuss this possibility. Stoolman asked if we could bring more counties/PSAPs into the meeting for additional options. Wagner stated that at some point, he feels that the Board of Supervisors should be included as they may be called upon to provide additional services to a potential new dispatch offshoot. Malott advised that even if an Executive Committee is formed, then the 911 Service Board does not cease operations as it is the only entity that will be recognized by the state. Discussion was held regarding taxation and funding for a separate dispatch entity. It was also suggested that we have additional counties/entities come to the meeting to discuss their operations. Ratliff/Tipton Ambulance asked for a timeline to be set to establish this proposal, and asked Wethington for his opinion. Furry/Mechanicsville suggested that we resolve the radio situation first, and then discuss dispatch as a separate entity. Ratliff pressed that funding sources need to be determined to respond to any potential recommendations received from the network analysis/coverage study. Bell/Supervisors stated

that the funding sources are really only for running dispatch; he believes that we are doing the right thing by trying to get the radio system running efficiently. Bell further stated that he doesn't want the Board to take on too much at one time. Wagner asked Wethington as to whether or not he was in a rush to hand off dispatch; Wethington stated that he wants radios working first, but believes we need to have additional entities attend a meeting to get their points of view.

Wethington announced that the next meeting will be on October 10th, 2019 at 6:30pm.

The motion to adjourn was made by Mayor Furry/Mechanicsville; motion seconded by Mayor Wagner/Stanwood. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned 8:10pm.

Minutes approved October 10, 2019