



METCOM 9-1-1

Governing Board Meeting Minutes

February 23, 2021

(Rescheduled from February 16, 2021 due to severe ice storm)

Members in Attendance: Meeting Held via Zoom On-Line

Sherry Bensema
Jordan Donat
David Frisendahl
Ed Grambusch
Alan Hume
Michael Kahrmann
Dan Mullen
Bill Miles
Marty Pilcher

Dave Rash
Scott Shepherd
Don Taylor
Jim Trierweiler

METCOM Staff:
Wendy Patterson
Mark Spross
John Thompson

Others in Attendance:

Nicholas Hunter
Brian Nicholas
Dari Reddy
Susan Ronning

METCOM regular Governing Board meeting called to order at 10:01 AM with a quorum met by members present via Zoom on-line platform due to COVID-19.

The board meeting was opened by Scott Shepherd.

Board Meeting Minutes: The January 20, 2021 Board meeting minutes were provided in the board packet for review.

Motion to approve minutes: Michael Kahrmann

Motion 2nd: Sherry Bensema

Motion carried no opposition

Marion County Radio Project Update: *Brian Nicholas, MCPW Director & Susan Ronning, ADCOMM*
Brian Nicholas advised a "green light" was received from the Marion County Board of Commissioners to move forward with the full, county wide radio system project. Susan Ronning with ADCOMM provided a quick, high level, overview of the information presented to the Board of Commissioners (a copy of these documents have been provided and attached to these METCOM Board Meeting Minutes). The Commissioners looked primarily at ADCOMM project options B & E. The proposed system would add additional radio sites to the Santiam Canyon. The cost is projected to be approximately \$12 million dollars. It is anticipated the project would be complete in about 3 years. The Commissions approved to move forward with a hybrid radio system that would allow both VHF and a 700/800 system to be available with overlap in some areas. The governance would remain with the County as an ORS 451 County Service District at this time. This would make the County responsible for the project and may allow for additional funding to be available at the County level. This system would require significant radio replacements for user agencies. ADCOMM will be contacting each agency directly to collect data regarding radio and financing needs. Brian Nicholas stated it was the intent of the County to provide upfront funding for the radio project and radio replacement. He also confirmed there would be a user/service fee. This service fee would be to fund the day to day use of the system and to build a fund for radio and capital upgrades. Although the cost of the subscriber fees is unknown at this time, the County is hoping to make the subscriber fees very reasonable so all districts would be able to afford the cost of the project. Brian Nicholas will be focusing on the financial aspect of the radio project, while ADCOMM Representative Susan Ronning will focus on the technical needs.

Brian anticipates there will be a lot of communication over the next 10 months to make the best effort possible to meet everyone's needs. ADCOMM, Brian Nicholas and the Commissioners agree that subsequent interviews with each partnering agency are needed to ensure the system design captures the needs of the agencies. The goal is to have a business plan completed by the end of this calendar year and presented to the Board of Commissioners for their approval, then will be financing.

Under the ORS 451, a Technical Advisory Committee will be formed. This committee will be instrumental in guiding the planning process over the next 3 years. The committee will have between 5 and 6 members from the service districts.

Q: It appears that the proposed system does not provide for a tone out system.

A: Susan R. – We can look at the project design and see if this can be address in the next phase to allow for a tone out system.

Q: Can it be a county wide tone out system?

A: We can look at that possibility and place that request on the list.

Q: The project shows a \$1.1 Million dollar figure for other police and fire radios. Where did this projected number come from?

A: That is based on a radio count that at this time is not realistic. That number will definitely go up. The numbers used were based on a Harris/Tate system, not a Motorola System. They will go out to bid to receive appropriate costs.

Q: What is your response to VHF overlap is not a problem because it can be fine-tuned to the millisecond?

A: VHF overlap is a problem in certain areas. The best you can do on a simulcast system is move the overlap to an area where hopefully there are not a lot of people. There will always be some overlap so it is best to try to design it where is not in an area where a lot of people will be. The other aspect of the VHF system is the noise floor is very high and it is difficult to account for this. This is a reason why ADCOMM recommends moving away from VHF in this type of environment.

Q: I think having a combination radio system is a great idea. It is difficult to make a decision when we are receiving conflicting information regarding different radio systems and you just don't know who is telling the truth. Does ADCOMM and the County understand how many agencies still use the plectron page technology and not able to rely on cell phones?

A: ADCOMM needs more detailed information on this. This will be a conversation with individual agency on how they receive calls.

Q: Will this impact the number of channels available for agency use?

A: This will be a trunk system so usability will increase. VHF will be limited to the frequencies available through the FCC; maybe 3-4 plus a TAC channel.

Q: Is the goal to sole source this project or will it go out to an RFP?

A: It is anticipated the trunking system will go out for RFP. The VHF will most likely not go to bid as some equipment will likely be reused.

Q: The noise issue is real in the Mt. Angel area and we are close to the tower and currently using a VHF system. This is why it is important to move forward with a 700/800 system. Is the plan to continue to a page out system to work along with the 700/800 system?

A: The existing VHF system could remain in place for use, but you would maintain it. The current plan is using 2 Marion County Channels and possibly adding a 3rd channel.

Q: What are the next steps?

A: The METCOM Board should propose 6 individuals to participate in the Technical Advisory Committee; with representation from both Law Enforcement and Fire.

Marion County Ice Storm Update: Brian Nicholas, MCPW Director

Marion County is putting the word out to cities that they will take all storm debris, free of charge, at Brown's Island. The County is also in communication with both Samaritan and Rubicon to provide services to individual property owners who need assistance with debris pick up. They are still working out the details and more information should be available shortly. If anyone has questions regarding storm debris removal, they may contact Brian May, County Waste Manager. Marion County asked for a one week extension on the IDA (Initial Damage Assessment). It is anticipated that the extension will be granted as other counties have also made this request. If agencies are needing assistance with welfare checks, you may contact Matt Wilkinson, MCSO 503-932-1397.

METCOM Budget Committee Presentation:

Budget Chairperson Mark Daniel is not present. Budget Committee Member, Sherry Bensema will present the budget information to the Board.

The following 2021-2022 FY Proposed Budget documents were provided to board members in their board packet prior to the meeting:

- Budget Worksheet (user fees)
- Revenue Detail Report
- Line Item Detail Description
- Radio Project Options (\$850K and \$1.28M)

Sherry reviewed the provided budget documents that proposed a budget of \$3,904,374.33 (not including funding for the radio project). User fees proposed \$1,997,792.46. The overall increase was lower due to 911 tax collection projection. Due to the smoothing of last year's budget with Aurora Fire Department leaving METCOM, fire agencies will see an increase to user's fees this year of about 3.19% and law enforcement will notice a reduction of approximately 4.09%. METCOM will begin bargaining for COLA and health insurance in March of 2021 with a full CBA opening in the 2021-2022 budget year. There is an increase on property insurance costs to appropriately insure METCOM owned equipment and assets.

The floor was opened for any questions.

No questions regarding the proposed budget were brought forward.

Radio Project Options – there are two radio project proposals before the board for budget consideration. This information is provided in the "Dollar Difference Radio Project" document. This outlines the agency cost for both an \$850,000 and a \$1.28M radio project.

Discussion:

Ed Grambusch – Per Silverton Fire Department, looking at it now we (METCOM) should be going to the \$1.28M. Mark Spross clarified that this is actually a \$1.5M project, however the \$1.28 is reflective of what dollars have already been collected in past budget cycles and earmarked for a radio project. Ed, stated this is basically a "savings" account for the METCOM users if we go with the County project, correct? Mark Spross confirmed "yes." METCOM is basically a savings account at this point. It is important to understand that it will show as an overall increase year over year. In addition, it is ok if each individual district would prefer to save the funds on their own within their own budget and not through METCOM.

Dave Frisendahl – it feels good to move forward with our own project while Marion County is moving forward to ensure personnel safety.

Q: Is this dedication money?

A: Yes. These funds have been earmarked under Reserve Capital Outlay, GL# 7050.

Q: Any further discussion?

A: No further discussion brought forward.

Motion: Motion to accept the budget as proposed with collection for the radio project in the amount of \$1.28M. – Dave Frisendahl
Motion 2nd – Mary Pilcher
Opposed – None
Obtained – one (1)
Motion approved to move forward

Budget documents will be updated to show funding for the \$1.28M radio project, for a total proposed budget of \$4,032,374.33 and will be presented at the March 9, 2021 Board Meeting for Budget Approval.

Calls with No Response:

Due to a slow, but steady, increase of calls where law enforcement agencies may choose not to respond on a medical only type call; METCOM staff will do the following: If an agency is not going to respond or enter a location, METCOM will provide the responding agency the contact information for the caller/complainant. The agency will then be responsible for contacting the caller to advise why they will not be responding to the call or entering the location. The responding agency may request METCOM patch or transfer them to the caller. Once the caller has been transferred, the call will no longer be recorded once the METCOM dispatcher leaves the call (completed the transfer/patch).

Legislative Updates:

There are five (5) Bills related to 9-1-1 being presented with the primary intention to reclassify 911 dispatchers as 1st responders and not clerical. These bills are all tied to PERS. It is anticipated that they will not make it out of committee.

HB 2425 – Allows funding for agencies to look at consolidation and may provide for some project funding. The intent is to cut the number of PSAPS from 43 to around 10.

HB 2927 – Places OEM as a standalone agency and out of OMD.

SB 363 – This is referencing the old Emergency Alert System. It allows for the encoder to be placed in PSAPS so the alert system can be initiated from that location.

SCR 6 – Commends Mill City rural Fire Protection District and other first responders for their heroic actions in fighting the Santiam Fire.

Chief Ferraris Retirement:

Chief Jim Ferraris will be in the office for his last day on March 1, 2021. METCOM would like to express appreciation for his work on the METCOM Board of Directors and his close work with METCOM in general. Congratulations to Marty Pilcher who has been named interim Woodburn Police Chief.

Open Agenda:

- Ed Grambusch – Expressed appreciation for the outstanding job METCOM staff did during the unprecedented ice storm. In addition, they provided great support during an unusual call for service when a citizen fell down a well. Chief Trierweiler with Mt. Angel Fire also provided assistance with organizing the rope rescue team.

- Mark Spross – Thank you to all the agencies for the work and support during the ice storm. During the three day event METCOM answered 3,800 calls for service, with a single day high of 1,880 calls. Mark was extremely proud of the work of all the dispatchers and the help provided from Supervisor Louise Funk who was present at the start of the high call volume. METCOM answered more calls during this event than during the Beachie Creek Fires. A big thank you to Supervisor John Thompson who ensured that the center continued to function, the backup center generator had fuel and employees were fed. Thank you to Woodburn Police and Woodburn Fire who assisted METCOM employees to and from work as needed and provided sleeping quarters if needed.
- Scott Shepherd – Marion County would like 6 persons from METCOM to participate on the Radio Project Technical Advisory Committee; preferably 3 fire and 3 law enforcement representatives. If you are interested, please contact Mark Spross.

Future Board Meetings:

March 9, 2021 at 10:00 am via Zoom – Budget Approval

June 1, 2021 – Adoption of Budget / Public Hearing

September 28, 2021

Meeting adjourned at 11:23 AM.