

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS TASK FORCE

Regular Meeting No. 24 – Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2024

Via Microsoft Teams

11:15 AM - Call to Order and Roll Call

Co-Chair Neal brought the meeting to order and conducted roll call for Task Force members. She reminded the attendees that the meeting was being recorded.

The following were in attendance:

Task Force Members Present

Barbara Neal, E911 Director, Co-Chair

Jennifer Morrison, Public Safety Commissioner, Co-Chair

Paul White, Regional Dispatch Working Group, Vice-Chair (arrived after roll call)

James ‘Jim’ Mack, Shelburne Dispatch

Ron Kumetz, VSFA

Others Present

Soni Johnson, E911 Board Clerk (subbing for Task Force Clerk Cally Audet)

Senator Irene Wrenner (Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee)

Dominick Arcuri

Rance Duffy

Rick Burke

Phillip Sisk

Stephen Whitaker

Kim Cheney

Approval of Agenda – no changes were made to the agenda

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Ron Kumetz moved to accept the minutes of the 4/10/24 meeting (Regular Meeting No. 23) as written; 2nd by Jim Mack. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously. Note: Paul White was not in attendance for this vote.

Public Comment

Stephen Whitaker asked Task Force members to confirm if a two-year extension was asked for (with a one-year extension granted). Co-Chair Morrison confirmed that a one-year extension was asked for and granted. Mr. Whitaker also commented on:

- Governance continues to be an issue. You get what you pay for. No plan is in place and what is being worked on does not meet statutory requirements.
- Dead zones – finding them is important – the current pace of this work is too slow.

- An architecture is lacking – what will the State’s radio system and the State’s microwave system be used for in the long run in support of the transition to regional dispatch?
- Local and regional people don’t trust this effort or the department.
- The 10-year telecommunications plan refers to a consolidation of dispatch but doesn’t articulate what that means.
- The Task Force should use the one-year extension for Mission Critical to get a planning framework and architecture in place.

Project Updates

Dominick Arcuri provided project updates:

- They are focusing on the plans for the data collection activities.
- A draft data collection form has been created and is under review.
- Televate is working with Mission Critical Partners on coordinating wireless data collection.
- Televate met with Corey Chase (Department of Public Service) concerning the wireless situation and facilities throughout the state.
- A draft of the inventory and assessment schedule is in progress.
- A draft *Frequently Asked Questions* has been developed. Updates are ongoing and it should be ready for publishing soon.
- They are working on additional outreach plans.
- Work on the April stakeholder newsletter is ongoing, and it should be published soon.
- Televate is reviewing the GeoSpectrum SPA report.

GeoSpectrum, Inc. (GSI), Strategic Planning Assessment – CDS Plan

Co-Chair Neal provided a brief overview of the Strategic Planning Assessment (SPA) report. This report was distributed to members prior to the meeting and a copy of the report is attached to these minutes for the record.

Co-Chair Neal and Co-Chair Morrison invited member comments.

Ron Kumetz commented that nothing on the list of suggested expenditures will hogtie the task force moving forward and provided a brief description of the difference between trunking and conventional radio systems.

Dispatch Center Survey Questions Review

Dispatch survey questions were distributed to members prior to the meeting and the draft document is attached to these minutes for the record.

Senator Wrenner, Stephen Whitaker, and Kim Cheney asked that a copy of the draft questions be sent to them via email.

Co-Chair Neal invited members to comment on the draft document.

Rance Duffy provided a brief overview of the draft document and detailed the plans for incorporating member recommendations.

Paul White left the meeting at approximately 11:53 AM.

Draft Survey Question Review (by section)

It was recommended that the document introduction include a sentence instructing that answers be left blank if not known.

Co-Chair Neal noted that the Enhanced 911 Board would be able to provide all 911 system and coverage information asked for in this survey.

- Contact Information – Demographics (questions 1-12)
 - Questions 6-10
Members asked for clarification on jurisdiction (911 jurisdiction vs. dispatch jurisdiction, should the answers be broken out by Law, Fire, and EMS). It was suggested that this section/questions could also be used to gather agency information and towns covered.
- Technology (questions 13-33)
 - Question 16 should be updated to clarify/specify that it applies to any dispatch system upgrades. A comment section could be added for agencies to provide specific details.
 - Question 24 should have ANI/ALI added to the list of CAD interfaces and applications.
 - Question 26 should also ask for the number of radio consoles.
 - Question 27 should be reworded so the answer provides specific radio technology details. Questions concerning radio technology could be broken out into its own section. Radio contact information needs to be gathered here.
 - Question 28 could be used to get specifics from each agency concerning known dead zones.
 - Question 32 can be removed from the survey. The Enhanced 911 Board can provide that information.
 - Question 33 should ask for specific information and/or examples.
- Facilities & Equipment (questions 34-40)
 - Question 34 needs to clarify what is meant by a workstation (used for 911 only, dispatch only, both dispatch/911, etc.).
 - Question 39 needs to be worded to collect specific backup/battery information; a yes/no answer will not be helpful.
 - Question 40 – The reference to 911 phones can be removed.
- Operations (questions 41-51)
 - This section needs to be clear that it is looking for dispatch function information (not 911). Dispatch agencies govern the adoption of their own standards/protocols. The Enhanced 911 Board can provide all details concerning the standards adopted for 911 purposes.
 - Question 48 should clarify what is meant by a “unit”.
 - Question 49 – the ancillary duties list needs a few updates. This question/section could also be used to quantify the amount of each shift that is spent on ancillary duties, though that information might be better gathered during agency site visits.
- Personnel & Staffing (questions 52-77)
 - Should information be gathered on the amount of overtime worked?
- 911 Calls & Incident Data (questions 78-99)
 - The Enhanced 911 Board can provide all 911 call information. This section should be used for collecting dispatch information (including 911 transfers). Rename section to Dispatch Calls & Incident Data.
 - Question 78 needs to clarify what is meant by call volume (answered, dispatched, or both).

- Questions 88-90 ask for total incident information. Members asked if answers should be detailed by specific incident type.
- The Enhanced 911 Board can provide all the information asked for in questions 80-83, 86, 91-92, and 94.
- Question 86 – Can headquarters provide this information for all the law enforcement agencies?
- Several questions state “(one month average is acceptable)”. It should be clarified that the answer can be an average of one month’s data, not that a one-month average response time is acceptable.
- Question 96 – How much detail should the answer provide?
- Leadership & Planning (questions 100-104)
 - Should governance be added to this section (or should there be a separate governance section)?
- Budget & Finance (questions 105-109)
 - Agencies can attach copies of their budgets (instead of trying to type in details).
 - Question 105 – Will out of state/private dispatch agencies want to share this information (will they consider it confidential)?
 - Question 106 – The Enhanced 911 Board can provide 911 system data.
 - Question 108 – ‘911 Tax’ can be removed from the list (911 is funded at the State level through the Universal Service Fund).
- Data Request Checklist (question 110)
 - Add a definition for ILA and MOU.
 - The ‘List of adopted standards’ should specify that it is for dispatch, not 911.

Co-Chair Neal opened the floor to public comment concerning the draft survey questions.

- Kim Cheney commented that the survey should ask about dead zones and that governance will sink this whole project or make it work; a single board with taxing authority is needed. It must be determined what the average per-person cost for dispatching service is in each community in order to build a funding plan.
- Stephen Whitaker commented that without an architecture or vision of what is being built, no agency is going to be motivated to answer a 33-page survey.

New Business – none

Set Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

The next regular meeting is scheduled for 5/8/24.

Motion: Jim Mack made a motion to adjourn; 2nd by Ron Kumetz. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Soni Johnson

Soni Johnson, E911 Board

4/29/24

Date