

STATE OF VERMONT PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS TASK FORCE

Regular Meeting No. 29 – Meeting Minutes

July 10, 2024

Via Microsoft Teams

11:27 AM - Call to Order

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
James ‘Jim’ Mack, Shelburne Dispatch
Ron Kumetz, VSFA

Others Present

Cally Audet, Task Force Clerk
Dominick Arcuri, Televate
Rick Burke, Televate
Rance Duffy, Mission Critical Partners
Phil Sisk, Mission Critical Partners
Stephen Whitaker
Kim Cheney
Senator Irene Wrenner, Joint Information Oversight Committee

Approval of Agenda

No changes were made to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

- 06/19/2024 – Regular Meeting No. 28

Motion: At 11:31 AM, Ron Kumetz moved that the Task Force approve the minutes as written; 2nd by Jim Mack. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Co-Chair Neal opened the floor to public comment.

Kim Cheney inquired if there was any follow up on the Central Vermont congressional spending projects. Co-Chair Morrison shared that the Radio Technology team is working on follow-up for all known radio projects to date and shared that she would check in with Director Chase and report back.

Stephen Whitaker provided the following comments:

- Received responses back from Department of Public Service and the Enhanced 9-1-1 Board that no records exist regarding Mission Critical Partner (MCP) pursuing database access to conduct propagation study of LTE coverage as required; and shared that a similar effort was completed as part of 10-year telecom plan.
- It appears that the attorney to be retained for regional governance has been shelved and believes this should be addressed.
- Concerned that Windham County Sheriff's earmark and pending Central VT earmark fail to integrate with activities intended to be completed by the Task Force; to include topics such as LTE, LMR and governance.
- Took issue with Televate reviewing COPS Technology plan.
- Reiterated his belief that pilot projects should be initiated.

Project Updates:

Dom Arcuri from the Televate project management team provided the following project updates:

- Teams are still in the process of data gathering from dispatch centers. Have continued receiving responses and are providing follow-up with those who have not yet responded.
- On-site visits are being scheduled and are set to begin next week.
- MCP is working to organize onsite review of wireless and other dispatch systems and have or are working to schedule meetings with Radio Technology Service (set for July 29th), and other radio shops throughout the state with meaningful knowledge of the wireless systems.
- Have been working to identify agencies that perform dispatch but may not interact with 9-1-1.
- The project is a bit behind in data questionnaire collection and has been noted as an issue moving forward, however the team feels that this issue can be addressed during on-site visits.
- A visual schedule has been created to capture progress to date (page 3 of status update).
- Highlighted that the team is still in the data collection stage and will not have system design options until the November timeframe.
- Percentage trackers have been created for major milestones and will continue to be updated as the project progresses.

Co-Chair Neal shared that she finds the report very helpful in providing a visual depiction of the current state, what has been completed, and what has yet to come. She also shared that she was hopeful that a greater number of responses to the dispatch questionnaire are received during the on-site discussions.

Rance Duffy from the Mission Critical Partner team provided the following updates:

- Site visits will begin next week.
- Some of the delay in questionnaire submissions were anticipated due to the length of the survey.

Rick Burke shared that the July Stakeholder Update is currently under review and hopes to send it out in the next 24 hours.

New Business

Co-Chair Neal shared that the Chairs and Vice-Chair have been in communication with the Televate team regarding customer feedback. Televate is working to develop a customer survey to be sent out by the Task Force to gauge how the customers perceive the services provided by dispatch centers. This will aid in developing recommendations for a system to be built to address as many customers' needs as possible. More to come on this topic at future meetings.

Co-Chair Neal shared about a conversation she had with former co-worker who is currently serving as a dispatcher for a local police department. She and other dispatchers around the state have spent many years making available dispatch training programs available with the support and assistance of the Enhanced 911 Board, Vermont Police Academy and other stakeholders. This group although an informal group has had many advanced conversations regarding minimum training standards and have expressed interest in becoming a more formal organization to support the dispatch function and provide minimum training standards, dispatcher wellness programs and continue to advocate for other dispatch related issues.

If the Task Force members agree that it would be beneficial to hear more from this group and the work they have completed to date, Co-Chair Neal will work with this individual to provide a presentation at a future meeting. All agreed this would be beneficial.

Co-Chair Neal stated that she would begin the necessary conversations for this initial presentation and shared that there may be other organizations or entities who might have valuable expertise worth bringing in for other future presentations as this project continues.

Co-Chair Morrison agreed that the need to start running in all lanes at once is certainly the direction the group should be looking to move into, but also reminded folks that the Task Force only holds the authority proscribed in Act 78. Minimum training standards, governance and possible types of governance are the lanes that we need to start moving in, so if there are other groups in the State with relevant expertise, the Task Force should consider communicating with them moving forward.

Co-Chair Morrison expressed her shared concern with Mr. Whitaker's earlier comments regarding the lack of coordination among radio projects across the state. She mentioned that the Radio Technology team has made multiple attempts to reach out to known entities that receive funding for these projects. However, she emphasized that the Task Force does not have the authority to dictate how local or regional communities spend federal dollars, as these allocations are approved by the federal agency. She reiterated that while she understands and shares Mr. Whitaker's concerns, the Task Force is currently unable to project a preordained notion of what the final outcome of this process will be. She emphasized that the ability to remain nimble in project planning and development is no longer feasible given the legislative constraints set forth in Act 78.

Co-Chair Neal shares these concerns and appreciates DPS' outreach to date.

Jim Mack added in terms of legislative intent workforce standards is an item that has been tasked to this group.

Ron Kumetz added to Co-Chair Morrison's earlier comments that one of the current challenges in this process is that the group is having to fight decades of residual distrust from prior efforts and provided the E-Comm Lifeline System as an example. He shared that information gathering and outreach is critical to determining how to funnel efforts in one direction. These do not have to be projects directly funded by the Task Force but do need to build trust for other stakeholders to build on the foundation this group sets forth.

Co-Chair Neal shared that she has had more than one conversation with folks from dispatch centers and has also received the feedback of the mistrust that Ron spoke to. It's important for the Task Force to continue to reiterate that there is not a preordained approach to this, and that engagement and input throughout this process is valued and appreciated.

Mr. Whitaker reminded the group that there is \$11 million in general funds that could be used to partner with these current projects to help guide in the direction that might be presented at the end of this process.

Kim Cheney shared that he anticipated some of the questions that would be presented during the on-site visits would be how much is this going to cost and who is going to pay for it, who is going to tell us how much, and when. He shared that he believed the Task Force will regret not having an attorney to help work through the review of possible systems at the end of this process.

Co-Chair Morrison shared not having an attorney on retainer at all times does not mean some of the money would not be able to be used for specific legal purposes, and reminded the group that the scope of work with MCP does include addressing the governance portion of this process. It will be MCP's responsibility to run in that lane and the Task Force will provide the support they need. She also acknowledged that there will likely need to be some local expertise in this process.

Mr. Cheney shared a prior conversation had with Co-Chair Morrison about the need for a public description of what dispatchers do, as many, including legislators, do not understand the root of the issues that need to be addressed.

Co-Chair Morrison added that the conversation Mr. Cheney mentioned took place prior to Act 78 being established, and that the path looks very different now.

Confirm Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

The next regular meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 24th, at 11:15 AM.

Cally will be away at a conference that week; Barb to check Soni's availability for that day.

Motion: There being no further business, Co-Chair Morrison made a motion to adjourn; 2nd by Ron Kumetz. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cally Audet
Cally Audet, Clerk

07/10/24
Date

DRAFT