

STATE OF VERMONT PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS TASK FORCE

Regular Meeting No. 34 – Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2024

Via Microsoft Teams

11:15 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, Vermont E911 Director, Co-Chair
James ‘Jim’ Mack, Shelburne Dispatch
Ron Kumetz, VSFA
Paul White, Regional Dispatch Working Group, Vice-Chair

Others Present

Cally Audet, Task Force Clerk
Dominick Arcuri, Televate
Rick Burke, Televate
Rance Duffy, Mission Critical Partners
Jason Malloy, Mission Critical Partners
Gigi Smith, Mission Critical Partners
Stephen Whitaker, Montpelier

Approval of Agenda

No changes.

Approval of Minutes

- 09/04/2024 – Regular Meeting No. 33

Motion: At 11:19 AM, Ron Kumetz moved that the Task Force approve the minutes as written; 2nd by Paul White. Motion passed unanimously.

Regional Town Hall Update

Co-Chair Neal shared that three of the four Town Hall Meetings have been completed, and the final will take place Thursday evening, September 19th. Some of the themes identified throughout the sessions thus

far have been statewide CAD, local control, equity and funding, access to resources, radio coverage, and the impact of the Rutland and Derby VSP closers in 2015. Co-Chair Neal also shared that participants have shared their gratitude for the ability to attend and provide feedback.

Each of the Town Hall sessions had the following participation:

- Northwest (Swanton) - 14 virtual participants and 13 in person participants.
- Southwest (Pittsford) - 19 virtual participants and 30 in person participants.
- Northeast (St. Johnsbury) - 26 virtual participants and 13 in person participants.

Co-Chair Neal opened the floor to thoughts from Task Force members on how they feel the town hall sessions are going thus far.

Paul White shared that while he only attended the Pittsford session, he definitely found there to be a theme of attendees discussing the impact of the VSP closures.

Ron Kumetz shared that he felt after hearing the discussion in Swanton that one of the problems going forward – radio coverage and local control – are part of the issue of why we are where we are. He shared that upon federal funding being made available following September 11th, local communities went about building their own systems in a manner that they believed would solve their own problems; however, did not communicate with any of their neighbors before doing so. He shared that in order for this to work, neighbors are going to need to learn to work together.

Jim shared that some of the feedback he heard had been that many participants want local control but want the money to be provided to them.

Co-Chair Neal asked for thoughts from Televate and MCP team members on how they feel the Town Halls are going.

Dom Arcuri shared that he agrees with the themes identified, and also shared that while many neighbors have not learned to work together yet, he has heard of some success stories of regional systems in Vermont to date (Lamoille County, St. Albans).

Ron Kumetz suggested the possibility of the Task Force developing some type of template to encourage neighbors to work together. If there happens to be a pot of money, they could consider making funds available contingent on communities working together.

Rick Burke shared themes he had identified throughout the sessions - policy, procedures and standards, funding (how much, where is it coming from and how will it be sustained).

Rance Duffy shared some observations and themes identified by his team during both the town hall sessions and on-site visits; to include CAD issues, the two PSAPs closing, radio coverage, cell coverage, and financing and equitability.

Co-Chair Neal shared that the beginning stages of planning for the future Community Listening Session is underway. They are hoping to have two (2) remote sessions in early to mid-October. Once those dates have been set, a poll will be circulated to Task Force members for availability.

Public Comment

Co-Chair Neal opened the floor to public comment.

Stephen Whitaker provided the following comments:

- Having listened to Town Hall Sessions, he felt that if you do not give attendees an idea of what is to come, people don't know what to ask.
- He was disappointed that the Town Hall discussions did not propose governance structures, mistake analysis and reporting.
- Felt as though the town hall sessions were wasted time.
- He expressed his opinion that the Task Force must start a propagation study.
- There is a need to program radio codes ahead of time to various dispatch centers to have failover.

Project Updates:

Rick Burke from the Televate project management team provided the following project updates:

- MCP completed two (2) of the remaining eight (8) dispatch center site visits this week.
- MCP continues to compile and analyze the data collected from the questionnaires and dispatch center visits.
- MCP's wireless team is in the process of developing maps of the wireless information that has been collected.
- Televate reached out to additional public safety leaders to understand and document coverage challenges.
- The content for the Town Halls was completed and (2) Town Halls (Sept 11, 12) were held.
- Further drafting of the content for the Town halls continued.
- The pursuit of additional cyber security surveys was put on hold until after Labor Day and will kick off soon.
- A Town Hall session was held yesterday (9/17), and another will be held tomorrow (9/19).
- Have worked diligently to get caught up on past due items.

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

- Reiterated many of Televate's reported items.
- By the end of this week, the dispatch center on-site visits and Regional Town Hall sessions will be complete.
- Rance Duffy announced that he will leaving Mission Critical Partners for a full-time opportunity with the military. He will remain on part-time; however, Jason Malloy will be taking over as the Project Manager for this project.

Jason Malloy introduced himself and provided a brief overview of his experience.

Co-Chair Neal welcomed Jason, and thanked Rance for all of his hard work and commitment to this project.

New Business

Ron Kumetz shared an observation from recent interactions and town hall sessions, stating that it is very clear that when the Task Force asks people about things, there is a very wide range of perception. Moving forward there needs to be a baseline when asking questions and should avoid open-ended questions.

Co-Chair Neal shared that she received an invitation to speak to the Vermont EMS Advisory Council. She will be providing an update on the Task Force and is hoping to open up lines of communications with attendees at that meeting.

Rance Duffy shared that registration is still open for the Southwest Town Hall meeting and encouraged Co-Chair Neal to let attendees know and provide the registration link.

Ron Kumetz shared that he will be holding a pilot meeting with first responders in his region to encourage more people to participate. Rick Burke offered to sit in on the pilot meeting if he'd like.

Paul White inquired if there was there EMS representation in Swanton and St. Johnsbury. Jim Mack shared that there were a few in Swanton, but not many. Co-Chair Neal shared that there was one in the room in St. Johnsbury but was not sure about virtual. They will need to look into that.

Confirm Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

The next regular meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 2nd, at 11:15 AM.

Motion: There being no further business, Jim Mack made a motion to adjourn; 2nd by Ron Kumetz. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cally Audet

Cally Audet, Clerk

09/20/24

Date