

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS TASK FORCE

Special Meeting No. 1 – Meeting Minutes

September 6, 2023
Via Microsoft Teams

3:26 PM - Call to Order & 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 throughout the meeting:

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
Michael Wright, CEO of Calx Ambulance
James ‘Jim’ Mack, Shelburne Dispatch
Ron Kumetz, VSFA
Mike Doenges, Mayor, Rutland City

Others Present

Cally Audet, Task Force Clerk
Mandy Wooster, Policy Development, Department of Public Safety
Phillip Sisk, Mission Critical Partners
Stephen Whitaker
Darek Wiczorek
Jim Morgan
Richard Townend

Approval of Agenda

At the onset of the meeting, there were no additional changes requested. Moved on to next agenda item, ‘Discuss Little RFP Bidder Questions and Responses (Possible Executive Session)’.

Discuss Little RFP Bidder Questions and Responses (Possible Executive Session)

At 3:29 PM, Co-Chair Neal asked Members to entertain a motion to enter executive session to discuss information related to the Project Management Support RFP that may impact contract negotiations.

Motion made at 3:29 PM by Michael Donges to enter executive session to discuss information related to the Project Management Support RFP that may impact contract negotiations, 2nd by Jennifer Morrison. Co-Chair Morrison requested that the agenda item including Executive Session be moved to the end of the agenda as to mindful of guest's time and asked to return to the agenda item 'Approval of Agenda'.

At 3:31 PM, motion to enter executive session by Mike Doenges was withdrawn, and second by Co-Chair Morrison was withdrawn.

Approval of Agenda

Returned this agenda item at 3:31 PM to discuss moving Executive Session to the end of the agenda as to be mindful of time for members of the public who had joined the meeting.

Member, Ron Kumetz entered the meeting at 3:31 PM

Co-Chair Neal stated that we would be unable to move Executive Session to the last item, as there would need to be an item for voting on next steps immediately following.

Paul White shared that unless provided reason(s) not to, he would be voting against moving to Executive Session to discuss the Project Management Support RFP bidder questions and answers, as he felt that the RFP is now a public document, and the questions and answers will also be posted publicly.

Co-Chair Neal stated that there would be further discussion on this matter once there is a motion approved to rearrange the agenda.

Motion: Motion made at 3:33 PM by Barb Neal to move executive session to the end of the agenda with the caveat that the task force may have a vote in public session immediately following; 2nd by James Mack. Motion passed.

Public Comment

Co-Chair Neal opened the floor to the public for comments.

Stephen Whitaker provided feedback on the appropriate manner in which a meeting should be run. He stated that the Task Force should not enter executive session to further discuss the RFP and questioned the legality of previous Task Force process. He stated that the Task Force was allegedly in constant violation of the law.

Co-Chair Neal opened the floor to any other guests prior to moving on.

Discuss Little RFP Bidder Questions and Responses (Possible Executive Session)

Co-Chair Neal shared that co-chairs have discussed moving to executive session with both Department of Public Safety and E911 Board legal counsel and found that while it is true that the questions and ultimate responses that the Task Force approved will be public, the discussion around the content of the RFP that

will be required by the Members could put the Task Force at a disadvantage and could impact contract negotiations. All vendors will receive the answers at the same time. If conversation is held in public, some parties may get their info before other vendors.

Co-Chair Morrison echoed what Co-Chair Neal stated and added that legal counsel advised that it is unusual to publicly discuss the contents of an RFP while it is still open for bidding, and public discussions of the contents could disrupt the RFP process by injecting comments and statements outside of the RFP that could influence the bidding process. She stated that counsel did share that it would be appropriate to briefly enter executive session for the purpose of approving the answers to the questions, but not further engage in broad policy discussion during that executive session.

Further discussion took place with Task Force Members regarding their thoughts on entering executive session.

Paul White state that if legal counsel has suggested they enter executive session he would not be opposed, but believed the conversation should be kept to the bare minimum.

Michael Wright shared that he believed the members should adhere to the guidance of legal counsel.

Ron Kumetz shared that there could be a great benefit to having the conversation in public forum as it could lead to gathering additional useful information, but if they were to enter executive session it should be to discuss the bare minimum.

At 3:43 PM, Jennifer Morrison motioned to enter executive session for the narrow purpose of approving responses to the questions received from potential bidders to the little RFP for project management, 2nd by James. Mack.

Discussion took place with a member of the public regarding correct procedure, and Co-Chairs shared that this is a time to hear from Task Force Members only. Further discussion took place regarding correct process.

Vice-Chair, Paul White stated that prior to the motion to enter executive session, there should be a motion to find that premature general knowledge would place the task for as a disadvantage.

At 3:46 PM Co-Chair Morrison withdrew her original motion to enter executive session.

Motion: At 3:36 PM Co-Chair Morrison motioned that she found general discussion of the substance of the RFP, while it is open for bid, could disadvantage the state and therefore task force members should discuss the response to the RFP question in executive session; 2nd by James Mack. No further discussion, motion passed.

Motion: At 3:47 PM, Michael Doenges motioned to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing the vendor questions and potential responses on the little RFP for project management; 2nd by Jennifer Morrison. No further discussion, motion passed.

Guest, Stephen Whitaker asked that executive session be recorded. Co-Chair Morrison shared that executive session would not be recorded and requested constructive input be shared moving forward.

Motion: At 4:37 PM, Michael Doenges motioned to leave executive session and return to the special meeting; 2nd by Paul White. No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Vote Regarding New Steps for Little RFP Bidder Questions and Responses

Motion: At 4:40 PM, Ron Kumetz motioned to accept the proposed answers as discussed and edited in executive session, and to the answers forward back to the Business Office for public posting; 2nd by Paul White. No further discussion. Motion passed 6-0; Co-Chair Neal absent at time of vote.

Adjournment

Motion: There being no further business, Ron Kumetz made a motion to adjourn; 2nd by Barb Neal. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cally Audet
Cally Audet

9/6/23
Date