

Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council
Western Massachusetts Regional Interoperability Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 19, 2015, 12:30 pm
WMEMS, 168 Industrial Drive, Northampton, Ma.

In attendance: Raine Brown (FRCOG), Brenda Codella (FRCOG), Russ Sienkiewicz (NPD), Gary Cromack (SAIC), Peter Cowles (WEMA), Robert Garriepy (HPD), Steve Kozloski (MPD), John Paciorek (DPD), Bernard Forgea (CFD/CPD), Melissa Nazzaro (Spfld Comm), Jason Breault (BCSO), Dennis Nazzaro (NFD), Lindsay Stromgen (AFD/HCFCA), Anthony Gentile (EMD), Tom Grady (BCSO), Walter Tibbetts (FCECS), Carolyn Shores Ness (BOS/BOH), Wendy Snow (SC), Paul Madera (LPD), Matt Grudgen (FRCOG), Bob Dean (FRCOG)

The meeting was brought to order by Melissa Nazzaro at 12:34 pm. A round of introductions followed. Raine Brown introduced Matt Grudgen, a Homeland Security Program intern with the FRCOG for the summer. Raine stated that Matt is available to visit some departments for a day.

The committee reviewed the minutes from the April 19, 2015 meeting.

<p>Motion: Steve Kozloski moved to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2015 meeting as submitted. Jason Breault seconded. Motion passed.</p>
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A round of introductions followed.

Project Updates

Hampshire Hills 800

Raine Brown stated that there may be some last minute equipment installations needed.

WMLEC Borden Fiber

Steve Kozloski stated that this project is moving forward. Gary Cromack stated that a purchase order was issued to Pittsfield Communications on May 4th. The installation of the fiber optic cable is scheduled for the end of May.

Hovey Hill

Gary stated that he has a part number for Raine. The EHP for the project was approved on April 28th.

Great Hill to Borden Microwave Link

Gary stated that the FCC licensing application has been submitted for this project. Gary will work on drafting the bid specifications.

BCSO Mobile Command Unit Pneumatic Tower

Raine stated that she will work with Jason Breault to finalize the bid specifications.

Interoperability Consultant Report

Gary stated that the FCC license for WMLEC was issued in February. Gary stated that he will create a reduced coverage map for Mt. Tom 800 Mhz system for 40 watts rather than 100 watts as requested by Connecticut because of interference issues to consider at the next meeting.

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Western Mass Interoperable Systems Update

Franklin County – Walter Tibbetts stated that the paging issue in Franklin County is still prevalent. More installation issues have been discovered. FCECS approved emergency funds to address three antenna installations.

MSP – No update was given.

Berkshire County – Tom Grady stated that there has been lots of use of the Field Comm Unit lately. Tom stated that he visited all of the tower sites to take photos. There is a new antenna on the Lenox Mountain tower. There was a meeting in Becket to discuss dead spots in that area for communications. Jason stated that the meeting was very productive and now Hampden, Franklin and Hampshire Counties first responders can communicate. Melissa Nazzaro stated that she would like to discuss this collaborative effort after the meeting to possibly use it as a model for other agencies to collaborate.

Hampshire County – Bernie Forgea stated that the Hampshire County System is working well.

WMLEC – Steve Kozloski stated there is a licensing issue that is being worked on. The air show had about 400,000 people attend. The WMLEC channels 1 and 2 were incorporated into the comp plan and were used to coordinate local agencies with the base. Steve stated that he discussed the installation errors with Comtronics.

CMED – No update was given.

Requests

FCECS Engineering Study

Bruce Bellevue gave a video presentation. Gary stated that most of the issues are from poor installation practices and cutting corners. The system was originally designed as a 7 site system and has increased to 9. As the sites were added the system was not optimized. The original 7 site system worked well. Currently there are many dead spots. The New Salem tower is the highest priority to fix the antennas. Mt. Grace, Mt. Toby and Country Hill antennas also need attention. Discussion followed concerning the sign off process and whether the original vendor can be held responsible. Wendy Snow stated that this a dangerous situation and someone may get hurt as a result of these issues. Jason asked if there is a work around available using the 800 system.

Melissa stated that she was not comfortable considering an engineering study without a Scope of Work included with it. Raine stated that she will need information from FCECS to create a Scope of Work. Tom stated that he would like the SIEC to discuss this project before approving it at the Council level.

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Motion: Peter Cowles moved to table the FCECS Engineering Study until a detailed Scope of Work is prepared. Bernard Forgea seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

WMLEC VHF-UHF Patch

Steve Kozloski asked that this be removed from the agenda.

New Business

WMRIC Chair

Raine stated that Melissa Nazzaro has been appointed as the WMRIC Chair. There is now a seat on the WMRIC Subcommittee vacant. Please contact Raine or Melissa with nominations.

Business Unforeseen by the Chair

Raine stated that the Subcommittee has \$127,729 of unallocated funds that need to be spent down by July 31, 2016. Due to the complicated nature of interoperability projects the Subcommittee will need to move forward soon to be able to use these funds effectively. Tom Grady stated that he will compile an equipment list for the *Pittsfield Punch Down Block project (I have no idea what this should be)*. Carolyn Shores Ness suggested offering the Communications 101 trainings again.

The Subcommittee members thanked Russ Sienkiewicz for his leadership and dedication. Russ thanked the Subcommittee for their hard work.

Next Steps/Future Meetings

The next meeting is scheduled for June 16th at 12:30 at WMEMS.

There being no further business Russ Sienkiewicz motioned to adjourn. Dennis Nazzaro seconded. The motion was voted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:06 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by
Gretchen Johnson
Homeland Security Program Assistant
Franklin Regional Council of Governments