

Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council  
Western Massachusetts Regional Interoperability Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
February 17, 2015, 12:30 pm  
WMEMS, 168 Industrial Drive, Northampton, Ma.

**In attendance:** Raine Brown (FRCOG), Gretchen Johnson (FRCOG), Russ Sienkiewicz (NPD), Peter Rosamilia (SAIC), Melissa Nazzaro (Springfield Comm), Dennis Nazzaro (NFD), Lindsay Stromgren (AFD/HCFCA), Gary Cromack (SAIC), Tom Grady (BCSO), Peter Cowles (WEMA), Robert Garriepy (HPD), Steve Kozloski (MPD), John Paciorek (DPD), Manny Litos (Motorola), Matthew Barstow (MSP), Jeffrey Coe (DPD), Jason Breault (BCSO), Brent Ohrman (Motorola), Anthony Gentile (EEM).

The meeting was brought to order by Russ Sienkiewicz at 12:39 pm. A round of introductions followed.

The committee reviewed the minutes from the January 20, 2015 meeting.

<p><b>Motion:</b> Tom Grady moved to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2015 meeting as submitted. Steve Kozloski seconded. Motion passed.</p>
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A round of introductions followed.

### **Project Updates**

#### *Hampshire Hills 800*

Manny Litos stated that all of the hardware except for two vehicle repeaters has been received. The baseline templates have been received for programming.

#### *WMLEC Borden Fiber*

Gary Cromack stated that this project will install fiber from an MSP shelter to a DCR H-frame. The installation will wait until the spring. MSP will install the electronics that will attach at each end of the fiber.

Gary stated that the P25 upgrade for the WMLEC system was included in the purchase price and will be done in the spring.

#### *Hovey Hill*

Steve Kozloski stated that he spoke with the Hampden Chief of Police and the areas of primary concern are not addressed with the omni directional antenna proposed. Gary stated that the antenna is currently licensed as an omni directional antenna. Steve stated that the change slightly improves coverage but does not eliminate any current “dead” spots. Gary stated that he estimates the cost would be about \$10,000. Raine stated that the project was budgeted \$90,000 originally. Discussion followed. The Committee decided to go ahead with the change. Raine stated that an EHP will be required.

#### *Great Hill to Borden Microwave Link*

Gary stated that this is a hub site for the Franklin County system. This fix will increase capacity for the system as well as partially complete a ring that will create redundancy for the WMLEC

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system. Gary stated that the license process is underway. An RFP will be released in the spring for the installation.

**Interoperability Consultant Report**

Gary asked Manny to give an update on the site monitoring quote. Manny stated that the quote is being compiled. Manny stated that he is researching the features and benefits in order to propose the best fit for the WMLEC System.

**Western Mass Interoperable Systems Update**

WMLEC – Russ Sienkiewicz stated that two sites are in the process of being relicensed.

Berkshire County - Tom Grady stated that Dispatch is moving over to the 800 system. The MOU is being drafted. A Quantar is being installed on Lenox Mountain.

Franklin County – No update was given.

Hampshire County – No update was given.

CMED – Raine Brown stated that Bob Hassett was not able to attend the meeting. There is a transition in staff happening now but a proxy will be appointed to the Committee soon and regular attendance should improve.

MSP- Matthew Barstow stated that the Mt. Tom site had an issue but the back up solution is working now.

**FFY2014 Projects**

*Interops Consultant*

Raine stated that the funds for the consultant will be held aside until the current year funds have been spent down. An RFP will need to be conducted for the FFY2014 contract.

*Hovey Hill Continuation*

Raine stated that funding was set aside if gaps were identified in during the 2013 Hovey Hill project. Raine advised the Subcommittee to begin considering how to proceed with the extra funds identified for this project since it looks like the solution will be \$10,000 at the most. The funding will end on July 30, 2016.

*Rural Terrain Gaps & Solutions*

Raine stated that the project summary was included in the meeting packet. Russ asked to hold the discussion on this project until after the project priority discussion.

**Requests**

No requests were presented.

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**Old Business**

*WMRIC Executive Committee – Member list*

Raine stated that a list of the WMRIC members was included in the meeting packet. Raine stated that Peter Cowles has agreed to take John Taylor's declined appointment as an At-Large member.

*WMLEC VHF-UHF Patch*

Dennis Nazzaro asked for this item to stay on the agenda. Progress on this has been slow due to all of the snow storms.

*Orange control hardwiring*

Russ asked for this item to stay on the agenda as well.

**New Business**

Jason Breault stated that the COML's attended the Polar Plunge in Berkshire County. Two channels were used and the event went smoothly.

Lindsay Stromgen stated that Steve Staffier met with Amherst first responders about the Blarney Blowout event at UMASS. The Tacstack will be tested this week to see if it will meet the event's needs. If it doesn't then a mobile trailer will be used.

*WMLEC License Renewals*

Russ stated that he is working with SIEC.

*Project Priority –short and long term planning discussion*

Raine stated that the prioritized list prepared under the gaps analysis project in 2013 was included in the meeting packet.

The BCECS system was identified as the top priority. Gary stated that there was no coverage north of Mt. Greylock during the drive test two years ago. The proposed solution was to look at sites in New York to give coverage in that direction. It is a large project but addresses a large area. Tom Grady stated that there has not been a lot of interest from the Berkshire County first responders who run PSAPs in the area of concern. Melissa suggested keeping it on the list of priorities but moving it to the bottom.

WMLEC Borden Mountain Fire Tower was the second priority. This project has been completed. Tom suggested that WMRIC write a letter asking EOPSS to work with DCR to streamline the process in working with them. Discussion followed.

FCECS Northwestern corner of Franklin County was the third prioritized project. Due to the irregular terrain communication is a challenge in that area. It was suggested to add this project

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and the fifth priority, Town of Charlemont and Northwestern Franklin County WMLEC to the SOW of the next consultant contract.

Raine stated that priority 4 (HCRS, Towns of Huntington, Chester, Montgomery, Russell and others) and 7 (WMLEC, Westfield River Valley) are primarily solved by the Hampshire Hills 800 project. Dennis Nazzaro stated that the 800 project addresses the police communication issues but does not solve the Fire and EMS problems. Bob Garriepy stated that Quantars were supposed to be installed to help but there have been issues with DCR. Gary stated that low tower repeaters were proposed. Raine suggested allocating planning funds to further explore the low tower repeater solution.

Hovey Hill priority number 6 is a current project underway.

Tom suggested sending a letter to communities that use the communication systems introducing WMRIC and let them know that there is an effort underway to formalize their payment agreements for the upkeep of these systems.

Raine stated that no information sharing projects are identified as priorities.

Steve stated that he will do outreach for the Rural Terrain project and then decide whether or not to submit a request.

Raine suggested holding \$10,000 for the Hovey Hill project and to move the remaining \$80,000 to unallocated. This leaves a balance of approximately \$110,000 in unallocated. Russ encouraged new project ideas for the next meeting. Raine will follow up with FCECS to obtain their opinion on the Franklin County priority projects. Dennis and Bob Garriepy will follow up with the Hampden/Hampshire Hilltown regarding priority projects in that area.

**Business Unforeseen by the Chair**

Russ stated that it was announced at the Council meeting that the State MSP IMAT team has been dissolved and that each MSP barracks will each have a team. Tom stated that it would be good to have them participate or observe at the upcoming Anti-Terrorism exercises. Raine stated that she will send out invitations.

**Next Steps/Future Meetings**

The next meeting is scheduled for March 17<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 at WMEMS.

There being no further business Tom Grady motioned to adjourn. Peter Cowles seconded. The motion was voted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:22 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by

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Gretchen Johnson  
Homeland Security Program Assistant  
Franklin Regional Council of Governments