

**Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council
Western Massachusetts Regional Interoperability Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 21, 2025, 12:30pm**

Subcommittee members present: Matt Barstow (MSP), Nina Barszcz (Westfield Dispatch), Jason Breault (Pittsfield PD), Aaron Budine (Bernardston FD), Robert Garriepy (Huntington PD), Anthony Gentile (Wilbraham Dispatch), Thomas Grady (BCSO/BCECS), Dennis Nazzaro (Northampton FD/Pelham FD), Kurt Seaman (S. Deerfield FD),

Non-members present: Raine Brown (FRCOG), Rich Fiske (EOPSS), Nick Licata (HMCC/FRCOG), Rachel Mason (FRCOG), Alex Rock (EOPSS)

Subcommittee members absent: Tyrone Denson (CMED/Springfield FD), Steve Kozloski (Monson PD/ WMLEC), Alan Sirois (Agawam FD), Lindsay Stromgren (Amherst FD), Robert VanZandt (Belchertown FD)

This meeting was conducted on Zoom. The meeting was recorded.

Anthony Gentile called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm.

Approval of Minutes

The committee reviewed the minutes from the December 17, 2024 meeting.

| |
|---|
| <p>Motion: Dennis Nazzaro moved to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2024 meeting as submitted. Nina Barszcz seconded the motion. Bob Garriepy, Nina Barszcz, Dennis Nazzaro, and Anthony Gentile voted in favor. Jason Breault, Kurt Seaman, and Aaron Budine abstained. The motion was approved.</p> |
|---|

Introductions followed.

Updates from the Chair – None.

SWIC & SIEC Update – Rich Fiske reported. They are still working on the MIFOG update. Alex Rock is working on the Western Mass component. It should be out by the end of the month.

Project Updates

FC40 Comms Upgrade – Raine Brown reported that it has been a real challenge coordinating with the vendor to get the equipment delivered and installed. It is close to a year since we awarded this to them, but it is still not done. Raine is going to try to get them to finish.

Western Mass Interoperable Systems Update

Berkshire County – Jason Breault reported that State 911 took over the center in December. Some kinks are still being worked out. They are looking at hiring a director and more dispatchers. Tom Grady added that State 911 posted for a radio technicians position, which was sent to the Council and to this subcommittee.

Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council
Western Massachusetts Regional Interoperability Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 21, 2025, 12:30pm

Franklin County – Kurt Seaman reported that with the change in the weather and some disgruntled chiefs, the decommissioning has not started yet, but they transferred the satellite sites in Greenfield to the City of Greenfield.

Hampshire County – Dennis Nazzaro had no updates to report.

WMLEC – Dennis Nazzaro reported that during the discussion about the MIFOG update at the SIEC meeting, he realized that WMLEC was tied to Fire District 11, which is not entirely true. While discussing the question of splitting it in the MIFOG, it brought up greater questions about the future of WMLEC. It is unclear what will happen with WMLEC after Chief Kozloski's upcoming retirement. There is not a lot of interest from the Chiefs Association to keep it up and running. This ties into the discussion about LPS9 and 10. What do we want to do with WMLEC? We can do away with WMLEC and use LPS9 and 10, but there is a question about users who don't have 800. If the police chiefs aren't interested in maintaining it, we could try turning it over to the state. We pay a lot in rent, but could maybe piggyback off the State and CoMIRS more. What do we want to do moving forwards? Discussion ensued, touching on the history of the WMLEC system, the lack of financial sustainability, the aging equipment that needs to be replaced, and how much it is actually being used. The issue is not simply about finding out which dispatch centers using WMLEC have 800 radios available to them, but also police cruisers, ambulances, fire trucks, tech rescue vehicles, dive team, etc. There was general agreement that the Western Mass Police Chiefs Association needs to do some soul searching and decide how to proceed. Rich Fiske offered to come to WMFCA and WMPCA to discuss the issue. If no one steps up after Chief Kozloski retires, the system will die through attrition. To sustain it, a better governance system needs to be developed, which is a bigger conversation. The State doesn't have funding to take over WMLEC. If people want to keep using it, they need to pay for it. It is not up to the Council to come in and save the system; it is owned and operated by Western Mass Police Chiefs. They need to have the difficult conversation about this. In the past there were challenges with interoperability that WMLEC solved, but with the development of CoMIRS as a statewide platform, standalone systems do not make as much sense.

CMED – No one was present to give an update.

MSP – Matt Barstow reported that they are still in the construction phase in Western and Central Mass. Weather has been prohibiting some work, but they are still doing ground work and some tower work when they can. Western Mass will be a forklift upgrade, single cutover. Working with tower crews, there was an issue with Mt. Toby where they had an extended outage that they did not anticipate and did not report. They are working on communication policies.

911/Dispatch – Nina Barszcz reported no updates other than the radio systems manager posting. Matt Barstow added that the State 911 development grant is out, with a deadline of March 6.

Air Methods – No one was present to give an update.

Other – None.

**Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council
Western Massachusetts Regional Interoperability Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 21, 2025, 12:30pm**

Budget Review

Raine Brown reported. WMRIC has just over \$106,000 in FFY23, and \$130,960 in FFY24. We could use some ideas for projects.

Requests

None.

Old Business

Interoperability using the State's P25 system talkgroups LPS9 and LPS10

This remains on the agenda as a placeholder.

New Business: None.

Business Unforeseen by the Chair: None.

Next Steps/Future Meetings

The next meeting will be Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 12:30 pm, as a virtual meeting.

| |
|---|
| <p>Motion: Jason Breault moved to adjourn. Aaron Budine seconded the motion. Bob Garriepy, Dennis Nazzaro, Nina Barszcz, Jason Breault, Anthony Gentile, Kurt Seaman, Aaron Budine, and Tom Grady voted in favor. The motion was approved.</p> |
|---|

The meeting adjourned at 1:04 pm.

List of Documents Reviewed at the Meeting

- WMRIC Meeting Agenda for January 21, 2025
- WMRIC Meeting Minutes from December 17, 2024 (draft)
- WMRIC FFY22 Budget Report through 1/17/25
- WMRIC FFY23 Budget Report through 1/17/25

Respectfully submitted by:

Rachel Mason, WRHSAC Program Assistant
Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council
Franklin Regional Council of Governments