

Alabama First Responder Wireless Commission Meeting
March 4, 2014
Huntsville, AL

IN ATTENDANCE:

Madison, Jimmy-- Winston County Sheriff's
Lord, Jon-- Alabama Fire Chief
Pfannkuche, Tracy-- D.O.C
Blair, Ernie -- Huntsville-Madison County 9-1-1
Nail, Curtis -- ALEA
Knight, Matthew -- AARS/EMS Advisor Board
Pilgreen, Michelle -- SoLINC
Moffett, Joey -- AAVFD
Hughes, Danny -- Alabama National Guard
Johnston, J.T.--AAEM
Hargrove, Jeb -- AEMA
Brodeur, Bill -- Etowah Co 9-1-1
Linsley, Eric -- Mobile County
Batt, Jeni -- Huntsville-Madison County 9-1-1
Reed, Chris -- Madison County EMA
Montanari, Pam -- OEC/ICTAP
Gibbs, Clayton --Tuscaloosa Police Dept, League of Municipalities Rep
Beaudry, George -- Montgomery County Sheriff
Hooper, Arnold -- State of TN THP
Newdome, Tom -- SouthernLink
Moffett, Angie -- AAVFD
Howell, Jon -- HEMSI
Patterson, James -- AL DPS
Goff, John -- Alabama Forestry Commission
Mello, Michael -- City of Tuscaloosa
Burton, Michael -- ASA- ECSO
Sadler, Don -- Sharp Communications
Reynolds, Rex -- Sharp Communications
Goodman, Nick -- Sharp Communications
Fields, Willie – Alabama Dept. of Corrections
Grabryan, George -- Florence/Lauderdale County EMA/9-1-1
Briggs, Jon – Mont. Co S.O.
Mackey, Gary -- ADDH- Office of EMS
Murphy, Michael -- DHS/OEC ICTAP
Montana, Scott -- Motorola
Smith, Brad -- Alabama Forestry Commission
Peterson, Jim -- Guntersville Police/ AACOP
Alvero, Tina -- Huntsville-Madison County 9-1-1

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Chuck Murph called the meeting to order at 9:07am. Chief Lord made a motion to recess during the Broadband Users Workshop. Chief Peterson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

At 12:55pm, the meeting came back into session and Charles Murph called for acceptance of the agenda. Chief Lord made a motion to accept the agenda. Joey Moffitt seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Charles Murph called for approval of the minutes. Captain Patterson made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2013 meeting. Chief Jim Peterson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Charles Murph advised Secretary Collier apologized for not being in attendance at this meeting.

Special guest, Arnold Hooper, was introduced. Mr. Hooper is the Wireless Communications Director at the State of Tennessee Department of Safety and was with Chattanooga for over twenty-seven years. Mr. Hooper began his presentation, giving an overview of the Tennessee P-25 system. The system started back in the 50's when the Tennessee Highway Patrol (THP) engineered a Low Band VHF communications systems and that system is still in operation today. In 2007, the Governor appointed the Wireless Interoperable Communications Advisory Board (WICAB) to examine interoperable communications throughout Tennessee. During the time of TN looking into a statewide system, the funding was not available until a PSIC grant became available for TN and they received approximately \$17 million dollars in Federal funds. At this point, THP realized they were up against an unfunded Narrow banding Mandate from the FCC and approached the State Legislature for funding in order to build out a Statewide communications system. In 2011, THP received a capital appropriation of \$40 million dollars in stimulus funds. This completed the Tennessee Valley Regional Communications System-TVRCs system in East TN for coverage in three of eight THP districts. In 2012, THP received \$80 million of general revenue funds that were approved to fund Phase II of the system, which completed the system Statewide. Since THP was using TVRCs to build off of and it was proprietary to Motorola, they decided to purchase from Motorola. Because this appropriation was a capital expense, the State Building Commission (SBC) had the oversight of the contract and purchase of the system. The State Real Estate Department (STREAM) was brought in by the SBC to oversee the project. STREAM also contracted with BGA to be the consultant concerning the contract with Motorola and provide expertise about the communications systems. This month Phase I was completed. Phase I consisted of: 22 new RF sites, 3 new microwave only sites, 28 existing TVRCs, 2 existing master sites, 3 existing THP console sites, 3 existing TEMA sites and 5 existing TDOC sites. Phase II consisted of: 43 new RF sites, 3 new microwave only sites, 1 new master site and 5 new console sites. In December 2013, the State of TN Department of Safety and Homeland Security executed a ten year maintenance and upgrade contract with Motorola. This agreement was necessary to provide a consistent pricing schedule for long term budget

planning. This was also an important piece for the future build out of the system and gave the locals who choose to join the system a firm commitment from the State that the system would remain viable and current. The contract gives the State hardware and software upgrade every two years. This is a hybrid approach utilizing both State and Motorola technicians. By committing to a ten year contract, the State will see saving of over \$18 million dollars. Arnold Hooper stated TN is open to exploring and connecting with Alabama. J.T. Johnson asked the rationale behind mixing VHF and 700/800MHz. Arnold Hooper stated the VHF was mostly in rural and some mountainous areas. Chief Lord asked if VHF is less expensive. Arnold advised VHF was more expensive than 700/800 MHz equipment, but it uses trunking and has better propagation. Jim Peterson asked how many were built out and the user load on the switch. Arnold Hooper stated the user load on the switch was not an issue because the switches and handles thousands of users and there are over 20,000 users in TN. The three switches are located in Chattanooga, Nashville and Jackson. Because of Legislation, if you get funding from THP, it needs to be available to locals. Charles Murph inquired about subscriber fees. Arnold Hooper advised they charge \$200 per radio/year. Jim Peterson asked how they selected the consultant. Arnold Hooper stated BTA was hired by WICAB during a competitive bid. Ernie Blair asked what is the business model between TVR and the State Troopers. Arnold Hooper replied it was one system, a partnership. Jim Peterson asked if they market the system to the locals. Arnold stated everything has been word of mouth and they did not want to market this until they had the maintenance contract in place. Charles Murph asked if they owned the towers and if the maintenance contract included 100% of tower sites and infrastructure. Arnold Hooper advised some towers are leased but 99% were owned. The contract does not cover tower infrastructure but does cover microwave, software and hardware. Jim Peterson asked how much money did it cost for the consultant. Arnold Hooper stated it cost \$3 million dollars on a \$100 million dollars of infrastructure.

Reports from Workgroups

The P-25 System Administrators Workgroup is planning another workgroup meeting in conjunction with the State workgroup.

Jeb Hargrove advised the State Agency Workgroup is scheduling a joint workgroup meeting with the P-25 administrators. They are also working on an overview and training for CASM for the state agencies.

Captain Patterson stated the Policies and Procedures Workgroup met and read the newly created policies to the members for consideration of adopting. (see attachment for the full policy)

- Policy Action 01-2014 "System of Systems": George Grabryan made a motion to adopt Policy Action 01-2014. Chief Lord seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- Policy Action 02-2014 "Level 4 Interoperability": George Grabryan made a motion to adopt Policy Action 02-2014. Chief Lord seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- Policy Action 03-2014 "Statewide Platform": George Grabryan made a motion to adopt Policy Action 03-2014. Chief Lord seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

-Policy Action 04-2014 "Regional Coordination": George Grabryan made a motion to adopt Policy Action 04-2014. Chief Lord seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

-Policy Action 05-2014 "Nationwide Interoperability Channel Administration": George Grabryan made a motion to adopt Policy Action 05-2014. Chief Lord seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Jeb Hargrove advised they were still in the process of transferring the FCC License WPTZ783 and gathering the exact population data. They should be able to file the required notification with the FCC next week.

Scott Montana stated three new sites are close to being deployed and will need frequencies soon. Charles Murph asked how the frequencies were coordinated. Eric Linsley advised they are coordinated internally and need to get a list of proposed frequencies to enter into the database. Charles Murph stated a frequency use agreement policy needs to be created for those jurisdictions using the frequencies that do not exceed three to five years.

Charles Murph advised a vendor sent a letter out stating the State of Alabama was about to lose their state 700 MHz frequencies because they are not being used adequately in the State except for a couple of jurisdictions. Eric Lindsey stated we are still gathering population data and have to show justification of a third of the 2010 census of 4,800,000 before June 13, 2014. Erin Lindsey said the license will be filed in the next couple of weeks and will show we met the first phase of the FCC requirement.

Charles Murph introduced Curtis Nail. Curtis Nail is coming on board as a project manager, governance and planning. He is a Huntsville native and worked at DRASH for many years.

New Business

Ernie Blair gave a presentation on the Huntsville-Madison County 9-1-1 (HMC 9-1-1) P-25 radio system. The Center is Alabama's largest 9-1-1 center and is comprised of eight different agencies (police, fire and EMS) including the 9-1-1 calltakers. By having everyone under one roof, it allows for built-in interoperability, cooperation and coordination on multiple agency events; making response times and accuracies improved. The glue that holds the Center together is a group made up of senior agency supervisors called the Operations Executive Committee (OEC). This group oversees the everyday activities and plays a role in some of the product decision making process. Up until 2013, the 9-1-1 agencies used separate radio systems using a mix of UHF, VHF, 800MHz, trunked and conventional systems. There was not radio interoperability between agencies. The HMC 9-1-1 P-25 system became fully operational in August of 2012 with even greater capability than specified, making users extremely satisfied with the performance. The system is an APCO P-25 digital system and was a \$12 million dollar investment for HMC 9-1-1. It consists of five tower sites throughout Madison County giving the users 97% coverage of our jurisdiction. Three of the five towers were built from scratch and the another two towers were existing. It is a hybrid simulcast/multicast system and serves all of the HMC 9-1-1 agencies, giving them true interoperability. The HMC 9-1-1 also formed a Radio Advisory Committee (RAC), similar to the 9-1-1's OEC, consisting of senior leaders from all of

the served agencies to help make informed decisions regarding interoperability. This group is crucial because they are the end users and address any concerns.

Alabama Homeland Security provided a network through Alabama Public Television to link-in Baldwin County's P-25 system. Alabama Homeland Security funded HMC 9-1-1 to construct P-25 sites in Clanton and Montgomery. Once they were completed, systems in North Alabama, Gulf Coast, Montgomery and Clanton were linked together.

Other counties joining HMC 9-1-1 system include Morgan County, Opelika and Phoenix City. There are many other potential partners seeking to join the system. AFRWC will now coordinate to link a "system of systems" and provide the governance needed to complete a statewide system.

Richard Ranson was unable to attend this meeting; however Charles Murph spoke to the group on Richard Ranson's behalf. Richard Ranson spoke to Charles Murph regarding the possibility of AFRWC taking control of certain Army Corps of Engineers towers. Charles Murph explained the US Corp of Engineers have four sites on the western side of the Alabama. If the AFRWC gained ownership of these four sites, it would also include the shelters, generators, etc. Jim Peterson asked the status of the sites. Charles Murph stated these are unused towers because the US Corp of Engineers are utilizing other sites or commercial communications. Eric Linsley asked if they owned the land. Charles Murph advised they own the land; however the land may need to be transferred to State Parks, making it State Park land. First a determination must be made as to if this is the direction the AFRWC would like to take and then he will begin to work with parks. J.T. made a motion to authorize Charles Murph permission to pursue the purchase of these four towers. Jim Patterson seconded the motion. Eric Linsley asked to add to the motion for Charles Murph to look at the condition of the sites including the shelters, towers, land, etc. Charles Murph stated he would visit the sites and report back to the commission by emailing a package of his findings at each of the sites and then conduct a conference call, if needed, in order to discuss the information. Motion passed unanimously.

Charles Murph attended a SLIGP workshop where David Buchanan, the Director of State consultation spoke regarding FirstNet partnering with the State. Firstnet.gov website was revamped and should be up and running by the end of this week. Outreach materials are still being developed. The Consultation process was defined into three stages. The first stage was the initial state consultation including the initial consultation package to the State, the SPOC confirmation from the State, analysis, clarification and planning joint effort and the initial consultation joint effort. This will also include the State RAN design process. Asset identification and selection will align with SLIGP phase 2. The final State plan will be submitted by the Governor. Once he receives the plan, he has ninety days to decide what he would like to do with it.

The next AFRWC meeting will be held June 24, 2014 in Montgomery, AL.

Eric Linsley asked what the meeting tomorrow was all about. Charles Murph advised Secretary Collier received a request from Rep. Phil Williams to understand the AFRWC and if there was anything he could do to help.

Chief Lord made a motion to adjourn. George Grabryan seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2:37pm.