

COLUMBIA 9-1-1 COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT
Minutes of the Board of Directors Regular Meeting
August 25, 2022

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Board President Anderson called the Board of Directors Regular Meeting to order on Thursday, August 25, 2022, at 9:00a.m. at the C911CD Meeting Room, St. Helens, Oregon and via Zoom.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rob Anderson, Henry Heimuller, Bruce Holsey, Shelley Hennessy, Jeff Flatt

Staff Present: Mike Fletcher, Nancy Edwards, Nathan Hughes, Dannell Hooper, Chandra Egan, Alex Edinger

GUESTS PRESENT: Mike Russell, C911CD Advisory Committee Chair
Kriston, citizen
Richard Hiatt, citizen
Peter McHugh, citizen
Kristen Plantz, citizen
Hunter Aldridge, citizen
Casey Kilker, citizen
Ken Areleo, citizen
Jason Kester, citizen
Melinda Bernert, citizen
Carroll Sweet, citizen
Melissa Busch, citizen
Anna Del Savio, Spotlight
Dan Tilkin, KOIN 6 News
Brandon Lesowske, Scappoose City Councilor
Tim Porter, Scappoose School District Superintendent
Tyler Miller, Scappoose City Councilor

Roll call was done.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Miller gave testimony on the City of Scappoose's request to delay making any decisions related to a future radio system until the Tait Engineering study is completed, which is expected to be finished in October. Further testimony was given on his opinion of the condition of the current radio system and what he thinks are the issues of joining another county's public safety radio system. Miller then commented about the time of the District's monthly Board meetings. Lastly, Miller distributed coverage maps of the current radio system.

Porter gave testimony in support of C911CD collaborating with the City of Scappoose to ensure that the replacement radio system has sufficient coverage in and around Scappoose and its schools.

Lesowske, gave testimony in support of Miller's comments.

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Busch provided testimony in support of having an efficient communication system for first responders and adjusting the timeframe for monthly Board meetings.

Sweet who resides outside the city limits in Scappoose, provided testimony in support of Miller's comments regarding the radio system.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:

No additions were made to the agenda.

ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONAL ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS:

Board Officer Election for 2022-2023:

Anderson opened nominations for President. Heimuller inquired if anyone wanted to volunteer for the position. Holsey volunteered to be President; Flatt seconded. No other nominations were made. Motion carried unanimously. Holsey took over chairing the meeting.

Holsey called for nominations for Vice President. Heimuller volunteered for the position. Anderson nominated Heimuller for Vice President and Hennessy seconded. No other nominations were made. Motion carried unanimously.

Holsey called for nominations for Secretary. Anderson nominated Flatt and Heimuller seconded. No other nominations were made. Motion carried unanimously.

Holsey called for nominations for Treasurer. Heimuller nominated Hennessy and Flatt seconded. No other nominations were made. Motion carried unanimously.

- **President; Holsey**
- **Vice President; Heimuller**
- **Secretary; Flatt**
- **Treasurer; Hennessy**
- **Member at Large; Anderson**

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARD STANDING COMMITTEES:

Heimuller moved and Flatt seconded to reappoint the standing committees as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Awards – Henry Heimuller, Bruce Holsey**
- **Personnel – Henry Heimuller, Rob Anderson, alternate – Bruce Holsey**
- **User Services – Jeff Flatt, Shelley Hennessy; alternate – Rob Anderson**
- **Facilities – Rob Anderson, Shelley Hennessy; alternate – Jeff Flatt**

OFFICIAL APPOINTMENTS:

Anderson moved and Heimuller seconded to approve the slate of Official Appointments as stated on the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Legal Services: Bullard Law – Labor; Beery Elsner & Hammond LLP – Contracts

Auditor: Pauly Rogers, PC

Insurance Agent of Record: Hagan Hamilton

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APPOINTMENT OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Heimuller moved and Anderson seconded to renew the terms of expiring members of the Advisory Committee and appoint new representatives/alternates for Mist-Birkenfeld RFPD, Scappoose PD and Vernonia RFPD as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

ADOPTION OF FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 MEETING SCHEDULE:

Members discussed meeting times. Members agreed to move September's meeting time to 6:30pm and to table the adoption of the meeting schedule until that meeting.

APPROVAL OF MAY 26, 2022 AND JUNE 30, 2022 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:

Heimuller moved and Hennessy seconded to approve the 5/26/22 and 6/30/22 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Acceptance of Budget Variance Report – June and July:

Heimuller moved and Anderson seconded to accept the Budget Variance Report for the months of June and July as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Expenditures:

Anderson moved and Flatt seconded to approve the expenditures starting with check #30868 through #30964 including the electronic payments in the amount of \$524,194.57. Motion carried unanimously.

OPERATIONS MANAGER REPORT:

Hooper reported on the following:

- Trainee, Bri Brogli, is expected to go solo status next week.
- Semi-lateral trainee, Lauren Brown, started on August 15th; she has been working as a dispatcher just under two (2) years and is already DPSST certified. Brown is currently going through our in house academy.
- There were two external inquiries (one training, one unfounded). There was one internal inquiry (training).
- Hooper and Lead Dispatcher, Wendi Farley, attended the National APCO 2022 Conference a couple weeks ago; Hooper was able to attend with a scholarship from Oregon APCO.

TECHNICAL MANAGER REPORT:

Hughes reported on the following:

- Working on facility maintenance (i.e., pruning overgrown shrubs and trees, parking lot sealed and striped). In the process of getting quotes for replacing wood trim/stairs, gutters and getting awnings cleaned and repaired.
- Egan is working with MAJCS to test new versions of CAD.
- MDCs – rolling out new maps that are faster, more reliable and detailed; testing with CRFR and St. Helens PD.
- Meeting regularly with Alex Edinger as the Safety Committee.
- Working with Hooper, Day Wireless and Equature to install the new audio recording equipment for the phone lines and radio system.

OLD BUSINESS:

Radio System:

Dixie Mountain:

No new update.

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Clatskanie Mountain:

Nothing to report.

Corey Hill:

Fletcher reported that all site repairs have been made since the break-ins at the site. All information has been shared with the District's insurance agent and the claim is near completion.

Haven Acres:

Fletcher stated that this site is a receive site just north of Clatskanie; the District shares this site with Clatskanie PUD. During late winter, early spring there was noticed degradation of the microwave signal, which was caused by trees/foliage. The District worked with Clatskanie PUD, Day Wireless and the property owner (Evenson Logging) to negotiate a cost share to have some trees removed last month and the signal was restored.

Fletcher stated that this site is rudimentary with antennas atop a telephone pole, which is not optimal. He spoke to Evenson and they were receptive to the District making improvements to the site. Fletcher referred to the proposal in the Board packet – he has started having preliminary negotiations with a neighboring PSAP to acquire a 150' heavy duty monopole, which would be three times taller than the pole that is currently there. If negotiations are successful, he will begin developing a quote to have engineering studies done.

Bald Hill:

Fletcher stated that this site sits above Scappoose and is owned and maintained by the Army Corp of Engineers. There are trees blocking the microwave path at this site as well, but the private property owner is not interested in removing the trees. Fletcher is working with Day Wireless to investigate realigning the microwave path to a different site or retrofitting the tower at Bald Hill and making it taller. Discussion followed. Fletcher is hoping to have more information to present to the Board in September.

Anderson thanked Fletcher for his work on this. This has been a long term issue. We looked into moving this site to Dixie Mountain, but it's taken over a year to try to get approval from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to co-locate there.

Meissner Site Improvement:

Fletcher reported that the civil construction RFP submissions closed and bids were opened on Tuesday, May 24th. Day Wireless was awarded the bid and we are working on a contract.

Tow Service Contracts:

No new update.

Ambulance Service Area (ASA):

Fletcher stated that the County's consultant, Fitch and Associates, has asked him to review their draft report. He will be meeting with the consultant next week to go over some follow up questions from the PSAP perspective on the ASA.

NextGen Radio System Improvement:

Fletcher introduced C911CD's Advisory Committee Chair, Mike Russell, to relay the recommendation of the Advisory members. Russell stated that there has been no consensus, which has made it difficult to provide a recommendation to the Board. A special meeting was held on June 14th to focus solely on the radio system upgrade. Three main decisions made by the members at that meeting were:

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- City of Scappoose's proposal for an additional study – members agreed they want to move forward with the study that has already been provided by Federal Engineering and they did not want to interject another study. Russell noted that the City did not provide a formal presentation of their offer to the committee, however, he didn't feel that it would have affected the committee's recommendation.
- Committee members recommended that the District further investigate a hybrid frequency system option.
- Committee members recommended to proceed with verifying the offer from Clackamas County for decommissioned towers and the equipment for three full P25 800MHz sites.

Anderson expressed his thanks to the Advisory Committee for their hard work.

Miller asked if he could comment; Holsey acknowledged his request. Miller stated that the City of Scappoose was unaware that a decision regarding their proposal was going to be made at the Special Advisory Committee meeting in June and did not have a chance to prepare the information requested of them. Russell stated that there was no attempt to subvert the City's interest in that meeting; could have done a better job of involving the City of Scappoose in the meeting.

Heimuller expressed appreciation for the Advisory Committee's work. If the District can acquire free towers, those can be used regardless of which system we go with. However, he feels it would be short-sighted of us to buy 800MHz equipment, when we haven't decided which frequency would be the best for the county. Heimuller expressed the need to hire a project engineer who can tell us, based on all the data, what would be the best direction to go for our county. Heimuller also noted, with regard to coverage in schools that has been brought up the last few months, that school districts and school boards have a responsibility too. The 9-1-1 Board doesn't have the right or the jurisdiction to mandate that the school districts put equipment in their schools to provide better radio coverage – it has to be a partnership discussion and needs to be embraced by all, not just blamed on the 9-1-1 District.

Anderson noted that any radio system that we decide to pursue in the future is going to require the support and buy-in from the end users. Due to that, we've been waiting for the Advisory Committee, who now, as a group, has decided that it's time to leave VHF. Now we have to decide if the system should be a stand-alone or if we partner with a neighboring agency. Anderson agrees with Heimuller that now it's clear that we're going toward the 700/800MHz system variant, it's time to get a consultant on board to help us through this process. Regarding the City of Scappoose's proposal, the study appears to have morphed into a RFP, which could cause some contracting issues when we go out for bids in the future.

Holsey stated that he hadn't heard that VHF is off the table. Discussion followed. Russell clarified that there has been no consensus on the frequency. He stated that the Advisory Committee members have asked Fletcher to pursue the equipment and come back to the Committee with information verifying the cost and then the Committee would make a recommendation about whether to move forward with buying that equipment or not. Fletcher agreed with Russell, there has been no consensus on the frequency. Discussion followed.

Miller encouraged the Board to wait until the study by Tait Engineering is complete in October. He believes it will address many of the questions the Board has. With regard to Anderson's RFP comment, he noted that the pricing is published publicly. The intent of Tait Engineering's proposal is to give the Board a more realistic idea of cost. Tait's coverage study finished last week, their engineer has come back and definitively said that 700/800MHz is the way to go in this county because the noise floor is

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way too high on VHF. All this information will become before the Board once Tait's study is complete. If the Board decides to do an RFP, they'll have a more realistic cost and they'll be meeting all the end user's requirements.

NEW BUSINESS:

New Recording System Lease – Equature:

Fletcher stated that our current recording system, Voice Print, is at end of life and has been experiencing technical difficulties. We've known that we're going to be replacing the system, the issue is that the recording system is dependent on if we stay analog or if we go digital. Voice Print wasn't able to offer a good short term option. After researching alternate solutions, the best solution was presented by a company by the name of Equature. Equature is a national recording platform used by many public safety agencies and federal organizations. They are offering the District a short term lease at a very low cost up front with the ability to upgrade or not, with no penalty. The annual amount due for the lease is \$7,744. As it was below his spending authority, Fletcher authorized the lease.

Microwave Network, Inc. (MNI) Quote:

Fletcher reported that this is phase three of the microwave system upgrades. In 2019, the first phase was a new microwave pathway between our Clatskanie Mountain site and the Green Mountain site. This was an investment of \$248,623. The second phase was a new pathway between the Clatskanie Mountain site and the Columbia Heights site, which took place last year. This was an investment of \$254,321. Phase three is a three pronged approach – new pathways between Dispatch and Green Mountain, between Meissner and Clatskanie Mountain and between Clatskanie Mountain and Corey Hill. This will be an investment of \$736,545. Fletcher requested the Board's approval to proceed with the quote from MNI. Discussion followed.

Heimuller moved and Flatt seconded to approve MNI's quote in an amount not to exceed \$736,545. Discussion continued. Motion carried unanimously.

Technology and Facilities Specialist Position:

Fletcher stated that the District is seeking Board approval to add a Technology and Facilities Specialist position. The full time equivalent (FTE) position already exists. The District budgets 'x' number of positions for different divisions. The technical division has recently gone through a change and our GIS duties are now contracted out and that FTE spot is open. The District needs a support position to assist Hughes with IT and facility maintenance. District staff worked to develop a job description and pay scale, and then met with the Personnel Committee to review everything. Fletcher noted that the funding is already in the budget, it's just a change of job title and description.

Heimuller stated that he and Anderson, as the Personnel Committee, met with Edwards last week regarding this position. Due to the overall cost savings, they feel the argument is sound for the change that's being requested.

Heimuller moved and Hennessy seconded to approve the creation of the Technology and Facilities Specialist position as presented. Discussion followed. Motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Compensation Adjustment:

Fletcher stated that at the June meeting the Board approved a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Dispatchers Association, for an adjustment for cost of living. It's the historical practice of the Board to consider administrative wage adjustments in conjunction with collective bargaining impacts following contract settlement. Staff met with the Personnel Committee to discuss this last week. Fletcher noted that these adjustments have been budgeted for.

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Heimuller moved and Anderson seconded to approve the administrative wage adjustments as presented. Heimuller noted that the Executive Director's salary is not reflected in this motion as the Board will be conducting an evaluation. Motion carried unanimously.

SDAO Summer Conference – September 15, 2022:

Fletcher reminded the Board of SDAO's Summer Conference which will be held in Salem on September 15th. Edwards noted that information was included in the Board packet and would be very good training for Flatt and Hennessy if they are able to attend.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATES:

The following is a summary of Executive Director Fletcher's updates where he addressed several topics that have been conversations taking place at these meetings as well as in the community and other public meetings concerning our District.

Inbuilding Radio Coverage – Over the past several months Scappoose City Councilor Miller, has made public comments regarding the recent school shooting in Uvalde, Texas. When tragic events like this take place, everyone shares in the fear and apprehension of it happening anywhere, including here. The District is not immune to this. There are many public safety radio systems in Oregon. While we all have the same mission, the way we go about the mission is always a little different. There are two things Fletcher guarantees that all of those who own and operate public safety radio systems have in common. Firstly, we believe, support, promote and even encourage the use and installation of in-building radio system enhancements. We also actively support the vendors who install these systems and assist in the testing of these systems both during installation and their annual maintenance. The other thing we all have in common is that none of us have any authority over the requirements, enforcement, placement or even the ability to insist on this equipment being used.

Councilor Miller has correctly stated that there are Oregon building code requirements for these devices - they are listed in state statute. Councilor Miller is also correct that there are state fire codes in statutes that describe in detail where this equipment is required, how it is installed, maintained and tested. In a recent meeting the councilor stated that only two schools in all of Columbia County have this technology within them. If this is true, the logical question would be – why is that? How did they get there? Why don't any other schools have this equipment? Are there any other buildings in Columbia County that have this technology? The answer is yes. How did this come to be? What the councilor fails to disclose is that found within both the building codes and the fire codes are details of which buildings meet mandatory requirements and those that are exempt.

Those state statutes clearly define who the responsible party is for the installation, oversight and the enforcement of these devices. Councilor Miller fails to mention that it is the responsibility of the property owners. The property owners are the ones who are responsible for the purchase and installation of this equipment. The next question to be answered is, is there any governmental agency who has oversight or enforcement responsibilities for these requirements? Yes, the agency who has the legal and statutory authority over these devices is the Fire Marshall's office. This information is not new. These allegations against this 9-1-1 dispatch center have been made by the city councilor for many years, despite him being advised in person and in writing by both this 9-1-1 District as well as the Fire Marshall.

A few months back, Fletcher attended a meeting of the Scappoose City Council where this topic was brought up again. Fletcher explained to the councilor and his peers on the council of this same information. Also in attendance was the Fire Marshall himself who publicly spoke to this issue and confirmed that what Fletcher was saying was in fact true and accurate.

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Columbia 9-1-1 is a Special Communications District within the State of Oregon. We are not a fire department and Fletcher as the Executive Director, is not the Fire Marshall. The only authority that the governing body of this District has is to impose a tax on real property within Columbia County in order to fund the operations of the 9-1-1 center. Imposing this tax can only be done if the voters of the county approve the tax measure. We have no more ability to insist or install any radio equipment at any private or public property than the fire district has to force you to install fire suppression sprinklers in your existing homes, even though it's in your and the fire district's best interest.

Columbia County is surround by other public safety radio systems. Fletcher can guarantee that if you asked the Bureau of Emergency Communications of the Bureau of Technical Services for the City of Portland, that they have not installed in-building radio systems for the, literally, thousands of buildings within Multnomah County that meet the requirements. Washington and Clackamas County each have 9-1-1 centers, each have public safety radio systems and Fletcher can guarantee that those entities do not install, pay for or maintain these devices either.

The City of Scappoose has far more authority to enact ordinances to mandate all sorts of things. Fletcher asked, why the school district, who owns the properties and buildings, who hires and employs staff who are entrusted to educate and care for the safety of the children from their own communities – why has this equipment not been installed? Why has the city not provided the funds to the school district for this endeavor? Fletcher noted that the City of Scappoose was the recipient of hundreds of thousands of dollars of federal ARPA funds this year and has total discretion of how those funds are spent.

Fletcher stated that Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District did not receive any ARPA funds as we were exempt from the state and federal distribution.

Having an elected official place this issue on the 9-1-1 District when he clearly knows the truth, and then to state that Columbia 9-1-1 does not care for the safety of the county's children is appalling.

Fletcher stated that he has contact information for every Fire Marshall of each fire district in our jurisdiction for those who are interested in speaking with them. He also has the contact information for the Chief Oregon State Fire Marshall as well.

Premise History - Another topic of conversation has been premise history. Premise History has nothing to do with the radio system. It has everything to do with our Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. CAD is the primary tool of a 9-1-1 center. Every call for service, every resource, every dispatch data set resides within CAD. Premise history is a feature and a function of the CAD system. It is the 'diary' of CAD. Every call for service that is sent to a specific location creates a diary entry. The premise history will show the date, time of a call, what type of a call (i.e., law enforcement, fire, EMS), the CAD incident number and who responded to the call.

However, Fletcher doesn't think that premise history is the issue that the city councilor is describing. In his story of concern, the councilor describes the potential of a known or suspected person who makes threats to harm public safety personnel, or perhaps a known or suspected location of hazards and even booby traps. Those scenarios are real, that type of information is held within CAD. However, in our old CADs system, those were called BOLO's (Be On the Look Out). In our new CAD system, they are called 'Caution Notes'. Where premise history data sets equal hundreds of thousands of entries in CAD; BOLOs - now Caution Notes - equal into the hundreds. There are hundreds of records in 'Caution Notes' that pertain to hazards, hazards to responding personnel or access information. 'Caution Notes' include more than just potential suspect information; it includes access to buildings, building alarm

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codes, gate codes (i.e., anything to get into a site). That is all protected information, and those records are maintained every single day; they are kept current and validated constantly.

When we moved to a new CAD system 4 ½ years ago every single old BOLO record from the old CAD system was exported. They were then hand entered into the new CAD system under 'Caution Notes'. They have always been there; they are there today, and they will always be there.

If a premise history is ran at a specific address, it will list hundreds of thousands of entries because it is a 'diary' entry for an address. That is all it is - a history of a call for service.

'Caution Notes' seems to be the scenario that the councilor is describing. However, if premise history from the old CAD system is what the councilor is concerned about, those records were kept too. The District purposely maintained the old CAD system for over three years specifically to maintain those records. They are available to dispatchers on the floor 24/7, they never went away. The end users are also able to see those records because the CAD team built a link to that data set for them. On the CAD mobile screen in a patrol car, a fire apparatus, or an ambulance and you'll see one a button with big, bold letters called **PRIORS**. PRIORS is premise history, it's always been there, it's there today and it will always be there. Fletcher feels like the District is being gaslighted.

Surplus Radio Towers - The councilor has expressed concerns about surplus radio towers. Acquisition and repurposing of radio towers is a common practice across the country. The towers the District has an opportunity to receive were specifically and architecturally designed to be used for public safety wireless communications. The only reason these towers are being replaced by the other agency is due to their needs for larger and more robust loading requirements than Columbia County has a need for. The towers are perfectly safe and will be purposely dismantled by professional tower constructors who will be itemizing, photographing and tagging each component, marking them for easy rebuilding. They will be loaded and professionally transported to a storage location for the District to be used eventually, or not. If the District chooses not to use these towers, we can surplus them to another agency that has a need. This is a common practice used everywhere.

As for councilor's concern for structural integrity and earth movement, all of the District's site constructions take these potential threats into account. An example of this is the current construction project at the Meissner site. Fletcher presented the structural plans for the construction and foundation requirements that were designed by a nationally recognized engineering firm to rebuild the tower at Meissner.

The transfer of ownership for these towers represents a very large cost savings to the District. On average, the towers the District is set to receive will cost around \$10,000 per tower. That cost includes all the documentation, deconstruction and transportation to our storage site. The District will receive all the original documentation for each tower, which will then be turned over to an engineering firm to reconstruct. The alternative to this, is buying brand new towers. If Miller is concerned with the General Obligation (GO) Bond and project cost, why would he be opposed to saving hundreds of thousands of dollars when the opportunity presents itself?

The District continues to make improvements to our existing radio system. Everyone is aware that the system needs to be replaced and steps are being taken to do that. There was much conversation earlier in this meeting about where we are and how to reach that next step. The current system is not being ignored. The District continues to operate, maintain and make improvements to the system. The District has contracted with a vendor to perform monthly preventive maintenance at each of our sites with an annual expenditure of \$62,425. Fletcher also referred to the upgrades being made to the

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District's microwave system that he outlined earlier. He noted the site improvements taking place at Meissner site. The District is also looking into improving the dispatch radio consoles. Overall, in the past three years Columbia 9-1-1 has or is in the process of investing over 1.8 million dollars in our current system. When annual maintenance on all the District's systems is included, that investment is well over two million dollars.

Fletcher expressed his appreciation to the Board and staff for their assistance while he has been and continues to be on medical leave.

11:03a.m. Break – public departed

EXECUTIVE SESSION – ORS 192.660(2)(h) Legal Counsel:

11:12a.m. Into Executive Session

11:37a.m. Out of Executive Session

Agenda Items – September 22, 2022:

Heimuller suggested that meeting times/dates be on the agenda.

OTHER BUSINESS AND MEMBERS COMMENTS:

Flatt: Welcomed Fletcher back from sick leave. Much to consider and more work to be done before this very important decision is made.

Heimuller: Thanked the public for their attendance and the staff for their hard work. Nice to see Fletcher, hopes he continues to recover. Wished everyone a safe Labor Day weekend.

Anderson: Thanked the public for their attendance. Nice to see that the radio discussion is slowly progressing and that the current system is getting some attention. Hoping some additional repairs can be made before next month's meeting.

Hennessy: Nice to see everyone. Glad Fletcher is feeling better.

Holsey: Thanked the public for their attendance. Appreciates everyone's patience and assistance as he takes his position as Chair/President. Happy Fletcher is feeling better. Long way to go on the radio system - hoping to get answers to so we can move forward.

Next meeting will take place on Thursday, September 22nd at 6:30p.m. at the C911CD meeting room.

11:41a.m. Board Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Maryjo E. Beck

Date Approved