

COLUMBIA 9-1-1 COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT
Minutes of the Board of Directors Regular Meeting
September 22, 2022

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Board President Holsey called the Board of Directors Regular Meeting to order on Thursday, September 22, 2022, at 6:30p.m. at the C911CD Meeting Room, St. Helens, Oregon and via Zoom.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bruce Holsey, Rob Anderson, Shelley Hennessy, Jeff Flatt (in person), Henry Heimuller (via Zoom)

Staff Present: Mike Fletcher, Nancy Edwards, Nathan Hughes, Dannell Hooper, Maryjo Beck (in person), Chandra Egan (via Zoom)

GUESTS PRESENT: Kenneth Border, Col. Co. Probation Officer
Kriston Plantz, citizen
Tyler Aldridge, citizen
Tyler Miller, Scappoose City Councilor

Roll call was done.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Miller gave testimony on the Bald Hill radio site, the performance and reliability of the current radio system and in building/in school radio system coverage.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:

No additions were made to the agenda.

ADOPTION OF FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 MEETING SCHEDULE:

Members discussed meeting times and dates. It was agreed to alternate morning and evening meetings from month to month.

Heimuller moved and Hennessy seconded to approve the 2022-2023 meeting schedule as discussed. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 25, 2022 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:

Anderson moved and Flatt seconded to approve the 8/25/22 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Acceptance of Budget Variance Report – August:

Heimuller moved and Anderson seconded to accept the Budget Variance Report for the month of August as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Expenditures:

Anderson moved and Flatt seconded to approve the expenditures starting with check #30965 through #31009 including the electronic payments in the amount of \$249,041.86. Motion carried unanimously.

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OPERATIONS MANAGER REPORT:

Hooper reported on the following:

- There are currently 14 dispatchers; one is in training. A 15th dispatcher will be starting October 3rd. Another applicant is in the final stages of the hiring process and is projected to start in the beginning of November. Plus, there is a lateral applicant that is being considered.
- Bri Brogli successfully completed training and is now on solo status; she is doing excellent.
- Semi-lateral trainee, Lauren Brown, who started on August 15th is progressing well in training.
- There was one internal inquiry (training).
- A couple of staff members will be attending the Oregon APCO fall conference next week in Bend.

TECHNICAL MANAGER REPORT:

Hughes reported on the following:

- The SD-WAN routing was updated to use WCCCA and Clackamas's network hubs simultaneously giving the District greater redundancy.
- CAD servers have been updated with the latest security patches.
- MDCs – rolling out new maps that are faster, more reliable and more detailed; testing with Scappoose, Police, CRFR and St. Helens PD.
- The new Equature audio recording system equipment has been installed.

Fletcher added that the Technology and Facilities Specialist position has been posted. The internal posting closed and it is currently posted externally, which will close on September 29th.

OLD BUSINESS:

Radio System:

Fletcher reported that generator refueling and preventive maintenance are being scheduled in preparation for winter.

Bald Hill:

Fletcher continues to work with Day Wireless for a solution at this site. The most immediate and 'simple' fix would be to raise the height of the current tower at Bald Hill. However, the guidelines for the tower would go outside the property lines of the property owner. So, the next simplest solution is to realign the microwave dish on the dispatch tower and point it to another site. This isn't optimal as it would take a lot of negotiations and time. The next option would be to realign the existing equipment at Bald Hill, by raising the antenna at dispatch 40 or 50 feet. Fletcher is expecting a quote from Day Wireless in the next week or so for that work; this would be a temporary solution.

Fletcher expressed his thanks to the Army Corp of Engineers, who've been extremely responsive and helpful. There's a possibility that the Corp may be interested in giving the District ownership of the Bald Hill site. If this were to happen, one of the new towers we have could be placed there.

Anderson asked the Board to consider scheduling a special meeting once Fletcher receives the quote from Day Wireless so the issue can be resolved as soon as possible; members agreed.

Meissner Site Improvement:

Fletcher reported that we've received the civil contract from Day Wireless for final review; he hopes to have it finished sometime next week.

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Tower Acquisitions:

Fletcher stated that we have received three of the four towers. The fourth tower, which will be used for the Meissner site, is being stored at Day Wireless's facility. Today, the building and the generator are being prepped for transport.

Fletcher noted that the surplus equipment is from Clackamas, not WCCCA. He met with Motorola last week to go over what that equipment is. Fletcher is working on a presentation for the Board.

Haven Acres:

Fletcher stated that work on this site is pending. He expects to know within a couple of weeks if we can acquire a monopole that would keep our footprint small, which is what the property owner, Evenson, would prefer.

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.

Corey Hill:

Fletcher reported that the insurance claim for the damage done to this site has been closed and the District has received the reimbursement checks this week for just over \$23,000.

Tow Service Contracts:

No new update.

Ambulance Service Area (ASA):

Fletcher attended the County's meeting on Tuesday, where the consultant, Fitch and Associates, made a presentation to the Commissioners and the County Fire/EMS providers. They made several recommendations. Some of those recommendations were for our District, which Fletcher completely agrees with. It's unclear what the next step is, but Fletcher will keep the Board apprised as the County moves forward with the ASA project.

NEW BUSINESS:

Policy Review – Chapter 4: Board Member Duties and Responsibilities:

Fletcher stated that language regarding his spending authority and adjusting the public comment time limit from 10 minutes to three minutes are the only changes. Discussion followed.

Heimuller moved and Anderson seconded to approve the updated draft of Board policies as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATES:

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

Scappoose School Radio Coverage – Much attention has been centered on the belief that the Scappoose School District is void of any public safety radio coverage, within the schools and outside of the schools. This is unfortunate as these stories create doubt and fear for staff, students and parents of

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the school district. Since these stories continue to be spread, the chiefs of Scappoose Fire and Scappoose Police, and the District have been drawn into the unenviable position of trying to reassure the public and media, and to correct false information. On August 31st, Scappoose Fire District participated in walk throughs of each school along with the school superintendent, Tim Porter. During the walk throughs, the fire district conducted radio checks with the dispatch center everywhere Porter asked for one; the results were 100% successful. Wednesday, September 14th, Fletcher met with our radio system manager and exterior radio testing was conducted at each Scappoose school; for transparency, each test was videoed – the results were 100% successful. On Thursday, September 15th, the Scappoose Police Chief along with his officers and Porter repeated the same radio tests the fire district had conducted, plus they also tested officer to officer radio coverage inside the schools; the results were 99% successful (in one place within one building, there was no reception). The Scappoose Fire District and Police Department believe there is sufficient and adequate radio coverage inside and outside the schools. The radio coverage test results will soon be posted to the District website with links to the videos as well as messages from Fletcher, the Scappoose School Superintendent, Tim Porter, and the Scappoose Police Chief.

Radio System Improvements / Pallans Report – Miller refers to the Pallans report that the District commissioned in 2015 and was published in 2016. Miller states that of all the recommendations from Pallans, the District has only completed one; this is not accurate. The Pallans report outlines a total of 13 recommendations of which six are complete, five are in progress and two of which are not within the District's control – as we do not own or operate police, fire or EMS vehicles.

1. Technology (analog vs digital/P25 radio system) – in progress
2. Dispatch Systems (consoles) – in progress
3. Coverage (improving coverage) – in progress
4. Interference – this is complete to the best of the District's ability, by having changed some of the frequencies that we were operating on to the frequencies that we currently operate on. (This is the only recommendation that Miller believes is complete.)
5. System Maintenance and Oversight – this is complete. The District has inspections and preventative maintenance performed on our radio infrastructure monthly. Subscriber Radios Preventative Maintenance – this can not be done by the District as we do not own said radios. This is the responsibility of those agencies.
6. Microwave – in progress. This has been happening over the last three years and is approaching completion. Miller has been in opposition to these upgrades; imploring the Board to not approve them. This is odd as the District is being held in a critical light of maintaining and/or improving the current system, but yet Miller is in opposition to the upgrades necessary to do that.
7. Interoperability – in progress. This will be a part of any new radio system.
8. Site Improvements – in progress and some are complete. The addition of the courthouse receiver site was completed, and the District is actively in process of completely rebuilding the Meissner site.
9. Vehicle Repeaters – the District does not own police patrol vehicles, fire apparatus or ambulances. However, many fire agencies already have some in-vehicle repeaters installed in their vehicles.
10. Vehicle Location or Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) – this is GPS for patrol cars, fire apparatus and ambulances. With this technology, our CAD system can see and track emergency vehicles. As part of the new CAD system purchase in 2018, this feature was intentionally purchased and provided to every user at no cost. However, the District does not own those vehicles; some of the users take advantage of this software solution and some do not.
11. Mobile Data – this is complete. This relates to the computers within emergency vehicles. The District provides all public safety agencies brand new CAD mobile data software at no cost.

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12. Fire Department Paging – Pallans report states that our current and backup system using cellular providers, is adequate. This can be part of any new radio system; the cost and capabilities are part of any consideration of a new system.
13. Equipment Replacement – This refers to the equipment replacement for the District as well as the entire subscriber fleet (portable and mobile radios for every police, fire and EMS agency). This will be part of any new radio system, and an RFP is currently being developed for that.

New Radio System Bond Concerns – The topic of any possible future requests for a General Obligation (GO) Bond have mentioned the cost of 35 or 40 million dollars. These dollar amounts are very misleading. A GO Bond can only be used for capital purchases and/or capital improvements (i.e., radios, antennas, towers, construction – civil work to build radio sites). A GO Bond cannot be used for maintenance and ongoing operational costs. Miller refers to the cost of 35-40 million dollars for capital expenditures, capital improvements, construction, plus 20 years of projected operating costs. The District could not and would not go for a bond for that amount as it is **illegal**.

Rocky Point Road Call for Service – Miller spoke at last month's meeting about a call for service he felt would've been better served if the District had a different CAD system than the one we share with Washington County. It has been stated that there's a solution to this issue, but Washington County refuses to make the change; therefore, Miller feels the District should have our own independent CAD system. It's true that Washington County does not want to put the alleged fix in place, but the other half of that truth is that neither does the District. The results would be the same whether the District shared a CAD system or not. The issue surrounding that call is a common issue for multiple jurisdictional border calls. Any call to a 9-1-1 center is routed by many different factors and networks. The call at Rocky Point Road was a wireless cellular call – it depends greatly where the caller is physically, where the cell tower is, and which phased array antenna they're hitting on the cell tower. It's possible that one cell phone call to a tower could be routed to three 9-1-1 centers. In the state of Oregon, all 9-1-1 calls are routed based on law enforcement jurisdiction. In the case of this call, the individual was in Multnomah County; it was in Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue's (TVF&R) jurisdiction. TVF&R is dispatched by Washington County 9-1-1. However, there are also Ambulance Service Area (ASA) jurisdictional boundaries and this call ASA belonged to the Scappoose EMS provider. This call involved three 9-1-1 centers – Portland, WCCCA and C911CD. The CAD system the District uses had nothing to do with this call.

There is a concern that has been stated that the District only has a single connection to CAD; this is not true. The District has five primary CAD connections. Each of those five primary connections have a backup. So, the District is 10 times redundant in how we talk to CAD - there are fiber connections, four cellular connections and Starlink satellite connections are being put into the CAD hubs.

Technically, WCCCA could have dispatched our units (Scappoose ambulance) to the Rocky Point Road call. However, it would have been a bad idea. While we reside on the same CAD system, we do not share the same radio system; this means WCCCA would have been dispatching blind. They would have no way of knowing if their dispatch had been successful. Scappoose Fire could have heard their tones go off, but there would have been no voice communication following the tones. Dispatch would have heard the tones, and they would know that they didn't set them off. But with no voice communication, staff would have no idea what was happening. Fletcher stated that fire station alerting is purposely programmed to have voice communication override tones for life safety issues. So, if anyone in the county was speaking on the fire dispatch channel, WCCCA's tones would have failed because voice has priority over tones.

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Fletcher noted that if the District was on our own CAD system, nothing would be different as to how the 9-1-1 call was processed. The District would be dependent on waiting for the call from our neighboring 9-1-1 centers to be passed to us. Dispatch staff catch calls every day for Portland, Clark County and Cowlitz County because of the wireless phone networks.

As for the District's part in the performance of the Rocky Point Road call, dispatch received the call at 18:31:47. Staff dispatched Scappoose medics at 18:32:03. This is a total of 16 seconds from call answer to dispatch – well below the national standard of one minute and 30 seconds.

Agenda Items – October Meeting:

Fletcher noted that invites were sent out for a Special Board meeting to take place on Thursday, September 29th at 9am; this will be a virtual meeting on Zoom.

OTHER BUSINESS AND MEMBERS COMMENTS:

Flatt: No comment.
Hennessy: Hope Heimuller feels better, wish him well.
Anderson: Clarified that while he was critical of the radio system in March, shortly after, a radio vendor replaced a piece of equipment, and he has not had a problem talking into the system with a portable radio in that area since. There are still improvements to be made. He is eagerly waiting for Bald Hill to go back online so we can re-evaluate how coverage has changed – both talk in and talk out – so appropriate action can be taken.
Holsey: Thanked staff, especially Hooper for her assistance – much appreciated.

Next meeting will take place on Thursday, October 25th at 9:00a.m. at the C911CD meeting room.

7:44p.m. Board Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Maryjo E. Beck

Date Approved