

Note: These minutes are a draft and are not to be considered official until approved at the next meeting.

Poweshiek County 911 Board Meeting Minutes for December 19, 2023

The meeting was held via ZOOM

Members Present: Rusty Massengale-Malcom, Gary Sears-Gilman, Joel Kercheval-Montezuma, Jason Roudabush-Poweshiek County, Kurt Hall-Brooklyn, Brian Paul-EMA

Dawn Disney-Addressing/Database Mgr.

Members Absent: Grinnell, Hartwick, Barnes City, Chelsea, Sully, Belle Plaine, Victor, Deep River, Searsboro, Sheriff, New Sharon, Montezuma

Guests: Stacen Gross-SGC

Call to order and Roll Call

Paul called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. - Members present as listed above.

Approval of Agenda

Motioned by Sears to approve the agenda as presented, second by Roudabush. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes from Meeting held October 17, 2023

Motioned by Hall to approve the minutes as presented, second by Roudabush. Motion carried.

Business:

Countywide Radio System Update

Paul started off by updating the members on the South site antenna and line work is complete, and the cross brace has been fixed. The generator needs to be started, microwave dishes have been hung, the racks are now being installed.

Holiday Lake site is basically the same, they are down to the civil punch list. The generator needs to be started, and as a side note all of the propane tanks at all four sites have been filled by Criswell Propane. There is no cost to the 911 Board for that as the initial fill was included as part of the project. The dishes are hung, antenna is up, and the racks are ready to be hung at this site as well.

At the last meeting with Racom they were ready to install the antenna at the Central site. Most of the work is done there is well, they are just down to the final punch list items. The antenna and line work are underway. They did say that this site would take the longest as that is where all of the inoperability antennas are and other equipment related to the same so it takes a little more work. Once they are done at this site the crew will move on to the Grinnell site, and start putting all of the racks and equipment into the central site.

Roudabush said that the beacons are active on the central site and Holiday Lake site. There is a problem with a sensor that is getting fixed before the beacon will be working at the Montezuma site. They are worried about the driveway in Grinnell, but Roudabush said that they have it worked out, and when the county does the Penrose/Garfield project that they will put the driveway in and have the various on that one.

Paul shared photos of the progress and said that they estimate that it will take about ten days per site to get the things that they are working on now completed. Grinnell site needs the generator started, and as Roudabush stated since this site is just inside the city limits and Grinnell has an ordinance that all driveways in the city have to be paved. They are giving the county a two-year variance to allow the county to complete it when they are doing the Penrose/Garfield project. Paul said that they will either do a paved drive or an apron into the Grinnell site.

Paul mentioned again, that the beacon isn't working on the south tower and that there isn't an issue with the FAA, as we have a couple of months to get that completed.

Paul has been working with RACOM on the fleet mapping of the radios, and they did a paging demo on the 10th and talking about the talk group paging and the two-tone paging, which is what most are use to with the high and low tone. The talk group paging is a little different in that there is no tone that goes out over the radio, after dispatch pushes the button, your pager will either tone or vibrate letting you know that there is a call. If you are not using a pager at the time this occurs and just have a radio, you would not hear a tone go across the radio, all you would hear is the actual call being dispatched. Paul is not a fan of the talk group paging, so they wanted to demo it, because that is what they are pushing for. Paul said that it is possible to put a tone in front of the call, but it is a two-step process for dispatch. It was decided after the demo, to stay with the two-tone paging that we currently use. The Dispatch Supervisor agreed with that decision.

Two-tone paging also works better with "I am Responding", which is another benefit. The other thing that is being considered is to add the encoding to the base station, which will allow the station to page their selves out. Racom will be providing a quote to add that. This was not included in the project cost. Racom said adding this would be in the hundreds of dollars, not thousands of dollars.

Time line update LMR/NWF completed by the end of January, microwave turn-up and test are to start the beginning of January also when they start bringing the system on line. They will link the system to Jasper and Tama counties and start bringing the system alive and do some basic testing. The LMR/NWF is anticipated to start the beginning of March, so the testing on the portable radios, and pages will start in early spring. The Sheriff's Office, Grinnell Police, EMA and Grinnell College are going to be the testing agencies that will be issued radios and go out countywide and do some initial testing. It's much easier to recruit a few radios to reprogram and work out any kinks or bugs than all of the radios issued countywide. Grinnell College has had issues due to the structure of the building so it is good to be able to test directly with those that will be using it at the college.

The initial testing does not include the dispatch center, which will start approximately in May. It will be at that point that everyone will be able to use the new system, but we will not sign off on it until next August-September when we can test with all of the crops in and everything is at their peak. At that time, they will do a grid test, where Racom will do a one square mile grid test, to make sure that we are able to get the 95% coverage as agreed.

The next meeting with Racom is on January 10, 2024. So hopefully there is more good news to come.

Discussion:

Those present discussed setting a time for the budget workshop. It was decided to set workshop for January 9th, in person at the Poweshiek County Public Safety Building, and proposed Public Hearing being set for February 13th at 6:30 p.m. That leaves enough time to republish if there would happen to be inclement weather, etc.

Next Meeting: January 9, 2024 @ 6:30 p.m.

Motioned to Adjourn @ 7:05 p.m. By: Hall and 2nd by Sears. Motion carried.