

**Central MN Executive Committee
Microsoft Teams Meeting
June 8, 2022 – 11:00 AM**

MEMBERS/ALTERNATES PRESENT:

1. Jeff Jelinski – ESB Chair
2. Steve Schmitt – ESB Vice Chair
3. Micah Myers – RAC Chair
4. Kristen Lahr – O&O Chair
5. Brandon Larson – O&O Vice Chair and Logger Chair (Guest)
6. Paul McIntyre – Users Chair
7. Sarah Booker – NG911 Chair
8. Stephanie Johnson – EMAC Chair

GUESTS PRESENT:

1. None.

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by ESB Chair Jeff Jelinski at 11:00 a.m.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Introductions were conducted.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

EMAC Committee made a motion to approve the agenda. RAC Committee seconded, motion carried.
Roll Call Vote: ESB – Aye; RAC – Aye; O&O – Aye; Users – Aye; NG911 – Aye; EMAC – Aye.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

NG911 Committee made a motion to approve the minutes from March 30, 2022. ESB seconded, motion carried. Roll Call Vote: ESB – Aye; RAC – Aye; O&O – Aye; Users – Aye; NG911 – Aye; EMAC – Aye.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Myers reported Sheriff Fiedler will be leaving us at the end of the month.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Regional Concerns

A. Regional Strategic Plan Update

Myers reported when we started down this project a little over a year ago in March we established our priorities and then we also took up action through this group and the Board to work with ECN to have Steve Tait do the scribing for taking what we had in those sessions and putting it on paper. When Tait was scribing he selected our priorities, but there was really never priorities established, because if you look at what is in the report in the packet our Priority #1, funding has been our number one goal securing funding. Priority #2 was advocate support for FirstNet priority. Priority #3 was training and exercises. Priority #4 was increased stakeholder awareness and usage of regional communications the COMU resources. Priority #5 was recruitment and retention of PSAP staff.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

A. Regional Strategic Plan Update (Continued)

Myers continued Priority #6 was increased stakeholder awareness and usage of the communication asset CASM resources. Priority #7 was implement equipment technology to improve 9-1-1 caller location accuracy. Priority #8 was increase stakeholder awareness and usage of Integrated Public Alert and Warning System. There are eight listed in the document. But then another thing along the way, we decided we were not going to try and present this whole document every meeting to the board. We would look at a method to provide updates and show them those updates as they are done. Lahr did a very nice job of putting together the document that shows what steps we are taking as they are aligning to the priorities we had assigned. But in the midst of all of this, we never officially adopted the SCIP Plan. What we talked about at our last RAC meeting was getting the board to adopt, so we have a baseline and then use the document that Lahr had put together as our update to this plan. But in the process also making sure that is the priorities. Myers does not think that number 2 is our priority. Myers thinks there are several other priorities that were listed below that, that should be moved up. The region should identify what is their priorities. We are going to work on all of them, but looking at if push comes to shove where it is a challenge of resources, we would look at the higher the priority, the more we are going to focus on completing that in the window of the regional plan. Lahr asked so we are looking at prioritizing the goals that we have there?

Myers replied we can leave it as is and modify it because everything is subject to change, but when we are looking at focusing what we are trying to do, because a 3-year window seems like a long time, but it is really a short time and looking at the ones we can successfully achieve. Then looking at the ones that if time permits we get to them, but in the order that Myers just read them off the way they are listed in the document it has FirstNet as being the #2 priority. Then we have the training. Training Myers thinks is second only to funding. In our region we have established that as you look at what we are doing with the training roadmap. And looking at even though the grant process changed a little bit for us for getting funding, we still made it a priority and we are looking at pulling from our reserves to cover a list of trainings that the users. Myers thinks training should be bumped up. Myers looks at one of the things everyone is talking about and it is so much so that the state, or ECN, is trying to put together a campaign. That is retention or recruiting of PSAP personnel, it seems to be the common issue across the regions and across the state. COMU it is one of the things Larson has been trying to get this more to the forefront and looking at it. It is an important element and we are finding more and more these events and stuff and leveraging the resources we have. Myers thinks it is an underutilized. Then the other one CASM we have talked about looking at putting out. CASM just did a refresher back in March, there was some updated trainings as to the changes moving that up, but looking at are these priorities in fact the way we want them? And that is what Myers is asking the group to weigh in on.

Jelinski thinks stakeholder awareness is also something that goes to the top and maybe not always, but in the world that we are living in right now. There was a bill at the legislature that many might think was going to solve the ARMER radio issues that anyone might have anywhere in Minnesota, and obviously that did not go through as it is right now. Just had a discussion of that in one of the meetings Jelinski attended at a local county level. When Jelinski talks about stakeholder awareness is what really could possibly happen with encryption and not being encrypted and how much are we going to lose?

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

A. Regional Strategic Plan Update (Continued)

Jelinski stated when ARMER came to the county that Jelinski would represent, it was an issue where everybody can communicate at one time together and with the silos were taken down and now there is the conversation out there that sooner than later certain law enforcement issues that are not right now necessarily encrypted are going to be encrypted and will that lose conversation with a simple first responder on the street that perhaps would not have a piece of encryption in his or her radio? Situational awareness, Jelinski thinks is also something that can go from top to bottom or in the middle, but sometimes and in the conversation certainly have radios replacing, situational awareness, stakeholder awareness can also rise to the top.

Johnson agreed with Myers and Jelinski that stakeholder awareness definitely those might need to be moved up higher, but Johnson thinks priority #5 right now the promotion and recruitment and retention of the PSAPs really should also be moved to the top of the list. Conversations on this side, thinking of the public perspective, the public truly does not understand what it would be if we cannot staff our PSAPs and when they start talking about more regionalized PSAP operations or things of that nature, they do not understand that increases the communication time and that takes away that personal knowledge of exactly where you are talking about. You might now reach a dispatcher who if you say I'm at the Casey's in this town they are not going to know where you are because you are not dealing with someone locally. Johnson thinks that a lot is going into the fact of the recruitment and retention of that, not just the general public knowledge. Johnson would see both of those moving up higher.

Larson agrees with what Johnson was saying. Larson thinks the people asset, the telecommunicators, are very key to identifying how we can retain and recruit top quality staff. When our PSAPs in our region are in a difficult situation where they may be short staffed on some shifts would it be prudent to add some aspects to that priority of not necessarily continuity of operations planning because Larson considers that to be like a zombie apocalypse situation where you fail over and leave your building, but for daily support and mutual aid between PSAP centers and do we need to look at that as well?

McIntyre added the only thing McIntyre would go back to is what you said that stakeholder awareness as more and more departments look to spend money. McIntyre thinks we need to make sure people understand what they are about to buy and spend money on. Whether, or not, they need encryption. If they buy the wrong radio, they can never have it. So, if something comes up down the road, you just spent \$4,000 on a particular radio to find out that six months, a year from now, you are going to need it. And you are either going to have to buy a whole new radio or you are just not going to have it in general because the vendor is recommending items that maybe are not particular to what people need just because they do not understand what it really means or what that particular radio allows them or does not allow them. McIntyre thinks making sure people understand what is happening right now and what equipment they may, or may not, need or what the equipment they are looking at buying actually is capable of doing before we have a lot of agencies spend a lot of money and find out things just are not going to work for them.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

A. Regional Strategic Plan Update (Continued)

What Myers is looking at is establishing the priorities. Myers explained and then the stuff that we talked about would be part of our regular meets and that document Lahr created that we are adding those additional components and building on these. At minimum, Myers would say we come up with what we identify as a priority. We have the nine priorities. Put them in order as to the group and say do we do we think that is something we can come to a consensus on. Jelinski asked or do they need to be listed 123456789? Are each one of them as important on their own right as the next?

Myers replied something that could accomplish that instead of saying having as listed. If you look at the way the document was, the draft of it, it has the section 4 regional priorities and then it has got like priority number one. Take away their priority and just list them. That could be another way to do it, and then we can establish internals. But when you lay it in a document, the way this was put in there makes it like that is our number one priority. When all of these are priorities. So, we could remove the priority off the front. It is an option of saying just leave it as regional priorities and then we adopt that and then we use the document that Lahr had put together that they have been using at the O&O and we started using at the RAC. And that becomes our mode of operation for further defining our priorities or putting some definable or achievable goals to achieve the objectives.

Lahr stated if we do not have to prioritize them. Put them in some sort of a hierarchy? Myers thinks that makes it easier because we can sit here for six hours trying to figure out this one goes in front of that one. Just remove the. Myers explained we have identified it as a priority and it does not have to have a specific number in front of it. Jelinski thinks it takes a load of pressure off of everyone.

Johnson asked do we want to cluster? Just change the order to cluster the common themes together. When you look at increased stakeholder awareness, we have three that talk about increasing stakeholder awareness but in different areas. Do we want to just change the order so when we are talking about stakeholder awareness, it is stakeholder awareness, stakeholder awareness, stakeholder awareness? While removing that priority, but we are just keeping the common theme of our priorities together.

Myers stated so you are doing a consolidation like stakeholder awareness to be as you identified, there are three of them like COMU, CASM. Putting that as a header stakeholder awareness, but then you still keep your subcategories because there are different planning organizational. There are items that are specific to that awareness. Like under the COMU we want to get awareness, but there are different methods we are going to take to get that awareness. That is why Myers thinks they broke them out originally, but you could put them. Stakeholder awareness is the role where.

Lahr thinks considering different committees are focusing on some of these goals, Lahr thinks it would be less confusing if we would still keep them separate. So that increasing stakeholder awareness is not under one priority. And then there is just different categories under there. It might get a little messy as far as assigning ownership.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

A. Regional Strategic Plan Update (Continued)

Johnson asked do we want to put them together in the list? Just so that as you are reading them you are still in that. That way you are reading them one after the other verses back and forth.

Myers thinks that is very doable. So, remove the priority and group them listed in succession so you have all of them listed like for awareness, you will have each function, because as to Lahr's point assign them to who is responsible for maintaining or filling in the detail on them. Myers thinks that could be our form of our motion that we removed the priority in front of them and we group them by their overarching theme, which is a stakeholder awareness, but they are still going to be individual items.

Jelinski asked is there a need to talk about ownership in that motion, or would ownership just fall into it? Myers thinks this group here can make recommendations, because Myers does not want to just pair it down to one single. There is going to be a primary and a secondary because Myers thinks with all of these are some level across the board from the committees, but you have a primary committee and then everyone. Myers does not want to exclude someone from wanting to comment or add stuff to it. After action is assign who is going to take this and keep stepping through the plan on a regular basis. *RAC Committee made the motion that we remove the priority labeling and group the priorities by their relevance and submit it to the board for adoption to create the base plan for the region. EMAC Committee seconded. Roll Call Vote: ESB – Aye; RAC – Aye; O&O – Aye; Users – Aye; NG911 – Aye; EMAC – Aye. Motion passes.*

B. Training Roadmap (Update)

Myers reported this is an item that was brought before the ESB at the March meeting. We went back and looked at what we had in reserves. We even went as far as looking at if it was not fully approved, the established priorities as to which trainings we want. But we did add one more training coming from the NG911 group. The NG911 Mental Health Caller, NG911 caller management and public safety training consultant groups. We are asking for an additional \$4,500 from our original ask, which was \$27,500. It comes out to be about \$32,000. And then we have already started a process to identify dates when we can put on these trainings. This is an ask to come back to the board today on the follow-up that we just pull from reserves and then add the additional NG911 training to get to our total of \$32,300.

Jelinski asked is taking \$4,500 out of reserves. Is that putting us between a rock and a hard place?

Myers replied no. When we went through and looked and that is one of the reasons when you see in the draft budget that will be presented to the board today, we are actually reducing the contribution level because we have BerganKDV who will be giving the report from the audit firm. Myers and BerganKDV had some discussion. Myers said we have got a nice reserve and we can spend some of that down. This is 10% of that reserve is what we are asking for and we will still be fine. There are other initiatives we got coming that we will still be able to it. We are going to continue our downward trend of reducing the budget until we get to a happy medium, but we are going to be reducing the budget by just short of \$13,000 this year and continue that trend. This is not going to hurt us.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

B. Training Roadmap (Continued)

Myers explained the O&O/User Committee were tasked with going back when we approached the board in March. It was asked that we go out and look for funding and we were going to look and see if we could come up with different ways to achieve what we had presented in the roadmap. We have found that we can do this by way of reserves. And then in the discussions at the RAC and at the last O&O/Users we talked about this additional training for the NG911 side of the house.

McIntyre stated it was on the User side, so at the board today would McIntyre present this that we have looked at additional funding? Unable to secure additional funding. We are able to do it out of reserves and we would like to request permission and approval for it to be paid for that way, and approve the training funding? Myers replied that is correct.

C. Grant Funding Letter (Update)

Myers reported back in March we submitted our original letter to Director Kelly at HSEM. Did not hear anything. That was at the beginning of March. At the end of March we asked the Board to give Commissioner Jelinski the ability to reply back in another email. Not too long ago, Director Kelly actually replied. It kind of brings to light that the SHSP grant, the board does not directly go through and it was one of the things we looked at from. And as you can see in his reply here, he says that comes by way of ECN or through the EMAC folks. This is what Myers wanted to ask Johnson. When you guys turned back the \$89,000 for the planner, you had made several attempts to ask if we could repurpose that and not hearing anything. When Myers looks at this letter, this is what Myers wanted to follow-up. He hits on one aspect and that is ECN is responsible for applying on behalf of the communication side. He steered us back to ECN so we had a discussion at the Grants work group on Tuesday of last week as to that. And it was some varied opinions on how that goes, but then Myers want to go back to the EMAC. As to Director Kelly is saying here, you go through your EMAC. Well, we did. And you guys did not respond. That is why Myers wants to reply back to his reply here is the next step. We have already started approaching ECN on the fact that HSEM is saying we have to go through them. But when we were going to the other channel that he identifies and that is the EMAC, and we are not getting response what do we do then? So just kind of throwing it out there for the group for discussion, but Myers would like to continue to move this. Myers spent some time reading through the notice of funding opportunity for the SHSP grant, and how much comes to Minnesota in the process. When you read through the requirements there are six initiatives that 30% of that funding is allocated in Minnesota has to go through different threats that they have identified. And then there's the 80% rule that is supposed to pass back through the locals. Myers sees ECN is providing services for they are coordinating the training itself but where are they getting their directive from and that is where Myers thinks for the ECN side that we need to look at with the Grants work group through the Finance Committee, we have started a process and we had a really good discussion at our last meeting on this as to getting our needs out there to ECN so they can include them on behalf or make the recommendation to the SECB, not ECN picking what they think that we need. Then as for the second half of this, if Director Kelly is saying this has got to go through the EMACs and when you guys turn back your planner money and you did not get a response what course of action do we take from there when we are asking to spend those dollars that way? Myers wanted to have more discussion and give an update here today as to where we are at in the process.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

C. Grant Funding Letter (Continued)

Johnson thinks what he might initially be getting at, which is not necessarily what we were talking about, but might be getting at it needs to go through EMAC for that initial grant request, not necessarily requesting it to get the turn back money, but actually including it in our SHSP grant application to the region. Oftentimes with our EMAC grant request that is \$90,000, but that is not necessarily going to be enough funds to support some of these additional projects. It would be a start, but it would not be able to finalize some of these in full projects, which would make it a stand-alone application. Johnson thinks he was thinking of that perspective. You are right in regard to the turn back, because you also received those emails. Myers knows exactly what Johnson went through towards the end there and we received direct response from them that you need to turn back the funds and it goes into the pot. Johnson explained then his next email that was saying that the monies were put into the pool for funding for the 2022 SHSP project applications that confused Johnson and Johnson is checking with some other EMs. It was Johnson's understanding that the turnback funds was its separate pot of money that you can dip into for projects just kind of by the wayside and the other one that kind of made Johnson a little irked with this timeline is because of the delayed response. This should not shock anybody, but because of the delayed response, we missed the deadline for the 2022 SHSP project applications. So already we cannot even submit a project application for ESB because EMAC has already had to submit ours. And none of this information came to light so Johnson would agree we need to find out from HSEM how do you want us to proceed? If it needs to be right from the get go with the grant monies how do we proceed that? Because in the same token we do not want to take away any SHSP funds from other areas that need it, but we understand there is these projects that also need support as well.

Myers stated a lot of that came up in the discussion with the grants work group, but another thing they came up that we brought up Myers said the problem with the Homeland Security regions is they do not align with the regional communication boards. A lot of them do. There is a lot of the folks, but then you have some that overlap and that was the concerns Myers had mentioned to ECN. This is why ECN needs to take a stronger position on what they are doing. Myers know everyone said it is a pot of money that everyone has competing interest for. But if you go back, we used to rely a lot of that for training. We used to get the SECB and the SHSP grant. And it was also the pool of money we could use for subscribers. And so now some the landscape is changing based on the FCC's filing. We do not want to miss an opportunity as we go back to our #1 objective is seeking funding and when we know there is funding being left on the table or rolled into like from any dollars coming from out of the SECB allocation that do not get used of that \$2 million it gets turned back into what they call non-dedicated funds and so then you have to take legislative action to actually use those so you do not lose them, they go into a different bucket. We are just trying to figure out ways to maximize and get some of the needs we have identified. A lot of people are looking at what we are doing in the Central and that is where if you look at on every one of our committee meetings we have listed communication projects. That was another point as brought up. What about the other core programs we have? Looking at if there is stuff for IPAWs, Wireless Broadband, and NG911 that should start showing up on that list as well when we are identifying needs not only for communication, but as for all of the core programs that are supported under ECN. We are just trying to figure out a way that we maximize to make sure that funding opportunities are not left behind or missed because lack of communication.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

C. Grant Funding Letter (Continued)

Johnson stated certainly if we find out we have to send the grant documentation directly to our ESB board so that you guys can look at submitting some of those applications and that is how the coordination piece can happen. Then maybe that is what we need to do. Johnson also found it a little interesting that in his email he also went back to who our fiscal agent is. It might also be a portion of maybe some misunderstanding of what we were trying to relate in that email to HSEM to show the importance of those undesignated dollars that are being turned back. There are still projects that it can just be reallocated to and maybe updating the system of how we can do that more expeditiously because unfortunately Johnson does not know how soon the communication piece is going to get better. When you look at that if those dollars were turned back to the 2022 SHSP well, that means that the earliest the CMESB could potentially even look into SHSP funds is 2023. That is an extended time of not making use of funds that could be made use of.

Myers agreed. One other note that we gave prior discussion at the grants work group is reaching out from the Finance Committee standpoint, reaching out to Director Kelly to include him in discussions when we are dealing with grants to bring him to the table. We are going to make that invite to him to get him to the table. And explain a lot of what we discussed here today and what we discussed at the grants work group last Tuesday as to there are communication needs. When they talk about the six core items or functionalities they are trying to remedy we can make our case for it. One of the things we talked about at the grants work group is when you have to make your correlation to those dependencies doing it not just on a regional concept but looking at it from a statewide concept for all the communication boards and stuff and saying here is how we make our justification to these six core functionalities and using that in helping ECN help us. We will help ECN write the grant application for the SHSP. It is identifying what your needs are and making that link to those requirements that the feds have on it. Instead of having each individual trying to come up with that and go that route. There is some more ground work we have to do, but that is what we are working towards and we will discuss further at our at our Finance retreat next month.

D. RapidDeploy Radius Mapping Project (Update)

Myers gave the last update he has from Wendy. Work continues on the GIS base map elements of the project led by Marcia Broman of MESB. Several sites are in the running to be the first to get their FirstNet HPUE connection up. So, they are working on that. This does not include the folks that are using the EDG device. Then the question was if your PSAP is one that had planned to use a LAN connection instead of FirstNet to connect your EDG device please contact Rapid Deploy. It continues to move.

Booker reported they were just finishing shipping. The agencies there were directly connecting their EDG devices to the LANs that communication with RapidDeploy was just a whitelist review or an IP to verify that those IPs will get through. Booker just yesterday got some of the training links sent to her from RapidDeploy. There are a couple, Rice-Steele maybe was one, that is totally up and running and trained, but those training links are going out for everybody else. We are getting closer.

E. CMN800MHz List serve (Update)

Myers reported that was put into place on the 16th of May.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

F. Formalizing the COMU in the region under the CMESB

Larson reported continuation from our last Executive Committee meeting. Our COMU group met this week. We had a really good conversation. A lot of different topics that we talked about. We still feel it is important that we find a home somewhere, so we can really help the region and public safety with any sort of communications incidents. Lahr and Larson are working on getting some COMU personnel together to help with the Paynesville Air Show again this year and trying to reach out with some other events this summer with communications planning. Larson does not know if anything transpired at EMAC.

Johnson reported we had a lengthy discussion on that. Lots of good feedback as far as agreeing that COMU needs a home. It offers a lot of resources and a lot of communicative assistance to local counties. One of the conversation pieces that came up from more than one EM was not thinking that EMAC was the best fit for it, knowing that there is no perfect home for COMU for the fact that if EMAC needs COMU assistance or if EMAC is looking for communication resources our go to initially is going to be through our communications personnel. And oftentimes that is going to end up being in the O&O/Users hat of things. And then also through the Duty Officer eventually we are going to find our way to either Larson or Lahr to start with knowing that you guys have multiple hats as well. We had a lot more discussion of understanding that there are lot of ways we can coordinate and a lot of ways where especially on exercises or planned events to really integrate COMU, but there were also a lot of conversations of there are also a lot of EMs that do not really operate in the communications world and other people in our agency do operate in that world. Where it would be fit as well. As we also have a lot of O&O/Users individuals as EMs they were also saying they do not know if O&O/Users is the perfect place either. There is a purpose and there is benefit to having it more formalized it was not that black and white answer, because there is just so many different things that COMU can help with.

Larson does not know what the right answer is where COMU should live. Larson feels we need to find a home and that home can move if needs change. One thing of note, we determined through ECN that the MN Duty Officer has nothing to do with the Communications Unit. They want nothing to do with it since it is not a state asset they will not even keep a list of phone numbers to get people over to Lahr or Larson. That was something Jim Stromberg originally had set-up with the Duty Officer and since then the Duty Officer said no it is not a state asset.

Johnson thinks we should communicate that out to our groups, because that is a procedural change that if we are requesting communications we are not going to get anywhere if they do not even know who to direct us to.

Larson thinks that is really important and that is why the MNFOG with it's update Larson believes they are going to include contact names and numbers for COMU personnel. Larson opens it up to the group. You all are the chairs of your committees. Larson is looking for guidance where does Larson go next to have conversations to formalize COMU. And what do you feel formalize means? Do you feel that is it's own stand-alone committee, or a workgroup?

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

F. Formalizing the COMU in the region under the CMESB (Continued)

Jelinski sees the benefit of being with the Emergency Managers in this conversation. Jelinski does see a giant benefit, but personally Jelinski sees the biggest bang for the buck right now to be part of O&O/Users. However, is that a rented space and could that space be moved one day to a different home and that home in the conversation be with EMAC, absolutely. You also asked or should it be a stand-alone committee. Our next item of business is going to be meeting location virtual verses in-person that is going to bring up a whole lot of conversation. If we bled into that conversation, should COMU be all by itself? Do you need one more meeting to attend once a month? Jelinski does not really think that you do. But could it be part of O&O/Users/COMU? Jelinski thinks that under O&O/Users you are talking an awful lot of communications from everything from A-Z and COMU is part of that conversation of communications. However, at the same time could that just be a rented space until you found out it actually would be better with EMAC? And EMAC through discussions at the same time would say yes, we see the benefit of being more here. Jelinski does not believe it should be a stand-alone committee.

Myers likes the concept, but because you have got elements from both in the EMAC and the O&O/Users, could you put it underneath the group of O&O/Users and then request representation from the EMAC? EMAC has a representative, so you can follow through. Being that the EMAC does not meet as frequently as they probably would need to meet with what the COMU is. You are meeting monthly with a lot of the players that are going to be part of that group are going to be in that one, but you are also going to have that connection to EMAC. They can appoint a primary and alternate and have them voice the concerns from all of the EMAC folks with that, because we do not need another meeting to go to. You already have that one on the schedule. But Myers does think they should be identified as their own group. When you are trying to come up with the meeting space, Myers thinks dove tail them into the O&O/Users and then have representation from EMAC appointed to that group. Johnson thinks EMAC would be very supportive of that.

Lahr asked what is our goal and purpose of formalizing it? So we have the opportunity to maybe fund something for the COMU from the region's budget or organize some training?

Larson's thought at some point we are going to need exercising and continuing education for the personnel in our region and training. So, being part of the training roadmap and putting in our two cents. Getting some funding maybe for additional training opportunities or mileage. Since a lot of our personnel are volunteer. The next part Larson is not solid on, but when we get our position taskbook and we complete everything in it, there is a page where our employer needs to sign saying I authorize this person to go out and do their COML stuff. That page is supposed to have that employer acknowledge that I will allow this employee to go out under our agency's time which means they would be covered by the liability insurance when they are operating at these different events. The places Larson has worked as a COML/T have not had a formal EMAC or an Emergency Manager request, so Larson was not covered under that other incidence or that other agency's liability insurance. Not saying we need it now, but thinking to the future is there something the region can assist with providing some of that liability coverage, knowing that some of our personnel when they get involved their agencies are not covering them to participate. At the core just to get going and starting we need to talk about training and education.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

F. Formalizing the COMU in the region under the CMESB (Continued)

Johnson stated that was one of the things the members of COMU presented to EMAC is not realizing that since it is not a formal committee at times they have to argue for participation at each event.

Lahr noted the COMU group is meeting informally sort of monthly now. So, Lahr does not think we need a home to meet. Lahr was getting at what is the purpose of formalizing maybe that would spell out or give us a direction on where we should fall under. Can there be a workgroup just under the ESB? Or does it have to be one of the committees?

Myers stated to Larson's point it just needs assemblance of formalization to fall under where it gets coverage under the liability. Myers does not think the liability has to be to set a COMU Committee. It is just so it is recognized by the Board as an official operating underneath there then they can get coverage under the liability of what Larson is looking for. Myers is also looking at making recommendations for training. Myers thinks we have the opportunity to do that without formalizing it, but having that involvement with making recommendations to O&O/Users is typically where a lot of the training is coming out of and the NG911 side. Myers thinks the biggest thing is the liability. It needs to be either a formal workgroup or a formal something, but in order to get coverage it has to be recognized by the ESB to be covered.

Larson thinks another thing that would be important even though a number of our of our COMU personnel had their employers signed their taskbook saying we support this, we support them doing these functions. Larson thinks if the region took a stance to recognize COMU and say this is an important function. It may lend a hand to our COMU community to express to all the JPA why this is important. How this is important, how it can benefit them. We are working really hard to have an educational campaign, but right now we are just a ragtag bunch and we are not able to ask for training in a training road map for instance, or ask for funding for this or that. That is where Larson thinks it would be good to be recognized.

Lahr asked could we not technically state, recognizing the importance and utilization of the communications unit is one of our regional priorities? Lahr thinks there is a valid way for our region to allocate funding toward that because it is part of our regional plan.

Larson asked but who is the person that is representing the group to ask for that? And where does that money go? Really if this is just a workgroup let us say for instance, we decided here that O&O is the best home for it right now. Really O&O just needs to say in one of their meetings that they are going to start a work group, commission a workgroup. And that can be a COMU training work group and that is kind of what we are doing right now is talking about that. If in this world that workgroup existed, that workgroup could provide some recommendations to O&O for what training we would like for the training roadmap or if we need some mileage reimbursement, etc. But, right now just being a group of people that are meeting Larson does not think we have any sort of place to ask for anything.

Jelinski thinks it is more than an important organization. It is a need, not a want. The world has changed. That is the purpose of COMU. The world has changed so we have to have a communications unit leader. We have a COML and a COMT. Why do we have that?

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

F. Formalizing the COMU in the region under the CMESB (Continued)

Jelinski stated not because we want it necessarily, because the world has changed and we now need it. What about the liability coverage, what about the training part of it, whether it's with HSEM, and county XYZ, that the COMU is called out? What are you here for if we are not going to call a COMU to say help us with this? Walk into a dispatch center, set up a temporary tower, whatever it might, but much more than an important piece. It is a needed piece in the world that we live in today.

McIntyre asked which one do you want to live under so we can make a formal recommendation at the next meeting to make you a workgroup? Larson does not know, but O&O historically has already taken action on all the position taskbooks and oversees the STR equipment, but you could think of us as Users as well. Larson does not know where the best place would be.

Jelinski thinks you might have hit it on the head when you said O&O or the STR is under that. Who is running the STR if it's not going to be your COMU/COML and certainly your COMT for the technical portion of it?

Larson agrees. That is one thing a lot of people throughout the state have recognized that COMU group really works with a lot of the technology and the toys. It is a lot easier to form a group and keep it together, surrounding technology and equipment because that is the tools we use. Larson thinks he is hearing there is a nudge towards O&O Committee, so Larson can request an agenda item at the next O&O to discuss it. Jelinski would agree with that.

G. Meeting Location – Virtual vs. In-Person

Myers reported this is an ongoing topic in this day and age as the world is changing. There is benefits and there is arguments. Pros and cons, both ways in-person versus virtual meetings. We would like to ask the board to come up with a solution. Some of the things Commissioner Jelinski and Myers have been discussing is from the level of the ESB looking at a hybrid approach like the SECB is doing where they will have meetings that are identified as being in-person and looking at those being virtual. Keeping in mind that you have to include the public aspect and that is the biggest challenge is making sure we make accommodations for the public to be able to go there. If it is a week where Myers has got a lot of stuff it is nice to have a lot of virtual because drive time kills, but Myers does know you lose a lot. The encryption summit was an example. One of the things the Finance Committee is doing that is why we are having an in-person retreat. Part of that is due to time constraints, but also looking at Myers thinks there are certain things you need to take the distractions because in a virtual meeting you can have where you get background feed. Then again when you look at the pump and you are looking at almost \$5 gallon gas to drive around when you do not have to, you have an alternative and it comes down you have got to find a happy medium. The committees when you look at the Open Meeting Law they have the ability to identify, and we have done it in the Bylaws, formalizing it saying here is our schedule as we go through and set our schedules for the upcoming years. Our year meetings that we identify which ones are going to be in-person and that and go from there. That way we can put this to bed, because it does come up, it is going to be and it is due the years Myers has been sitting in the RAC position and working with the Board and the committees. This is always been an ongoing topic of discussion.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

G. Meeting Location – Virtual vs. In-Person (Continued)

Jelinski stated as many of you know, Jelinski sits on the SECB and Jelinski has Vice Chaired the SECB for several years now. Jelinski has had different conversations with Commissioners of Public Safety Bruce West was one of the last Commissioners there and the new Commissioner Smith is the newest Assistant Commissioner of Public Safety that is leading the SECB. Jelinski has had in-depth conversations with both of those individuals as far as meeting in-person, meeting virtually. Jelinski's opinion was to both of them to have members from the State of Minnesota once a month drive to the Saint Paul for the purpose of a one-hour meeting makes absolutely zero sense in today's world. Jelinski's suggestion to the most recent Assistant Commissioner of Public Safety/Chairs of the SECB was you have two meetings you have a meeting in the spring and you have a meeting in the fall. Plain stupidity says we have meetings when it's 20 below 0 when we know we do not have to. Both of those Commissioners at the end of the conversation said why do we have to have two meetings? Why wouldn't one be enough? Since the beginning of COVID, the SECB has yet to have a meeting in-person. We all know there is conversation of having a boot camp, possibly at Camp Ripley coming up this year yet maybe in August. Jelinski's personal opinion of meeting in-person in today's world is really, because we all just want to waste our time. Makes no sense to me at all. Jelinski has attended O&O and Users from the very beginning from day one. Jelinski has attended RAC from the very beginning from day one. Jelinski has been to those meetings, Jelinski believes that we accomplish vastly more virtually than we ever accomplish in a meeting and we have 40 people sitting around and the same three people do the talking all the time anyway. And at \$5 a gallon? Really? If part of my job is supposed to be watching dollars and cents, I'm doing a terrible job of it. If I am going to advocate to we need to be meeting in-person once a month. The point of fact is that at the end of the day in the world that we live in today, really, are you kidding me? We are meeting to have an hour or two long meeting to have a meeting and then we are going to turn around and go home again. That that just does not make sense to Jelinski.

EMAC decided to have their 4 meetings a year in-person with a virtual option as needed. Johnson will say that it was very lengthy conversation both ways. But in part that was it really fell on the state since the state at this point is not willing to do their meeting in the morning virtually. It came to the discussion of if it is an all-day meeting and the state is not willing to do their morning session virtually and less necessary we are going to be driving to the location anyways what is the point of a virtual. To support your argument, Johnson has heard from multiple areas and also multiple committees that Johnson has been on or coordinate with that they are getting push back from their county representation or supervisors or even their businesses or stakeholders in charge of them that attending in-person they are not going to be allowed to as frequently as we were accustomed to before just for multiple reasons that you mentioned. When we are thinking about what post COVID look like, yes we all agree there is a benefit to in-person, but we also agree there is a bigger benefit with virtual as well that we are going to start seeing some of that coming out as well where even if we schedule in-person meetings we might start seeing that for some reason they cannot attend, or they need to try and get a virtual option before they are able to spend that amount of time.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

G. Meeting Location – Virtual vs. In-Person (Continued)

Larson agrees with the Chair that there are times where a virtual option can be beneficial, especially like we are talking about with gas savings and everything else. The thing that Larson would say though is a lot of the meetings Larson has been sitting in there is something lost. This meeting is really awesome. There is like eight or ten of us and we are having some real good conversation. And most people are active. But a lot of meetings Larson has been sitting in statewide, regional or otherwise. Like you said, it is the three or four people and you only hear from everyone else when there is an “Aye.” Larson has even had it at a meeting where people were saying “Aye” and motioning, but they did not know what they were motioning to. Like Myers mentioned, that encryption summit. Larson was a little not wanting to attend in the first place especially since it was a slumber party, but that turned out to be an awesome meeting. It was like an old fashioned getting together. We got to network with people we do not see often, some people we have never met before. Got some other side business accomplished as well pertaining to communications and everything. Larson thinks back to a story that you told me a number of times about how you attended a regional meeting or an ECN conference in the early days of ARMER and you walked in and said Morrison County will never, ever, ever join ARMER. The story Larson recalls that you told me was throughout that conference at some point you had a sit down with a couple other folks that found you grant dollars to help Morrison County adopt and join ARMER. Larson would challenge you that a virtual setting you would not have that same side conversation and interaction to help your agency in a purely virtual environment. Larson thinks it would be responsible and prudent for us to have a hybrid option, but Larson says that knowing it is a loaded question on the technology and finance side because now you have to find a location that can support a hybrid or schedule a couple in-person and other virtuals. Larson knows he is not as popular with his thought process, but Larson is really for in-person. Larson knows that it is a drain on time and other resources, but Larson thinks there is a qualitative piece to in-person that is going to be lost if we just go purely virtual.

Schmitt would echo quite a bit of Larson’s comments, but prior to COVID, we also had a call in option on our board meetings that emergency services. So, we were already doing a type of hybrid, I would say it is going to be maybe we have quarterly in-person meetings with virtuals at other times, you know, cold weather months, difficult to travel those type of things. It is going to be some sort of a hybrid of the two is what Schmitt envisions. Schmitt agrees with Larson though there are connections and things that you can only make in-person that lead to other areas of development in our programs if we are together in the same room. And Schmitt thinks you definitely miss that option. Schmitt thinks maybe not every Emergency Services Board meeting will be in-person, but not every one will be virtually either, and we come up with some sort of solution that gets us face to face every once in a while and at the same time on the weather and things like that, we can go virtual and in cold weather months. Schmitt think there is value to in-person that we cannot replace virtually.

McIntyre agrees with everything that has been said both ways. McIntyre hopes we can come to some sort of hybrid type of solution. McIntyre only says that exactly what you are talking about with staffing crisis right now, the cost of travel, etc. McIntyre thinks few and fewer are going to be allowed to be leaving in the frequency of all these different meetings.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: (Continued)

Regional Concerns (Continued)

G. Meeting Location – Virtual vs. In-Person (Continued)

McIntyre explained if we start looking at all the RAC, O&O, Users, board all the different other committees we all sit on if McIntyre can jump on for an hour and not have to have four hours of travel on top of it is going to be a lot easier to make sure McIntyre can continue to go to meetings and others to continue to have some form of involvement. McIntyre would still be able to travel if needed, but it is a lot easier to be able to jump on focused for this period of time and give my organization back four hours of travel when we are short and staffing crisis is to be available for other things as well other than sitting in some car for windshield time for a long period of time and not being able to accomplish anything.

Booker would say exactly the same thing. Booker does not think it means we never meet in-person. But Booker thinks the frequency with what we were meeting versus having this virtual option, like McIntyre said staffing is a big deal, coverage, all of all of those things, the costs. Booker's county, much like other counties, is really looking at every single dollar and Booker thinks the permission to do that is going to be limited. Booker thinks that it is going to need to be a hybrid. Booker would like to see twice a year or quarterly, but Booker thinks anything beyond that is going to be a stretch.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Committee Attendance

View online.

B. Website (Update)

a. Training page updated – New 9-1-1 Training Resources page

Shari noted there were two training pages before, but they have been combined. We had two because we had the other regional boards on our website. By the request of the NG911 Chair, Shari has created the NG911 Committee training page where we are putting all the vendors on there. Shari is also trying to find free resources, free trainings and on demand trainings because we got a lot of requests for that from sheriffs from the NG911 Committee. Shari is looking for podcasts, free trainings, etc.

Myers asked is there anything in here that shows what we were talking about with the after-action reports the follow-ups for the training, so people can see the comments or submit recommendations? Myers thinks it would be a good resource for the folks when we are trying to build a training roadmap for the O&O/Users. They would come here, but then if there is a training maybe they are more apt to complete something and submit either anonymously or say I think you should include this. It gives us another way to get feedback from our end user base which is always somewhat of a challenge.

NEXT MEETING:

- a) July 27, 2022 – 9:00 a.m. (ESB Meeting)
- b) August 17, 2022 – 11:00 a.m. (ESB Meeting)

ADJORNMENT:

Chair Jelinski made the executive motion to adjourn the meeting and the motion was carried unanimously at 12:32 p.m.

Minutes by Shari Gieseke.