

**STATE OF COLORADO
COUNTY OF ROUTT**

**OFFICE OF THE CLERK
April 25, 2013**

Chair Chuck Wisecup, Oak Creek Fire District, called the meeting of the Routt County Communications Advisory Board (CAB) to order. Bob Struble and Cheryl Dalton, Emergency Management; Tim McMEnamin, Levi Pietrick, and Lorie McCarty, Routt County Communications; Glen Hammond, Routt County Search and Rescue; Michael Arce, Steamboat Springs Fire; Bryan Rickman, West Routt Fire Protection District; Ray Birch, Routt County Undersheriff; Ed Corriveau, Oak Creek Police; Bob DelValle, Steamboat Springs Police; Machia Cox, Yampa Fire Protection District; Rob Ryg, County Coroner; Emy Keeling, Routt County GIS; Daryl Branson, Colorado 911 Resource Center, and Tom Sullivan, County Manager, were present. Dee Bolton recorded the meeting and prepared the minutes.

EN RE: ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM

Chuck established that a quorum was present this day.

EN RE: ADMINISTRATIVE

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The draft minutes of the January 24, 2013 quarterly meeting of the Communications Advisory Board were reviewed. Changes to the minutes were proposed.

MOTION

Ed moved to approve and authorize the Chair to sign the January 24, 2013 Communications Advisory Board minutes, as amended. Rob Ryg seconded; the motion carried unanimously.

COLORADO 911 UPDATE / DARYL BRANSON

Mr. Branson said that the Colorado 911 Resource Center was a non-profit organization created several years ago by the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to provide access information services and serve as a clearing house for 911 professionals across the State. He handed out copies of the Center's newsletter and encouraged those present to use the organization's website, which contained information about policies of 911 authorities and call centers in Colorado and other areas across the country. Also on the website was a list of the Statewide surcharges and a list of the statutes that governed those surcharges. In the weekly newsletter was information tracking legislative issues. Anyone wishing to receive that newsletter should email Mr. Branson. Currently on the federal level the Center was tracking a voluntary agreement to begin providing texting for 911 by May 15, 2014 among the four

major cell providers—Sprint, AT & T, Verizon, and T-Mobile. The Resource Center was trying to clarify and provide details about the significance of the agreement. An important item from the local perspective was that texting would not be sent unless requested. The agreement required that a requesting agency's area be able to accept and deliver 911 text calls, and that the call center in the area had to request that information. How individual call centers would know when texting 911 was available from a carrier in a center's area was still unclear. The FCC was considering putting mapping tools on its website that would help track the rollouts; the Resource Center's website has those tools as well. People could also call the Resource Center to learn when or whether texting 911 was available in a particular area. Locations would probably not be attached to texting 911; rather, the cell tower location would be provided, which was not very useful. That drawback was being worked on. Depending on the area, there would be options as to how a call center wanted to receive text 911, in case some responders' phone systems were capable of receiving texting on the phone system and others had a separate stand-alone terminal. Some carriers would be offering a TTY call option, which meant that a call could be received the same as any hearing impaired person would receive a TTY call. He did not recommend that option for call centers because a TTY call tied up the 911 trunk line for the duration of a conversation, which was particularly significant to rural areas that had only one trunk line. He noted that in the areas in which texting 911 was being tested, the average 911 phone call lasted approximately two-2.5 minutes; the average text 911 was between seven and 7.5 minutes, which could create a problem tying up a line so much longer. The text 911 service was for the big four; the FCC was considering rules that would cover the rest of the cell phone carriers. Those rules would be similar to the big four's but have a longer deadline by which the service had to be offered—perhaps as much as a year longer—since many of the smaller carriers could not afford to upgrade their equipment in a short timeframe.

Mr. Branson reported that the FCC was currently reconsidering rules about non-service initialized phones (NSI), which were cell phones that no longer had contracts on them. The current rule was that if a carrier saw a 911 call from a phone, even those without valid contracts, the carrier still had to deliver that call to the local 911 center. That was a problem nationally in some areas because the vast majority of prank calls or accidental calls that call centers received were coming from NSI phones. The FCC was evaluating the pros and cons of reopening discussion on that rule and whether it should remain in place or be rescinded. The issue was complicated, especially in urban areas where many NSI phones were connected to domestic violence shelters, homeless shelters, the elderly, and those who could not afford a phone but might need call 911. He thought that the rule would remain in place. A link to the regulatory page of the Resource Center's website in the handout he provided had instructions as to the way in which to file comments on the issue.

Mr. Branson said that the FCC was also considering rules and requirements to help ensure survivability and reliability of an information center following a disaster. That consideration was prompted by the 2012 storm on the Eastern Seaboard that caused widespread 911 outages and by Hurricane Sandy. The rules considered would require telecommunication centers to have backup generators in place at certain points in their infrastructure and to test those generators periodically in the same protocol they were already

following. Most of the rules did not impact call centers, but in the event of a 911 outage, call centers having a backup generator system would enhance the ability to provide services during a disaster. To learn more, go to the Regulatory Page on the Resource Center's website.

Mr. Branson discussed the deregulation of voice-over protocol, which, in Colorado, was being addressed in House Bill 13-1255. He explained that at present the PUC was operating under a decision made a few years ago that stated that the PUC would not regulate internet-based telecommunications, i. e. voice- or video-transmitted internet-based calls, transmitted over the internet in Colorado. The bill would make that decision permanent so that even if the FCC in the future wanted to regulate those calls, it would not have that option. Some organizations were concerned because they viewed the matter as a way to deregulate 911, the next generation of which will eventually transition to an ID-{}based platform. Once that transition occurred, if the bill were in place, it could conceivably keep the PUC from regulating 911 at all, which affected issues related to terrorists, the fees paid to carriers, and which carriers were permitted to conduct business with call centers in Colorado. The Resource Center remained neutral on legislation, but he had attended a committee hearing on the proposed bill, and several organizations, including AARP and Colorado Senior Lobby, had spoken in opposition to the bill as being bad for senior citizens. However, the bill passed committee and was currently on the floor of the House, after which it would be assigned to a Senate committee. The Resource Center was tracking the status of the bill, and interested persons could be updated by going to the Legislative Regulatory Page of the Resource Center's website.

Mr. Branson said that another bill being tracked at present was 1308, which was the cell phone information release in emergency situations. He said that most call centers knew that in an emergency situation, if the center were disconnected from a caller, the center could retrieve the caller's number from the caller's carrier. Sometimes a call center had to complete a form and fax it to a carrier before such information would be released. Bill 1308 would make access to those caller numbers easier. The only concern about the bill of which Mr. Branson was aware was the privacy issue.

Mr. Branson said that a Training Standards Committee had been formed in which he was encouraging all call centers to participate. The Committee was looking at the development of a voluntary set of standards for 911 call centers' dispatchers Statewide. Sharon Cleaver from Routt County Communications was involved in the effort. Nothing would be mandatory or require legislation. He urged anyone interested in participating to attend the meetings because otherwise, standards might be created to which some call centers might object.

Mr. Branson said that First Net was a public safety wireless broadband network enacted in 2012 and called The Next Generation 911 Advancement Act. A grant was funded from the sale of Radio Spectrum. The two components were the national level and the First Net Authority level, which operated on a federal level and which recently hired its first fulltime director who would follow-up with the states, which would administer the grant programs.

Each state had to designate an office or a person to be a coordinator. Grant funds for First Net Colorado would go through the Governor's Office of Information Technology; Brian Shepherd would be Colorado's coordinator. He planned to do outreach to all law, fire, and first responder agencies and call centers to help coordinate future activities. Mr. Branson did not know how the program would roll out. The end goal was that nationwide, the selling of a data-only network that would be set aside for public safety. As calls were received, information such as medical information would be sent directly to the field to first responders.

In regard to 911 surcharges, Tim said that the maximum in Routt County for a phone line was \$1.25, which was decreasing. He said that a major surge had occurred in recent years due to the increased use of cell phones, which in turn increased revenues, but at present house phones were decreasing so the charges for 911 calls were decreasing as well. He thought that texting 911 would charge a fee to add that service. Consequently, call centers' costs would increase. Mr. Branson said that unfortunately what Tim had described was a Statewide phenomenon. According to the present Colorado statute, up to \$.70 could be charged without PUC approval. The PUC had to approve any charge higher than that, and the rationale for the increase had to be justified. On the Resource Center website was the PUC checklist for that justification. A call center had to demonstrate that there was no other way to raise funds, particularly if a center wanted to go above the State average of \$.78. Two counties in Colorado were currently at \$1.50. Raising the \$.70 might be allowed through legislation. Tim said that Routt County's surcharge was raised several years ago to \$1.25, and the PUC had to approve the charge as well as the Steamboat Springs City Council. To complete the process required a Herculean effort. Mr. Branson said that, depending on local ordinances, sometimes the increase had to be approved by the voters since it was a surcharge rather than a tax. The other option was to consider other funding sources, such as a County sales tax to help fund the 911 surcharge.

Tim said that after pre-paid phones were implemented, Routt County received between \$4,000 and \$5,000 per quarter. Mr. Branson explained that pre-paid calls were based on wireless calls made within the State, and Denver had 20% of those so it received 20% of the funds received for the State, which did not benefit rural areas much. He believed that the 911 community would have to explore the funding issue further because costs continued to increase and to do so further with Next Generation 911. He noted that Routt County was not the only area struggling financially.

Tim noted that from Routt County, the Sheriff, Steamboat's police chief, and he were the members of the 911 Authority Board, which was a subcommittee of the Communications Advisory Board. The equipment was ready, but the wireless carriers and CenturyLink had to be ready, too. Then the Text 911 Subcommittee would have to convene and approve the request of delivery from the wireless phone companies. That would be further discussed at the July Communications Advisory Board meeting in subcommittee. Verizon was Routt County's primary carrier; Union Wireless was second, from which he did not anticipate getting text 911 until it was required by the FCC.

Mr. Sullivan asked why a center would want to take on text 911 if it could not be

positioned. Tim said that it was not a matter of choice: The ADA required that call centers must be able to hear messages from the hearing-impaired, who were migrating strictly to text. Mr. Branson added that sometimes a text could be sent in the backcountry when a call could not. He said that the FCC was not mandating 911 call centers to accept text 911, but if a center chose not to, that could potentially create a liability situation. If a hearing-impaired person tried to text 911 and could not, the center could be sued.

Tim said that the Resource Center's website had been helpful to him. It had sample RFPs and SOPs that saved considerable time as templates. Mr. Branson added that samples of Colorado call centers' agency billing model for use of the dispatch system and the pertinent formulas were also on the website. Any member of an agency could call with a question, and the Resource Center would research it and post the answer on the website.

Bob DelValle asked the present limitation on locating a person for an emergency in relation to the pending 1308 bill. Mr. Branson replied that the legal limitation depended on the carrier's liability department. Some carriers were more protective of their users' privacy than others were; some would accept the letter described earlier; others required more information such as that the situation was life-or-death. Part of the reasoning behind 1308 was to render consistency for carriers in regard to what information they had to provide and what they would get in return. Tim thought that if the situation were life-or-limb or had exigent circumstances, such as a person held against his will, the information would be forthcoming. Mr. Branson said that if a person were likely to be injured or injure himself in the time it took to obtain a warrant, the location of the person would be provided by the carrier.

Emy asked what was happening in the Next Generation of 911 in Colorado. Mr. Branson responded that last year the Next Generation 911 Steering Committee was formed. That committee looked at what questions needed to be answered before moving toward NextGen 911 in Colorado, i.e. funding, governance, etc. The work stalled when the committee tried to establish how the group would be governed, for example whether there would be some central coordination of network rollout in the State. CenturyLink was planning to offer NextGen 911 service as a tariff service in Colorado and was discussing the matter with the Public Affairs Commission. Every other state that had moved to NextGen 911 had done so as a contracted service. Since Colorado had no centralized purchasing authority to purchase a contract, the tariff was the only option. House Bill 1255 was further complicating the issue because it would deregulate high-speed-based telecommunications, which would render the tariff moot because it was unregulated. The outcome was unknown at present.

Board members thanked Mr. Branson for the information.

Mr. Branson exited the meeting at this time.

EN RE: PROJECTS AND ISSUES

FARWELL FUEL TANK

Tim stated that the fuel tank project was moving forward. The tank would be ordered soon. It had to be sole-sourced to match the generator manufacturer. He hoped that the tank would be installed by October, 2013; the work would be completed by the County's Maintenance and Road and Bridge Departments when the road was passable. The project would increase capacity from a 92-gallon tank to a 190-gallon tank.

FARWELL WIND TURBINE

Tim stated that the Farwell wind turbine project had been postponed for at least a year. At present, it was unknown whether the project would be feasible for the foreseeable future. Because the turbine would be situated on Forest Service land, if it were to have blades, an environmental impact study would have to be conducted. The concern was raptors nesting atop the turbine. Most manufacturers had advised him that a vertical axis model would not work due to icing of the blades. The Forest Service had abandoned all vertical axis turbines at similar elevations for that reason. One company could construct the turbine but would not install it. The project might be postponed until newer technology devised a model suitable for Farwell's environment.

MICROWAVE STUDY

Tim said that the Requests for Proposal for an engineering firm to study the County's microwave system and provide advice as to how to make the system last as long as it was expected to had been awarded to Televate, the same company that had conducted the Oak Creek study. Tim had been in communication with the company and had provided requested information. As soon as the sites were accessible, the company would visit them. Recommendations were due in the fall of 2013. The recommendations in the study would be considered before the project moved forward.

RADIO SHOP

Tim announced that this day Levi Pietrick, the Communications Department's new Radio Technician, had submitted his application to be authorized to program the DPR radios. Levi had completed his tests; the CCNC Committee would review and approve Levi's application at the Committee's May meeting.

CAD/RMS UPDATE

Tim said that the system was working and in use, but there were still some holdups on both sides so he was unwilling to sign off on it at present. On the CAD side, six instances in the last year had occurred when dispatchers were entering a call on the screen, it disappeared, and the system log never entered the call. When a call could not be reproduced, it was extremely difficult to locate the problem. Other issues needed to be fixed, but those were not critical. In regard to the RMS side, the problem was that the virus recording was not testing well. Information Systems had recently requested another extension of the grant until June; another would be requested to extend to September.

CCNC FUNDING AND MAINTENANCE

Tim said that CCNC had requested \$13.9 million for maintenance on the Statewide DPR radio system. The legislature was still in session and had yet to fund 2012's budget. The Governor was supportive and would sign the request if passed by the legislature. The funds would pay in part mandatory upgrades to equipment Statewide so as to meet new standards. The matter had no effect on Routt County. The system that existed was essentially maxed out so had to be expanded; radio call signs programmed into radios had to be accepted and approved by the State to ensure that there were no conflicts within the Statewide system. Part of the issue was a Microsoft issue. The State anticipated having the funds and completing the work by September, 2014.

COMMUNICATIONS STAFFING

Tim said that the Communications Department was fully staffed; a new employee had started work the previous week.

Tim wished to talk about the quality assurance and quality improvement plan that had been developed using standards taken from other centers around the country. The plan would be implemented May 1, 2013. Each week, ten% of all of the calls for each dispatcher for the week would be randomly reviewed using a checklist to ensure that all questions were asked and answered appropriately. Also, all of the law enforcement Priority 1 calls, all CPR calls, all child delivery calls, all structure fires, and all wildland fires would be reviewed. If any agency wanted a review for a month of any particular type of call, a review would be performed. The first month that the plan was implemented, agency assist calls would be studied with the intent of changing the way those calls were dispatched. When law enforcement was at a non-injury vehicle accident, an ambulance was subsequently requested an agency assist was sent. That procedure was being changed to ask why an ambulance was being requested, and the answer was being used as the nature code. The same would be done for law enforcement: If fire were on-scene and subsequently requested law enforcement, the reason for that request would be logged in the report of the call. Mike explained that fire would usually request law enforcement en-route because a crowd was anticipated on-scene. The second focus within the first two months of initiating the plan was dual response zones. The reviews were intended to be positive reinforcement as well as to make improvements. The supervisors would conduct the reviews and forward a report to Tim. Those reports would be used in employees' annual performance reviews. He hoped the plan would assure quality as well as improve it.

OLD BUSINESS

Chuck said at the January meeting, verbalizing en-route versus MDC only had been discussed extensively. He asked for follow-up comments. Lorie stated that there had been

no change; the same issue was ongoing, and no one agency was at fault; everyone was. She explained that the issue was that when a call was dispatched, dispatchers needed to have a respondent say, "Copy and received. En route MDC." If that were not spoken and the dispatcher was busy with other activities, the dispatcher was unsure whether a responder was en route. Lorie said that the statement also established the en route time and advised dispatch that it did not have to send someone on a call. Also, that respondent would be put on the board. If he were not on the board, when he called to clear and say that he was back in service, the dispatcher would not have known that the responder had been on-scene. The objective was to have standardization. Tim stated that it could take as much as a minute for dispatchers to make the change if the requested statement were not made. He noted that when the statement was made, others within the same agency would also know what that responder was doing.

Mike thought that dispatchers should assume that responders were using the MDCs until they were not. He thought that the MDCs were being used the majority of the time as responders were en route, on-scene, or back in service. Lorie said that dispatchers could not make assumptions. Chuck said that Oak Creek Fire was not using MDCs because sometimes they received a call and were already en route before they had connectivity.

Mike said that he was okay with making the statement requested. He asked whether a responder should then say, "We are on-scene"; "We are clear"; "We are back in service"?

Chuck stated that at the last meeting when the issue was discussed, no consensus had been established. By consensus of those present, it was agreed that representatives would explain the request to the members of their agencies and use the statement requested.

EN RE: NEW BUSINESS

DTR CHANNEL MAP RE-NAMING OF TAC CHANNELS

Tim said that the State wanted every county to do a communications plan that would be filed in Denver. If a major event occurred in Routt County, Denver would reference that plan and know what the County was going to do. When he had begun writing the plan, stating the channel that an agency would be on had been difficult. He said that the naming of the TAC channels had been discussed in the past. He was recommending changing the channels to, for example, Fire TAC 1 through 5; police would be changed from a department's name to Law TAC 1 through 4. Thus, channels would not be assigned to a specific agency but a range of channels would be available to every agency. He asked for the Board's authorization to change the names of the TAC channels. Then any one of the fire or law TAC channels could be used by an agency in that group; the channels would not be assigned to any individual agency. For example, instead of Steamboat PD, the channel would be TAC 1, 2, 3, or 4.

Mike noted that when people were trained, they knew the location of, for example, the Steamboat Fire channel, which was particularly important in a low visibility situation. If TAC 3

or 4 could be used, the channel would not be in a standard place or be a known number. Tim said that if a TAC channel were needed, use TAC 1 in the agency group; if another incident occurred in another part of the County at the same time that needed TAC, that incident would use TAC 2. Mike thought that the issue should be discussed further before a change was made.

Tim said that an option was to upgrade all of the pac-sets so that they would voice the channel a person was on. He confirmed that all of the radios would have to be re-programmed. Chuck noted that reprogramming would have to be done anyway, due to the new template and the addition of Road and Bridge. Tim said that the re-naming of only the TAC channels was an effort to simplify the major event communications plan being required by the State and to maintain consistency; nothing would change in regard to the main channels. He had to have the issue decided so that the recording vendor could re-program the channel names on the recording machine at the same time as the names of the channels were changed.

Board members present discussed their concerns and their agencies' supervisors' concerns extensively. Ray pointed out that law might be 1 through 4 when actually the channels were 6 through 9, which could cause confusion. Tim said that if a channel were assigned, the person would be told to go to Zone C, Channel 9, rather than use the name that a TAC channel had at present. Mike requested that the issue be discussed further after additional information had been received.

Levi said that since the radios were all going to have to be re-programmed, he wondered whether anyone had other concerns or issues. He asked whether people wanted to try out the voice announcement for fire-fighting training so they had practice for times when they were trying to use the radios in the dark. He explained that when the radio was turned on, it beeped. Instead of a beep, every time the channel was turned, if a voice file were loaded, it would say, 'TAC 1' or whatever channel a person had turned to. Tim noted that the industry standard was that the maximum number that a radio could handle was twenty units.

Bob DelValle asked whether all counties would use the same naming system. Tim replied that channel naming would be unique in every county. Bob asked why a change was being suggested if there were no standardization across the State. Tim said that writing the communications plan would be easier if the names were changed.

Tim said that he would meet with the various chiefs and try to reach consensus on the direction to take.

VHF CHANNEL MAP

Tim said that Levi had researched the appropriate frequencies of all agencies, including federal ones. The VHF radios had to be updated to incorporate those changes. Levi said that he was still awaiting the frequencies from some agencies, for example, Yampa Valley Electric. In the agenda packet was a channel list of what would be programmed. A

new card would be sent to agencies when all of the changes had been made. Color changes would be difficult for a while.

RECORDING TAC CHANNELS

Tim announced that as soon as consensus had been reached about the naming of the channels, all TAC channels would begin to be recorded. Some TAC channels would be eliminated because no radio traffic had occurred on them.

FIRE: MAYDAY SOG 5.03; LAW: OFFICER DOWN SOG 4.35

Mike said that Steamboat Fire had a Mayday SOG. He thought that what Tim had written was good, but he thought that since other fire agencies had a Mayday SOG, they should all be coordinated so as to be the same. The new Blue Process would standardize what, how, and when something was said and would require the revamping of the current Mayday SOGs. He suggested that common terminology should be developed amongst the fire agencies. He said that if the existing Mayday SOGs were exchanged among fire agencies and reviewed, consensus could be reached so as to standardize the Mayday SOG terminology. Chuck commented that Oak Creek's Mayday SOG was very similar to Steamboat's.

Tim added that agencies should advise the Communications Center of their agency's expectations for dispatch, particularly in a Mayday or an officer down situation. In the latter situation, dispatch would advise that all users clear the channel. If a mayday occurred, dispatch would tell people that traffic had to stop immediately on a particular channel.

Bryan said that if an officer were down, there should be an EMS response so EMS should not have to be silent because EMS would need as much information as possible. Tim acknowledged that an ambulance would be dispatched. He explained that the responding caller would be acknowledged, but he would be operating on a different channel. He was asking that no other traffic occur in that situation. Bob DeValle said that in such a situation, the instruction to hold all traffic was issued, and the caller could go to TAC 1. Tim added that one dispatcher would stay in communication with the officer down situation and remain on that one channel. The dispatcher would announce the channel to be kept clear. The same would apply in a Mayday situation. Others would go to an alternate channel. Bryan noted that a building collapse was an example of a Mayday situation.

Chuck announced that the Minute-taker was retiring. The Communications Advisory Board presented her with a card and a gift certificate to thank her for her service and wish her well. Dee appreciated the Board's thoughtfulness.

Tim stated that Jessica Copeland would henceforth be the CAB minute-taker.

EN RE: ADJOURNMENT

At 4:33 p.m., Bryan moved to adjourn the Communications Advisory Board meeting. Ed seconded; the motion carried unanimously.

No further business coming before the Communications Advisory Board, same adjourned sine die.

Dee Bolton, Deputy Clerk and Recorder

Chuck Wisecup, Chair

Date