

## **December 09, 2021 Meeting Notes for the Public Safety Communications Council**

### **Online- in Attendance:**

Jeff Pierce, Harold Timmerman, Bruce Nachtigall, Brian Soehl, Andy Barth, Jason Jones, Jim Pearson, Doug Barthel, Jay Gerlach, Doug Penniston, JD Geigle, Tracey Murdock, Trent Ninceheler, David Goodwin, Jon Hubregtse, Steve Swenson, Michael Steffen, Chuck Kevghas, Tyler Green, Charlie Kludt, Casey Collins, Kevin Karley, Andy Barth, Doug Barthel, John Wiik, Frank Jarman, Gordon Coles, Ray Black.

Chair Goodwin called meeting to order at 10:00

**Roll Call**, 17 members in attendance so quorum was met.

### **Request for additional Items to add to Agenda:**

None.

### **Approval of October 2021 Meeting Minutes:**

Timmerman motioned to approve, second Steffen.

### **New Business:**

#### **1. System Upgrade Status**

Pierce provided an update on the system upgrade. To date, the system core has been upgraded to 7.19, NICE logging recording system upgraded. Trent Ninceheler gave an overview of GenWatch, added for system and user reporting, and also on the Critical Connect Platform that will allow an interface to similar systems in our region, LTE interface, and a PTT app. We have had a few delays in the turnup of this platform, so will be Q1 2022.

It is important to note that we are approximately one year out from beginning the conversion of sites across the state to P25.

#### **2. Reliance, Hot Springs, & Hill's project outlines.**

For both the Reliance and Hot Springs add sites the projects are on track and on schedule. For both sites the equipment is ordered and installed, circuits ordered, and tower crews have installed the equipment on the towers. It is the plan to turn up Hot Springs in the new P25 format and Reliance in the legacy SmartZone format by Q1 2022.

The Hills project which requires the installation of new sites in the Rockerville, Hill City, and Keystone is on track as well. RCS was awarded the project civil work, which includes site prep and installation of the buildings, towers, and assistance with the telecommunications circuits. Prep for the footings has been completed, and those footings are in the process of or have been poured. Planning on a first quarter 2022 completion. Timmerman and Nachtigal added to the discussion.

#### **3. Site Prioritization**

The process to determine a formal process for the addition of sites on the state system has not made any further progress and council members Pierce and Jager will resume work on that.

#### **4. Critical Connect/WAVE System**

Trent Nincehelter gave an update of the Critical Connect platform that is partially installed. Some of the hardware is already installed, we are waiting on the rest of the equipment from Motorola and for them to be on site & optimize. Critical Connect provides a direct interface to a cellular push to talk (PTT) application, has the capabilities of eventually extending coverage out over LTE networks to compatible devices, and is the platform to allow direct interface to other P25 systems. Schedule is to have this completed by Thanksgiving 2021.

#### **5. FY23 Budget Request**

Budget request by State Radio and in the Governor's budget are the following:

- \$500,000 for the increased support cost associated with the buildout of the system, expected cost and recurring.
- \$200,000 for replacement of the While River tower. Aging tower (early 1970's) and has been used for target practice. Better to replace before it falls down. One-time.
- \$450,000 for an additional site in the Redfield area. One-time.

The request for funding to provide a statewide application was not included.

#### **6. Bridge4PS application, Rollout and Status.**

In order to avoid some of the issues the radio side encountered when no common system, frequency, or protocols were put forth in South Dakota, the council approved of the adoption of Bridge4PS as a common application for situational awareness in the state, this application can share from one-to-many awareness items such as pictures, maps, weather reports, etc. that can't be delivered over the radio. The application has been tested at numerous events over the past 2 years within the state and has a unique pricing model that makes it the most efficient option for the state. State Radio had purchased enough initial licenses to get a slow start on this process, so will just need to revamp the process and move on.

Additionally, discussed was the FTE hired to manage the application process. That individual has been reassigned to manage the State Broadband program Connect SD. State Radio is taking a look at current staffing and will factor a new hire to best meet the needs of our first responder community.

#### **7. 3G Services**

King requested at the subject of 3G coverage and the sunseting of that platform be discussed. Doug Penniston reported that for most services, 3G will be phased out by the end of February 2022

## **Old Business:**

### **1. FYT2021/2022 Budget:**

Pierce provided overview of the State Radio budget. At this time all aspects of the budget are at expected levels. 58% of the fiscal year remains as of the report numbers provided.

### **2. Grant Status:**

The only outstanding grant process ongoing at this time is the grant through the Office of Emergency Management that will fund an additional tower trailer and a Compact Rapid Deployable (CRD) basically a portable cell on wheels that can be deployed to almost any environment with a vehicle, UTV, or even airlifted into position. When deployed, the satellite link and onboard equipment will provide a 1-mile bubble of LTE coverage and a smaller area of Wi-Fi coverage.

### **3. Digital Radio System Updates:**

Most of the upgrade process affecting the system was covered in the new business, but the new sites are in progress as expected. Additional projects to direct-connect Spearfish and the Rosebud Sioux Tribe PSAP's are underway, and the increased capacity for the Mitchell site is nearly completed. Beyond that, routine maintenance getting ready for winter.

### **4. FirstNet/Broadband**

Doug Penniston provided the annual update for FirstNet progress in South Dakota. 38 sites were committed to South Dakota, 26 were FirstNet funded. Of those 38 sites, 21 of 26 FirstNet sites are completed or in final stages of completion, last five will commence in spring 2022, all in the Black Hills. All remaining sites should be completed in 2022. ATT added a 2<sup>nd</sup> deployable for emergencies in Rapid City, so the state has one on both ends of the state. Band Class 14 is already built out beyond the 22% committed under the FirstNet program. Doug also gave an overview of the ATT affiliation program, which expands the number of first-responder related users.

Collins brought up and Penniston confirmed that there are some device shortages.

### **5. Key-File, Code-Plug Template, Test Site**

State Radio and the dealer community continue to collaborate on code-plugin templates for radios and departments that will be using the statewide system. Currently, operable code-plugs have been generated for Motorola and Kenwood/EFJ radios, work continue on Icom, BK, and Harris radios. BK is the national standard for federal firefighters, and Harris is used extensively with the National Guard

### **6. Encryption Standard**

AES-256 is the default standard moving ahead and should be the only encryption option ordered if working with other agencies. BIT/State Radio is planning a workshop for internal and dealer personnel that defines the number blocks and state plan for encryption.

## **7. Simulcast Conversion**

The initial plan to first complete the Rapid City simulcast, move to Sioux Falls and complete that simulcast before heading back to the Hills area to complete before Rally 2023, had a considerable amount of discussion from both the dealers present and the representative user group. The initial mindset was that those sites that were peripheral to Sioux Falls and Rapid City would overlap enough to allow both systems to operate within the area of each city. However the idea of users having to understand and use their radios accordingly was a concern and State Radio was asked to review with Motorola and report back for March meeting.

Communications prior to and during the upgrade were also discussed. Pierce is working on an interactive site map that will be on the SDPSCC website.

## **8. Moving Out Past Simulcast Buildouts**

This topic was very well hashed out in the previous agenda item.

## **9. Monthly Calls with Radio Shops and Stakeholders**

State Radio staff continues to host open forum meetings for the radio dealer community and stakeholders each month. Particularly on the radio dealer side, things have been worked through, and as we are at the 1 year or less point before the major part of the project kicks off, State Radio and the SDPSCC would like to promote as much as possible anything we can do to inform the community.

## **10. Aberdeen Request for Patching**

Aberdeen and Brown County maintain a local radio system that is separate from the statewide digital trunked system. As such there are issues with communications during emergencies because the radios and frequencies are not compatible without a “patch” between the two systems through the PSAP console. The patch can create issues if not properly managed and used, so this was discussed as an agenda item. After a discussion with the Brown County Communications Director, the path ahead may be best served by adding local channels into State responder radios. This may be the model for all areas not using the statewide system. HP requested that we keep a uniform plan in all radios.

### **Organizational Reports:**

Jones –

Swenson --

Green —

Goodwin –

Barth –

King –

Rave --

Timmerman –

Kludt – Discussed DHS grant process for new radios.

Collins –

Karley –

Geigle – WestComm is installing radios for EMS units out west

Steffen –

Jaeger –

Barth – Issues with product availability on radio side.

Pearson –

Barthel --

Motion to Adjourn by Geigle

Second by Nachtigall

Meeting adjourned 1205