



Tama County Communications

100 N. Main Street • PO Box 4 • Toledo, Iowa 52342

Office – 641-484-3760 • Fax – 641-484-2198

The Tama County 911 Service Board meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM on September 8, 2020 by 911 Vice Chair Van Egmond (Dysart).

Members present: Billie Van Egmond (Dysart Primary), Chief Jacob Molitor- via Zoom (Meskwaki Nation), Brian Staker (Montour Primary), Sheriff Dennis Kucera, Chief Jason Bina – via Zoom (Tama), Shawn Kennedy (Traer Primary), Keith Sash (Gladbrook), Kendall Jordan (Emergency Management) Jeremy Cremeans (911 Director).

Also in attendance: Tim Brown (Dysart Alt) Tyler Sells (Traer Alt), Mindy Benson (Emergency Management Coordinator), Mary Wankowicz.

Motion by Kennedy second by Brown to approve agenda, motion carried.

Motion by Brown, second by Staker to approve meeting minutes from July 14, 2020 all aye, motion carried.

Motion by Staker, second by Sheriff to open the public hearing regarding the 911 budget amendment at 6:35 PM with a unanimous vote by members present, motion carried. No public comment was voiced and there was no comment received in the 911 office. Motion by Brown, second by Sheriff Kucera to close the public hearing with a unanimous vote by members present, motion carried. Director Cremeans advised that the public hearing noticed was published on August 28, 2020 in the Tama-Toledo News Chronicle, which meets the requirement of public notice. Jeremy explained that Mindy and he met last month and were able to split some of the Emergency Management budget to be transferred to the 911 budget. Because the Director salary was unknown as to what it was going to be after Jeremy's six-month review, it was set at \$55,000 as we can always choose to be lower than the budgeted amount but cannot go over. No questions or comments were voiced. Roll call vote to adopt the 911 budget was as follows: Dysart- yes, Gladbrook- yes, Montour- yes, Tama- yes, Traer- yes, Sheriff- yes, Emergency Management- yes. Not Present: Chelsea, Clutier, Elberon, Garwin, Lincoln, Toledo, Vining, LeGrand, Belle Plaine, Gilman, Reinbeck, Grundy Center. Motion carried to adopt the 911 amended budget.

Motion by Kennedy, second by Sash to approve Claims. All ayes, motion carried.

Old Business:

Jeremy gave the update on the SARA radio project. The project continues going smoothly. The Vining site is being "fast tracked" because of the damage to the current site and will be completed first. Expected completion date will be around the end of October. There is some delay in getting rebar which could push the tower construction back a week or two. We are still looking at a May 2021 cutover date tentatively for the new system. There was a firmware update to the communication electronics that they will be doing in the factory prior to sending that equipment out and getting that staged and tested in Marshalltown.

Jeremy received communication concerning the amount of radios being purchased for EMS. It was explained that we were not doing radio for radio replacements rather, we would be counting seated positions for each agency. EMS would get 3 radios per ambulance and Fire sent in seated positions to calculate those numbers. It was determined by the Service Board and Board of Supervisors to go this route rather than radio for radio to help reduce the burden on the taxpayer. Kennedy explained that he has a base radio in his office that was not counted, he also has a UTV type vehicle that currently has a mobile radio in it that was not counted. He explained that he has 4 Paramedics that will have a radio leaving him 2 for the remaining crew and UTV. He mentioned to the group that he currently has a dual head radio in each of his units and was okay with the single head but would like to see more portables allocated. Discussion ensued on this topic. It was determined to table this topic and that Jeremy would get some dollar amounts from RACOM and send that out to the Service via email to decide on how to proceed.

Jeremy included in the packet information regarding the current generators with current run hours on them. Mindy mentioned that she reached out to Rural Water to see if they would be interested in purchasing the generator and LP tank currently at the Gladbrook site. She advised that they would be interested in leaving things as they are and that they would be interested in purchasing said equipment. Jeremy also mentioned that the departments that showed interest initially, had contractors come out and it was determined that they would need a larger generator to operate what they needed. No action taken at this time though it will be kept on the agenda as an action item moving forward.

New Business:

Jeremy presented a quote from Thomas Company of Tama for a full-sized refrigerator to be placed in our office. It was explained that this has been a bucket list item for some time as we currently have a refrigerator that is slightly larger than a dorm size one, limiting space for those working long stretches or hours. This is an Amana 18 cubic ft top freezer with a price given as \$629.00. It was explained that this was the cheapest price locally and a quick search on the internet. Kennedy motioned to purchase the refrigerator from Thomas Company, second by Bina. All voted Aye, motion carried.

Jeremy gave an update on the storm damage from August 10, 2020 derecho. A tower crew was here on September 1 to inspect the Engineer tower and Courthouse tower. Initial inspection did not show anything significant to these sites. There are some bent antennas on each tower which, they were able to straighten some. Others will need a little more work if not replaced due to mounting hardware being damaged. RACOM is waiting for the final report to come back before a decision is made on how to proceed. It was determined that the current Vining site is a complete loss and not safe to climb. RACOM is also getting a quote together to decommission this site and replace the equipment to be placed temporarily on the new Vining site. This will be included on the insurance claim from the storm.

Jeremy explained that during the derecho, when telephones were not operational, staff were using their personal cell phones to make/return work related calls. This was identified as being an improvement point and an opportunity to develop alternative means of reaching the Communications Center during certain events. Two cell phones were obtained for the Communications Center from FirstNet. During normal operations, these numbers will be forwarded to the main 641-484-3760 number. During times of need, the forward will be cancelled, and these numbers will be an alternative to the main number. These numbers are 641-758-5556 and 641-758-5011.



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Jeremy told the board that Sidney Westendorf has been hired as an On-Call Telecommunicator. She comes to us with experience from Butler County and has Shieldware experience. She moved right through her training and has been picking up hours already.

Jeremy took this moment during the meeting to publicly acknowledge the professionalism and dedication the staff showed during the derecho and the week following. *During the brunt of the event, there were two Public Safety Telecommunicators working. Julie Hoskey and Anna Bloomquist. Laurie Schultz came in soon after the storm had passed the Tama/Toledo area to help contact utilities and assist in organizing calls and help with answering overflow calls. During that day, there were 569 calls that came through the Communications Center. For reference, the Monday before there were 93 calls that came through during the same 24-hour period. Overwhelmed or inundated was an understatement for that day. The staff that worked during and post storm did an amazing job, relying on each other, their training, and years of experience to get information out in a timely fashion. They utilized the resources that they had on hand and were able to navigate through equipment and structural failures experienced that day and days after while dealing with an already aged radio system. Remaining professional during this time proved to be a challenge while dealing with their personal devastation. Because of this, I would like to recognize the following Public Safety Telecommunicator's for their professionalism and dedication that day and following week – Michele Taylor, Melissa Bergom, Julie Hoskey, Anna Bloomquist, Laurie Schultz, Cheyanne Packer, Jamie Youngbear, Diane Kesl, Rylie Davis, and Sidney Westendorf.* Many at the meeting echoed their appreciation for all that is done each day and agreed that the staff did amazingly well under the circumstances. Many thanks were given!

Next regular 911 Board meeting will be held Tuesday October 13, 2020 at 630PM. Motion for adjournment by Sheriff Kucera, second by Staker. Meeting adjourned at 7:10PM

Respectfully Submitted

Jeremy Cremeans, Director