

Knox Regional Communications Center Users Group

Wednesday
October 18, 2017
4:00 p.m.

A meeting of the Users Group of the Knox Regional Communications Center took place on **Wednesday, October 18, 2017 at 4:00 p.m.** in the Knox County Emergency Management Agency Office.

Executive Board members in attendance: Adam Miceli, Rockland Fire/EMS; Camden Fire Chief Chris Farley; Jesse Thompson, Union Fire/EMS; and Knox County EMA Director Ray Sisk. **Members absent:** *Ruston Barnard, Rockland Fire/EMS; Craig Cooley, Rockport Police Department; and Rockland PD Deputy Chief Chris Young.*

Users Group members in attendance: Kevin Soule, Union FD/EMA. Jason Peasley, Rockport Fire Chief; Clarence Keller, Hope Fire Chief; Mike Drinkwater, St. George Fire/EMS; Amy Dyer, St. George Fire/EMS; Betty Thomas, South Thomaston EMA Director; and Marc Candage, Vinalhaven Fire Chief.

Others in attendance: Knox Regional Communications Director Linwood Lothrop, Knox County Administrator Andrew Hart, and Administrative Assistant Candice Richards.

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| I. 4:00 Meeting Called To Order |
| II. 4:01 Discussion Items: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Review & Approval of the 2018 Budget2. Election of Representatives3. Other Business |
| III. Adjourn |

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Chris Farley at 4:07 p.m.

II. Discussion Items:

1. Review & Approval of the 2017 Budget.

Director Lothrop executive board has reviewed the budget and tentatively approved it. He briefly went over the highlights from the budget:

- Personnel Services – deputy communications director position – originally the position was a dispatcher that had been requested as part of a prior budget year process and was approved, and then last year it was asked to reclassify that last dispatcher position, so it was only about a \$16,000 change to this year’s budget. The overtime line is up because back in 2016, before the 2017 budget was finalized, the finance office combined some budget lines inadvertently left out funding of \$19,000 that was originally in the holiday overtime line. Rather than trying to throw that back in at the last minute, it was decided to leave it out since the deficiency could be covered by still having some vacancies. The problem is, now that the department is up to staff, the funds need to be put back in there.
- Contractual –down 1% overall.
- Capital Expenditures: all being funded from undesignated fund surplus
 - Redundant Microwave Path from Benner to Coggins – a project being spread out over a 5-year period; provides a microwave repeater as backup.

- Remote IP Monitor for Tenants Harbor site – allows the County to do diagnostics remotely so the technicians know what they’re dealing with before they go out there.
- Computers and monitors need to be replaced; they are on a 5-year replacement plan. They’re used 24/7. Changes in software and technology have meant that the County has to keep upgrading to meet the five year window. The monitors are dying and the new ones are larger which will make it easier for the split/screen that dispatchers need to do with the new protocols.
- Replacement batteries for Ragged Mountain backup system.
- Software upgrades for a laptop allows staff to use the laptop as a full console away from the comm. Center.
- Paging encoder for the trailer that allows the County to dispatch out of a trailer if something were to happen like what happened with another county where they lost the ability to dispatch because of a lightning strike.

The total budget is \$1,191,660, which is an increase of 12% from the 2017 budget (it would probably closer to a 5% increase if the \$19,000 of overtime wasn’t inadvertently left out of the 2017 budget and if the Budget Committee hadn’t cut \$40,000 from the 2017 budget).

October 26th at 5 p.m. is when the Communications budget is being reviewed by the Budget Committee and Commission. All end users are welcome to attend the meeting and show support if so inclined.

- Amy Dyer motioned to recommend the budget to the Commission and Budget Committee for approval. Jason Peasley seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.

2. Election of Representatives.

Chief Farley explained that three of the representative terms will end on 12/31/17 so the Users Group needed to elect individuals to fill those seats for the next term. The three people currently filling those responsibilities are:

- Chris Young – Law Enforcement representative
- Adam Miceli – Fire representative
- Jesse Thompson – EMS representative

Chief Farley called for nominations.

- Kevin Soule made a motion to recommend Chris Young, Adam Miceli, and Jesse Thompson to the Commission for reappointment. Jason Peasley seconded the motion. A vote was taken on the motion with all in favor.

3. Other.

Priority Fire Dispatch

Clarence Keller asked for the status of priority dispatch. Director Lothrop responded that the staff have finished up the QA training this week and the Center goes live the 21st with the new protocols. The end product will be the same but it will make the dispatching piece far more efficient for the dispatchers doing the call-taking.

New Dispatcher

The newest dispatcher is Jessica Ward. She started training two weeks ago. She is very intelligent and scored the highest score on the CritiCall test.

Dispatcher Recognition

Director Lothrop thanked the agencies that including the Center in their press releases about incidents because that certainly helps with morale for the dispatchers when they are recognized for what they do.

FCC licensing

Director Lothrop will be sending out an email to remind everyone about this. Some agencies will have some licenses that need to be renewed in 2018.

Switching to Digital

Director Lothrop will be sending the agencies a survey very soon which will be asking about how many department issued radios each agency has in the field – both mobile and portable. Since it doesn't look like there will be much in federal funding available in the future and the County already has the infrastructure in place, he wants to start shopping around to see what funding opportunities out there based on what the total need of the County's agencies ends up being. There are potentially lease purchase agreements, purchase over time, swapping, or bulk purchasing. The idea is to get all agencies over to digital at the same time. The County may be able to use some of the Communications department's undesignated funds toward that goal. First though, he needs to figure out what the department issued needs are. This doesn't include personal radios that people bought themselves. After Director Lothrop gets the survey results back, the agencies will all get a copy of the report back with a summary of the results.

III. Adjourn

- Ray Sisk motioned to adjourn. Kevin Soule seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Candice Richards
Administrative Assistant