

**STATE OF COLORADO
COUNTY OF ROUTT**

**ROUTT COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY BOARD
August 11, 2004**

Chairman Bob Struble, Steamboat Springs Fire and Rescue, called the meeting to order. Chuck Wisecup, Oak Creek Fire Chief; Chuck Vale and Cheryl Dalton, Routt County Emergency Management; Dan Allen, Yampa Fire Protection District; Ed Corriveau, Hayden Police; Faith Mendoza, Routt County Communications Director; Bob Reilley, North Routt Fire Protection District; Dan Taylor, Routt County Sheriff's Office; and Kristia Check-Hill, Routt County Search and Rescue, were present. Dee Bolton recorded the meeting and prepared the minutes.

EN RE: REVIEW OF MINUTES

MOTION—APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Wisecup moved to approve as written the minutes for the regular meeting of the Communications Advisory Board for July 14, 2004. Mr. Taylor seconded; the motion carried unanimously.

EN RE: COMMUNICATIONS REPORT/RADIO SYSTEM UPDATE

Ms. Mendoza reported that the system was running well; Mr. Vale is doing site visits and checking each tower.

EN RE: COMMUNICATIONS CENTER STATISTICS

Ms. Mendoza reviewed the Number of Calls by Complaint and Hour of Day for the months from January to July, 2004. She noted that each title had a call guide associated with it. Mr. Taylor suggested that the County Commissioners receive a copy of the report. Mr. Vale said that the Report was the best ever received.

Mr. Struble asked the difference between the title Search and the title Rescue. Ms. Mendoza said that a search did not necessarily involve a rescue.

EN RE: RFP/EQUIPMENT UPDATE

Ms. Mendoza said that the contract with Century/Tel for the purchase of a computerized telephone system, a master clock, and a recording system had not yet been signed but it was being reviewed by the vendor. If Century/Tel agreed to the terms, the tentative installation date for the telephone system, the recorder, and the clock would be soon thereafter. She noted that the mapping system relied on the telephone system being installed.

Ms. Mendoza reported that a loss of audio on the Dictaphone from approximately July 20th to August 6th was due to several operators' oversight. The fire on July 26th was an incident that had no audio.

EN RE: CAD REPORTING SYSTEM

Ms. Mendoza said that the Communications Center was getting a new fax machine within the next week since the current machine was malfunctioning. When installed, some formatting issues should be resolved. She said that agencies should visit or contact the Communications Center and individually discuss the information and reports that one's agency wants to have generated.

EN RE: SEARCH AND RESCUE REPEATER/CHANNEL

Ms. Check-Hill asked what the progress on the Search and Rescue repeater channel was. Ms. Mendoza said that Search and Rescue wanted to put a repeater on Mt. Werner to enable the agency to communicate over a wider area. She noted that on the green card, Search and Rescue was Channel 43, and a repeater channel for Search and Rescue was set aside on Channel 45. She said that a repeater with a PL code could be installed on Mt. Warner, and a wider range within the County would be gained, but the installation of a repeater would not solve the problem of sending a request for aid to other counties because they might not have the PL code that would use the repeater. However, adjacent counties could install the tone.

Mr. Vale said that all of the County has a PL tone on its systems. The monitor button takes off the PL tone and every transmission is heard. Ms. Mendoza said that some channels were the same as agencies in other counties and conflicts and overrides were occurring and audio might be missed if the other signal were stronger. Mr. Vale said that to turn the repeater on, a signal and a PL tone is sent. That action opens the repeater, which hears other counties' transmissions, which is the cause for the interference. He said that that interference was the risk associated with installing repeaters. He noted that some communications with federal agencies might not be heard, depending on the brand of radio the federal agency is using. He said that the goal was to program his new computer so that when a major incident occurred, the Communications Director could use that computer software to program radios.

MOTION—TO SUPPORT SEARCH AND RESCUE'S REQUEST

Mr. Taylor moved to support Search and Rescue's efforts to obtain and install a repeater site on Mt. Werner with a PL tone. Mr. Vale seconded; the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Mendoza will organize the internal aspects of the project, then Mr. Vale will contact Search and Rescue and authorize the purchase of the equipment.

Mr. Vale noted that getting all of the channels and PL tones to match the green card was in progress.

EN RE: FCC DECISION ON SPECTRUM

Mr. Struble said that he received a letter from the Fire Service regarding a private vendor blocking channels. Ms. Mendoza handed out two July 8, 2004 news releases from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regarding Spectrum interference and leasing rules. She said that the issue was the government giving money to Nextel Communications, Inc. The question was whether to try to stop it, join other agencies' efforts to stop it, or try to resolve the interference problem within the system. She asked that agencies read the material from the FCC and discuss at the next meeting whether the Communications Advisory Board should respond to the letter received by Mr. Struble. Mr. Taylor said that a cautious approach should be taken.

Mr. Vale stated that the issue was major, but primarily involved large cities and huge corporations. He said that in western Colorado, the infrastructure was not in place to be concerned about the issue raised in the FCC press releases. He reviewed the status of the ten-county region and said that getting on 800 MHz would be sporadic. He said that a radio could not be purchased at present and legally put on the 800 system. A computer template had to be purchased and installed and permission from a private organization managing the 800 system and representing the entire State had to be obtained. He said that an 800 digital radio for his car was being purchased, but no one in western Colorado had the software to use it. He stated that RETAC had received \$200,000 to purchase some 800, some UHF, and some VHF radios with which to improve radio communications, none of which would be for Routt County because Routt County did not need 800 and did not like UHF. He said that RETAC and Homeland Security believed that trauma centers should have 800 radios to talk to other trauma centers as well as ambulances, but ambulances might not have 800. He noted that if a cell phone would not work in a given location, neither would 800; if the cell phone worked, then it could be used to talk to a trauma center. He said that the money being spent would not address mutual interoperability. Mr. Taylor said that the Board making such decisions should have a common goal. Mr. Wisecup said that a public safety board should be formed so that the same participants were making decisions. Ms. Mendoza said that across the State, some decisions were being made to purchase equipment without fully understanding the equipment and its interoperability with existing equipment systems.

EN RE: 800 MHZ POSITION PAPER AND UHF/MED CHANNEL

Mr. Struble said that the above discussion covered these agenda items.

Mr. Vale asked for the Board's direction on the current Routt County UHF system when it fails. Mr. Taylor said that the UHF system should not be resurrected; VHF provided superior coverage. The Board discussed the issue further.

MOTION—POSITION REGARDING 800 MHZ

Mr. Taylor moved that the Communications Advisory Board take the position that the system for talking to hospitals and ambulances remains VHF and that no additional funds be spent on UHF equipment until the infrastructure was installed for 800 MHz, at which time the issue should be re-evaluated. Mr. Wisecup seconded. Under discussion, Mr. Taylor said that he understood and appreciated the protocol, but the Communications Advisory Board could not fix the problem; the area is rural Colorado, and probably 90% coverage could never be attained so the EMS protocols should be re-examined to accommodate the area in which they were being used, and protocols should not dictate the amount of money being spent for attaining 90% coverage. Mr. Vale suggested that the two Yampa Valley Medical Center doctors attend the next Communications Advisory Board meeting to discuss the issue. He said that the EMS protocol was a local one that was broad in nature. Mr. Struble will share this day's meeting minutes with the doctors at the Medical Center and determine whether they should be invited to a Communications Advisory Board meeting.

The motion carried unanimously.

EN RE: NEW BUSINESS

>Mr. Taylor discussed some paging issues. Ms. Mendoza said that paging Mental Health was difficult because it was hard to get anyone to respond.

>Ms. Dalton said that the ID badge form had been revised and expanded. She said that essentially the first page was completed by the applicant and signed by the agency supervisor; the second page was the certification information. She said that supervisors should verify a person's certification information, and sign the form prior to the applicant submitting the application. The supervisor's signature on the second page would indicate that copies of all certifications for the applicant were on file with the agency. Also, if an applicant is a member of another agency, that should be cross-referenced on the application. The color copy of the form should be submitted to Ms. Dalton, and a current date should be used. The badges would be issued for two years, after which, a list of persons authorized to receive badges would be sent to supervisors of agencies. The supervisor would authorize the re-issuance of badges. Mr. Struble suggested that supervisors submit packets of application forms to Ms. Dalton after receipt of which people visit her for their photographs.

EN RE: NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Communications Advisory Board will be held on ---, 2004, at 3:00 p.m., in the Commissioners' Hearing Room. Agenda items should be submitted to Sue Heineman.

EN RE: ADJOURNMENT

MOTION—ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Wisecup moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Taylor seconded; the motion carried unanimously.

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

Dee Bolton, Recorder

Bob Struble, Chairman