

**STATE OF COLORADO
COUNTY OF ROUTT**

**OFFICE OF THE CLERK
March 24, 2011**

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, Routt County Communications; Doug Monger, County Commissioner; Bob Reilley, North Routt Fire Protection District; Kristia Check-Hill, Routt County Search and Rescue, Emy Parmley, Routt County GIS; Bryan Rickman, West Routt Fire Protection District; Dan Allen, Yampa Fire District; Rob Ryg, County Coroner; Garrett Wiggins, Routt County Sheriff's Office; Joel Rae, Steamboat Springs Police; Tyler Whitmore, Yampa Valley Regional Airport; Pat Arnone, Pearson Communications, and Ron Lindroth, Steamboat Springs Fire, 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 27, 2011 quarterly meeting of the Communications Advisory Board (CAB) were reviewed. Several amendments and additions were made.

MOTION

Bob Reilley moved to approve as amended the minutes of the Communications Advisory Board of January 27, 2011. Joel seconded; the motion carried unanimously.

EN RE: PROJECTS AND ISSUES

MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS VEHICLE PHONES

Tim said that the wireless pumps in the communications vehicle were not at present completely compatible with Verizons. Verizons had referred him to three consulting firms in the Denver area to help get the unit running. He had spoken with the County Manager and the County Commissioners and determined that a purchase agreement would be forthcoming because resolving the issue was a high priority.

OAK CREEK RADIO UPDATE

Tim reported that the engineering company hired to study the Oak Creek area and make recommendations as to ways in which to improve the 800MHz system radio had completed its study. The County Commissioners were pleased with the report and were trying to find the funds for the project, which would cost \$250,000. The EMS Council had allocated \$10,000 toward a local match for a grant that would be submitted in the fall of this year. Bryan explained that the EMS funds came from the Penguin Plunge raised years ago to be spent on 800 radios but never used since the radios had been purchased through grant monies. At its most recent meeting, the EMS Council had voted to put the funds toward the Oak Creek project. Tim said that the funds would allow the placement of five repeaters at the Oak Creek site and provide 67% coverage with packsets in the area that at present had less than 10% coverage with hand-held radios. Chuck added that an opportunity to place amplifiers on buildings in the Town of Oak Creek would increase coverage even more.

Pat stated that he had provided Motorola and the State Engineer the information and the two entities were looking into it. The Motorola representative had observed that the \$250,000 was at least \$100,000 short. Pat noted that anything done on the site would have to be approved by CCNC and its technical operations division. Bryan said that \$100,000 was available through a State EMS emergency grant fund. He had asked the RETAC Coordinator whether the project would qualify as an emergency, and the Coordinator was going to further investigate the question. Bryan believed that Fire and the Sheriff's Office could argue that the situation constituted an emergency.

Sheriff Wiggins said that he had not explored law enforcement funding options for communications projects but he had recently spoken with a Yampa Valley Electric Association representative who had advised the Sheriff that YVEA was considering the possibility of converting to 800 due to the dead areas in South Routt YVEA was experiencing. Plans for the project had not been further explored due to the projected \$7 million cost investment, which was prohibitive. He offered that YVEA might want to become a partner to share expenses since a partnership had been discussed in the past. Chuck explained that the partnership to which YVEA alluded related to obtaining a new site, and YVEA's participation would be in-kind by providing electricity to the new site rather than by contributing monetarily. Commissioner Monger stated that YVEA had never discussed the topic with the County. Chuck said that since the study had been completed, the coverage maps could be shown to YVEA to determine whether it would be interested in participating in the cost of the project. Chuck said that if legislation regarding school interoperability were enacted, the South Routt School District might be a potential partner in the project. Commissioner Monger thought that the County was running out of 800 band width since Road and Bridge was going to have to go to 700. Chuck said that 700 and 800 were the same. Tim said that last year the County offered to talk with YVEA, and YVEA had no idea about the project. Pat said that he had also talked with YVEA recently, and it definitely was interested, but at the time of the meeting, YVEA had had no concrete plan and needed time to make one. He thought that YVEA might be more prepared at this juncture to discuss the issue.

Commissioner Monger said that the non-coverage issue had been discussed several

times. The County Commissioners were not interested in the option of seeking a new site. Thus, the County had been willing to authorize a study performed by experts who would provide all options and recommend viable solutions. His impression during initial talks about the possibility of the 800 system was that coverage would be less than it actually was, in spite of poor reception in some areas.

CAD/RMS UPDATE

Tim reported that the CAD/RMS system update project was still moving forward. The following day the Evaluation Committee would meet and hopefully reach consensus as to the choice of vendor; three of which were still being considered. Ron stated that the federal Aid to Firefighters grant for approximately \$500,000 had been received and would be contributed to the program, the majority of which, from the firefighters' perspective, would go toward the CAD aspect of the project to get fire districts mobile data terminals and the hardware and software needed to support them. Given the fact that he had been attending site reviews and vendor interviews, and fire was contributing one-third of the cost of the CAD/RMS program, he asked that the fire chiefs be allowed to participate in the discussions and have a vote as to the final choice of vendor. Chuck said that his fire district had spent approximately \$50,000, excluding grants, to ensure that South Routt had CAD interface. Joel explained that the grant was for \$1.5 million, but the project was established by the County and the City. Commissioner Monger asked whether fire's system worked within the systems that the three vendors were offering. Ron said that it did. He said that the fire chiefs had identified strengths and weakness of each of the vendors, which essentially aligned with the Sheriff, the jail, and law enforcement. He said that one interoperable system for the entire County's Dispatch Center was a huge chunk for fire to be able to operate within. Bob Struble said that when the CAD/RMS system was first being discussed approximately ten years ago, the City and the County had each contributed more than \$500,000. Then the economy crumbled. To ensure that they were included, the fire districts had gotten together to assert that they were a participant in the project. Commissioner Monger thought that the fire districts had been offered the opportunity to participate but the fire districts had been unable to contribute toward the cost of the initial project. Bob Struble said that fire had not been asked when the project was with Visionaire.

COMMUNICATIONS STAFFING

Tim reported that the Communications Department was fully staffed: four dispatchers were in training; two should test out in April/May, the other two in June. Two lead dispatcher positions had been vacant; three dispatchers were tested and qualified for the positions; two of the three will be promoted as of April 15th.

DTR MOBILE REPEATER RADIO TEMPLATE/REPROGRAMMING

Chuck said that the question of ownership of the DTR Mobile Repeaters had arisen at an EMS Council meeting. Tim said that the County only had one, and it belonged to the West Routt Fire District. Bob Struble added that they were --- through the Homeland Security

Office.

Tim said that Bryan had asked where the repeater would be kept. Bryan said that he had offered to house the repeater in Hayden, but the repeater was for use Countywide. He simply wanted to ensure that potential users knew where the equipment was and how to access it. Tim noted that Search and Rescue had a repeater as well. Bob Reilley thought that storing the unit in Hayden was as good as any other location. He stated that equipment should be centrally located for easy access when needed. By consensus, the Board decided to keep the DTR Mobile Repeater in Hayden. Commissioner Monger said that the unit should be inventoried and tracked for accountability. Tim stated that the unit was labeled.

In regard to radio template and reprogramming, Pat handed out the Routt County DTR Channel Map and stated that it was not at present comprehensive: Much more would be added to it. Ron suggested that when the matrix was finalized it be dated so the most current list could be used.

Pat reviewed the Yampa Valley Regional Airport changes that had already occurred. He said that the portable repeater was different from the FutureCom box or Digital Vehicle Repeater System (DVRS), which could be used as a portable repeater but was really a talk group extender that broadcasted locally but also connected to a talk group and rebroadcasted the talk group through the entire system. The unit contained a repeater and a mobile DTR radio; the latter was the same as those in vehicles. When the components worked together, they became a talk group extender and provided greater flexibility but were complicated to program.

Pat handed out a Zone Channel Assignment—1 of 4, provided by the Garfield County Communications Director who had some DVRSs in operation and had volunteered to build the template for Routt County, based on the handout just provided, which would ensure that the entire region was operating in the same way. The programming complexity was that when desiring to extend a talk group, a channel had to be dedicated in the list. In the list, FC stood for FutureCom; groups A through D would be assigned as part of the regional plan: B was Routt County; the State was probably A, and Moffat and Eagle County were the other frequencies on the list. He demonstrated how to read the chart by giving examples. He explained that the FutureCom zones would be added to the region and discussed the particulars of the talk groups, the zones, and the categories within the zones. He said that if any other Routt County talk groups were to be added to use the device, a channel would have to be assigned because the box had to be told the talk group a user wanted to be in. He recommended that Zone B ROUTT MAC be extended to be the basic County channel for all entities to stay tuned to since ROUTT MAC was listed and recorded at the Dispatch Center. He said that the unit was a powerful tool so the region was working to make full use of the unit's capabilities. The unit was designed to extend to an incident commander the ability to talk to Dispatch. The issues were whether Routt County wanted to extend ROUTT MAC, since the County's channel map would grow, and whether more than that needed to be available to be extended, and if so, where they should be categorized.

Joel asked whether a State group such as wildfire should be extended so that people could connect to a State or national channel at an incident. Pat said that 17 through 20 were for the Northwest region; 21 was a Statewide mutual aid talk group. The system was almost programmed so that the entire State had all 21 MAC groups; the sheet handed out this day was essentially only for the Northwest region. If someone from outside the region came to an incident and was connected to the system, he could talk to dispatch on 18 but could not talk on-scene on the FutureCom box.

Bryan said that to get maximum benefit from the equipment's capacity, it would make sense to extend Law1 and Fire1 when initially programming so as to have additional capability in the future. The suggestion was discussed and options within the zones were offered. Pat said that most radios were already set up to scan Law1 and Law2. Ron said that another channel for major incidents should be designated to avoid clogging up the day-to-day frequencies. Joel noted that ROUTT MAC would provide six extendable channels; he saw no need for more. Bob Struble agreed. Pat said that if a site were lost, the FutureCom box could repeat that site locally and be heard Statewide. Pat stated that the Channel Map just handed out represented what was programmed on the County's radios at present; some of the channels had simply been shifted. Ron asked that Eagle County be added to ROUTT MAC to establish direct communication with the I-70 corridor. Pat replied that Eagle County's system was currently not compatible but it was in the process of being upgraded over the next three years. Sheriff Wiggins asked whether the Drug Task Force had a specific channel that could work in Steamboat as well as Craig. Pat was unsure but he said that it had all of the TAC channels. Tim noted that a letter of authorization to add the Task Force was necessary. Pat took note of the agreed upon changes and additions and will provide an updated Channel Map to all users.

Pat stated that ideally reprogramming would be built up within the next two weeks. He stated that mobile units were more powerful than packsets, but some packsets should be equipped with FutureCom boxes to be used when out of a vehicle. Actual reprogramming would begin the first week of April.

ROUTT COUNTY COMMUNICATION STRATEGIC PLAN

Tim said that development of a Communications strategic plan was a big project so he was delaying the project for a year because he could not do it well at this time.

EN RE: NEW BUSINESS

DEMO REPEATER

Pat said that he had a demo repeater in Meeker. He will then install it at the Oak Creek site to check the 8TAC91. He will notify everyone when that would occur.

In regard to communications with med-evac helicopters, Pat noted that 8CALL90, a conventional repeater, was used to talk to helicopters on the Front Range and had

interoperability between the two systems. There were no 8CALL repeaters on the Western Slope at present but Simplex channels could be used.

PACKSETS AND MOBILE UNITS

Tim said that he would be ordering two new packsets and mobile units the following week. They would be available for anyone who needed to use them.

THANK YOU

Bob Reilly wished to thank those who participated in --- and the County staff who delivered fuel to Farwell. In regard to paging, he felt that the Dispatcher on duty was responsible for the quality of the communication rather than the equipment.

EN RE: ADJOURNMENT

At 4:35 p.m., the Communications Advisory Board meeting was adjourned.

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

Dee Bolton, Deputy Clerk and Recorder

Chuck Wisecup, Chair

Date