

Public Safety Broadband Network (PSBN) Commission
Department of Public Safety, Headquarters, Lab Classroom
Meeting Minutes
July 1, 2015

- Chair, Paco Aumand, called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm by reviewing the agenda with the following present: William LaFerriere, BGS; Steve Locke, Hartford Fire; Doug Johnston, Springfield Police; Tess Gauthier, DPS; Robert White, AOT; Joe Flynn, DEMHS; Terry LaValley, DPS; Kiersten Bourgeois, VT ACCD; Sara Small, DPS; Rhonda Camley, DPS; Frank Costantino, DII; and Suellen Royea, DPS.
- **Recap on state consultation:** Paco Aumand shared that there were a total of 69 people that attended the FirstNet State Consultation with a lot of interaction, he felt we showed that we are interested and overall it was a very good consultation meeting. He asked for comments from those that were at the meeting. Tess Gauthier thought we had a good group of diverse representatives, the use cases were good, but would have liked to see more local representatives. The meeting took a step back as there were some new faces in the room. Paco noted that Doug Johnston and Steve Locke's names were given to the Governor for appointments to this Commission and E-911 boards, respectively. Rhonda Camley noted that she will be taking over Sara Small's grant duties with Sara acting as a backup. Paco recapped that the Commission is in place to guide Vermont in building a public safety broadband network. We received about \$800,000 through a SLIGP grant, which funds outreach, data collecting and planning for the public safety broadband network. Once the plan is developed and given to the Governor, the Governor has 90 days to opt in/opt out. Comments about the consultation meeting from those around the room continued. The general consensus was that there were some good questions at the meeting, we were given some good insight from the FirstNet representatives, it will be important to include more local participation as we proceed, and the presentations were good and on point. Paco thought there may be some uncertainty about the value of what FirstNet is doing and created 4 buckets:

1. I support the FirstNet initiative and the work of the Commission and want to participate in outreach efforts where possible.
2. I support the FirstNet initiative and the work of the Commission but do not feel I have the time to spend helping in the outreach effort.
3. I have concerns about the building of the national broadband network and do not feel that I can talk about the message sufficient to participate in the outreach effort.
4. I have concerns about the value in the development of a Vermont public safety broadband network and do not feel that I can help deliver an outreach message.

He wondered which bucket members saw themselves in. The general consensus was that most members felt they were a mix of buckets 1 and 2, and needed more information/knowledge to comfortably speak to others. There was a willingness to help set up meetings and suggestions to create some technical talking points and to keep our Congressional representatives up-to-date with our progress. Paco shared that he plans to take our comments back to FirstNet and noted that he thought that FirstNet needs to do more selling to those in the planning stage.

Robert White noted that the US Coast Guard knows nothing about this project. Tess responded that we were asked not to do any outreach to them because they are a federal agency. Terry LaValley believes the network will happen and is an opportunity that does not come around very often. Paco Aumand noted that our webpage has some information and reviewed our initiative is named VTERN, VT Emergency Responder Network. One challenge may be convincing fire departments, which are not paying for or using wireless mobile services, to join the network.

- **Coverage Work Group Update:** Paco Aumand reviewed the proposed coverage map; the missing coverage areas are the spine and Northeast Kingdom. Tess Gauthier gave a report of the Coverage Working Group, which met on June 30, 2015. The group consists of Terry LaValley, Joe Flynn, Corey (from Public Service) and a National Guard representative. They also are allotted 40 hours of work from VCGI. Part of the data collection requested from FirstNet includes a request to look at the baseline coverage map and determine where we want coverage. The working group is working on a GIS map of fire and police calls and Hazardous spills. There was some discussion about the grant and who should pay for the 40 hours of services from VCGI. There was some confusion about the services/payments of VCGI. Kiersten Bourgeois offered to research the group. Tess continued that an RFP for GIS services has been posted. Terry added that FirstNet provided us a coverage map and asked where we want to see coverage. The map included 5 criteria which were overlaid to show current coverage. He felt the Vermont first responder community has a current solution available and suggested to look at 2-way radio coverage, LMR or LTE coverage and take what is left over and build those areas out over 5 years. Joe Flynn added that Public Service did some mapping and found that about 90% of Vermont has broadband access, but the grids may not be accurate (one section of the grid may have service but the other side of the same grid may not). The group intends to drill down the data layers to see if there is a justification for coverage in those areas. Kiersten noted that the VTA did a lot of work by driving around and thought that Jim Porter should have all their files and data. Robert asked if any of the microwave dead spots are they on the white spots. Terry LaValley answered that they did not look at that but plan to come back to those areas. Tess asked Robert to join the coverage work group.
- **Commercial Provider Engagement:** Paco Aumand noted that we have providers in Vermont that already have infrastructure in place and asked if we have an obligation to engage them and to what extent. His personal opinion was that we are going down a road to let FirstNet develop the network and thought that we may want to let the companies in Vermont know what is going on. Some thoughts shared included: AT&T and Verizon would be briefed through their parent company; outreach/education for the large companies would be done by FirstNet; if we hold a meeting with commercial providers, could someone from FirstNet attend the meeting; draft a letter to providers; adding information on our website directing providers to FirstNet; attending regulatory meetings; and coordinating with the Department of Public Service.

- **Data Collection:** Tess Gauthier reported that they pushed out the survey to EMS, sheriffs and local police chiefs last Wednesday and the survey was sent to all fire departments via email last Friday. They also reached out to the associations to advise that the survey would be coming out and plan to do a hardcopy mailing. A couple of suggestions included touching base with the LEPCs and the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. Tess Gauthier reviewed they have talked to 207 people and handed out 154 information sheets.
 - **Staffing:** Tess Gauthier continued that Justin Barton has been hired to work on data collection and another person, who starts on Monday, will work on following up on missing data/surveys. Paco Aumand reminded everyone that in the early days, we were planning on spending \$500,000 money to have the work done outside and then decided to use temporary state employees.
 - Tess continued that we need to update the SKIP to ensure that broadband is included, which Sara will research and get back to Tess, and an invitation will be sent to attend a two-day event the end of July.
 - Robert White asked about whether or not Tess had reviewed their data. She answered that she has not.

- **Grant Update:** Sara Small reported that we are in good shape as we have already submitted Phase 2 paperwork of the grant. Sara reviewed that they only gave us 50% in phase 1 and then in phase 2 we modified the budget, added temporary positions, resolved a match problem and updated contractual line items.

- **Future Work of Commission:** Paco Aumand asked after outreach and education, planning and data collection, what comes next for our work as a commission. It was noted that the commission is set to sunset, but Paco thought that FirstNet may be looking for States to govern the network when it is built and the Commission may have some responsibilities. A question was asked if there is sufficient funding to continue our work. Sara Small reported that we have spent about \$17,000 on this grant, which expires January 2019 and she reviewed the proposed pending expenses. A suggestion was made to do some public service announcements. Joe Flynn noted that the Emergency Preparedness/Health Department Conference is scheduled in October at Jay Peak. Tess shared that we will have a table at the Sheriffs conference, also.

- **Meeting in August:** Paco Aumand suggested waiving the August meeting and meet in September. Those in attendance were in agreement. The Coverage Work Group will meet in August. Paco announced that he is retiring, but will stay on as Chair of this Commission.

- **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 2:53 pm.