

**MINUTES OF THE
GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS TASK FORCE**

Monday, June 23, 2014 – 10:00 a.m.
Snow College Administration Building
800 West 200 South #147, Richfield, Utah 84701

Members Present:

Sen. Wayne A. Harper, Cochair
Rep. Brad L. Dee, Cochair
Sen. Ralph Okerlund
Rep. Douglas V. Sagers
Chief Michael H. Jensen
Chief Mike Mathieu
Chief Mike Navarre
Mr. Ken Petersen
Mr. Steven H. Proctor
Deputy Warden Jerry Pope
Ms. Tina Scarlet
Sheriff James M. Winder
Captain Alan Workman

Members Absent:

Rep. Mark A. Wheatley
Chief Chris Burbank
Sheriff David Edmunds
Chief Terry Keefe

Staff Present:

Mr. Joseph T. Wade, Policy Analyst
Ms. Victoria Ashby, Associate General Counsel
Mr. Tim Barber, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Task Force Business

Chair Dee called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. Sherriff David Edmunds and Chief Terry Keefe were excused from the meeting.

MOTION: Chief Jensen moved to approve the minutes of the May 22, 2014, meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Coordination of 911 call/dispatch centers in Salt Lake County

Chief Jensen gave a brief overview of an interlocal agreement between two Public Safety Answering Points in Salt Lake County: Valley Emergency Communications Center and Salt Lake City Dispatch. He reviewed the progress working through the particulars of the interlocal agreement.

3. Overview – Where are we? What is in the works?

Mr. Proctor presented “Summary of H.B. 155” and gave an update on the merger of the Utah Communication Agency Network (UCAN) and the radio communications part of the Department of Technology Services into the new Utah Communications Authority (UCA) created by H.B. 155.

Mr. Joe Blaschka, owner, ADCOMM Engineering Company, presented “Utah Statewide 800 MHz Upgrade” and an update on his work in preparing a cost estimate and implementation plan for upgrading and expanding the governmental radio communication system in Utah.

4. Comments from attendees/participants

Mr. Brett Mills, member of the public from Emery County, voiced his concern of the number of potential sites, the functionality of an 800 MHz system and the costs of upgrading the current system as well as

potential interoperability with more entities than just law enforcement. Chair Dee and Mr. Proctor replied by emphasizing the need for better training and better coordination with federal entities.

Sheriff Cameron Noel, Beaver County, questioned whether each county needs an upgrade to 800 MHz. Chair Dee states that it depends on each county's needs, and the bill's ultimate goal is interoperability, not necessarily 800 MHz.

Mr. Johnny Parsons, member of the public from Sevier County, is very happy with the current 911 system and does not see a need for Sevier County to upgrade. Mr. Parsons also expressed questions about the installation and ownership of any new equipment. Mr. Proctor replied that communications equipment is currently owned, managed, and maintained by UCAN while the county agencies pay user fees and own vehicles and handheld radios, but noted that arrangement might change as UCAN becomes UCA.

Sherriff Danny Perkins, Garfield County, expressed questions about what lies in store regarding consolidating smaller dispatch centers and the potential impact on jobs. Chair Dee acknowledged the sheriff's valid concerns, but noted he has seen very positive aspects of consolidation in Weber County as it relates to customer service.

Mr. Bruce Bichord, a member of the public from San Juan County, expressed his concerns relating to geographic features interfering with communications and rural areas being dictated to by state government. Chair Dee reiterated his desire to be responsive to rural communities and that membership on the UCA board is configured so that rural community needs are well heard.

Mr. Kent Parsons, a member of the public from Sevier County, expressed his concerns about the possibility of a reduction of television repeater stations in rural areas, as well as intermodulation with existing television sites. Mr. Proctor complimented the expertise of engineers such as Mr. Parsons and their contributions to many sites throughout the state. Chair Dee committed to being very attentive to concerns raised by engineers throughout the process as well as being mindful of not affecting the needed television transmissions in rural areas.

5. Break with light refreshments

6. Continuation of comments from attendees/participants

Mr. Maury Parsons, a member of the public from Sevier County, expressed his appreciation for the Task Force's efforts in seeking to provide the best possible public safety. He also expressed concern about a deterioration of the professional relationship between counties and the Department of Technology Services. Mr. Parsons recommended against site consolidation. Chair Dee committed to find solutions on how to improve relations between county sites and state entities.

Mr. Gordon Topham, Sevier County Commissioner, expressed that he hopes that the task force will be thorough in the development of the system so that even small interruptions in service can be avoided.

Mr. Barry Horsely, a member of the public from Carbon County, expressed his concern of increased costs to the radio system; his department's projected expenses would be more than the current salary of the employee who maintains the whole current radio system for the county. He also expressed concerns regarding site sharing with the state, the contractual terms regarding division of responsibilities and services, and his desire to build a more efficient and productive partnership with state entities. Mr. Proctor committed to finding ways to build a better network that works for everyone with better service and cost savings.

Mr. Mike Melton, Area Fire Management Officer, Southwest Area, Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, commented that he has experience working with both VHF and 800 MHz radio systems and understands the pros and cons of working with either systems. He recommended that the task force keep interoperability in mind with federal agencies due to the significant amount of work he does with them.

Mr. Brian Neilson, a member of the public from Sanpete County, expressed his desire for a commitment that local 911 monies will not be touched throughout this process. Chair Dee stated that would not be a preferable course of action, and he has no intention of taking any money from local government bodies during this process.

7. Other items/adjourn

Sen. Okerlund, Sen. Harper, and Chair Dee all expressed their appreciation for everyone's time and helpful comments throughout the meeting.

MOTION: Sen. Harper moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Dee adjourned the meeting at 1:53 p.m.