

Public Safety Broadband Network Commission (PSBC)
Department of Public Safety Headquarters, Lab Classroom, Waterbury
Minutes of Meeting
October 17, 2018

- Chair, **Terry LaValley**, called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm with the following Commission members present: **Chris Herrick**, Department of Public Safety; **Thomas Hango**, Vermont State Police; **Al Barber**, Vermont Fire Chiefs; **Steven Locke**, Professional Firefighters of Vermont; **Dan Manz**, EMS Representative; **Frank Costantino**, Agency of Digital Services; **Barbara Neal**, E-911 Board; **James Porter**, Department of Public Service; **Doug Johnston**, Springfield Police Department (via conference call); **Robert T. White**, Agency of Transportation (via conference call); **Ron Kumetz**, Vermont Firefighters Association (via conference call); and also present **Lisa Helme**, DPS; **Grant Clarke**, DPS; **Bruce Fitzgerald**, AT&T Principal Consultant; **Tom Shull**, FirstNet Government Affairs Executive; **David Cook**, FirstNet Senior Public Safety Advisor; **Jennille Smith**, Site Acquisition Consultant; and **Stephen Whitaker**, member of the public.

Introductions were made by those in attendance.

- **Agenda Review & Minute approval for April 11, 2018 meeting:** Al Barber made a motion to accept the minutes as proposed. Dan Manz seconded the motion. Motion carried. Agenda: Terry LaValley proposed reordering the agenda to accommodate the commission members who were participating via conference call. He proposed moving discussion of SLIGP 2.0 and the RFP recommendation to the top of the agenda. Chris Herrick made a motion to reorder the agenda as proposed. Al Barber seconded the agenda. Motion carried.
- **SLIGP 2.0 Recommendation of the evaluation team for the RFP for FirstNet planning services.** Terry LaValley noted that premature general knowledge of these proposals and pricing would clearly place the commission and DPS at a substantial disadvantage on the vendor selection and negotiation of a contract. Chris Herrick made a motion to move into executive session. The motion was seconded by Al Barber. The meeting went into executive session at 1:38 pm. Non-commission members left the meeting. The meeting resumed at 2:08 pm. Chris Herrick made a motion that the commission follow the recommendations of the review group and that contract negotiations with TeleVate be undertaken. Dan Manz seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- **Public Comment:** No comments were made.
- **Update from Terry LaValley, FirstNet Single Officer, PSBC Chair:** Terry LaValley shared that DPS had been working with AT&T for several months to put in place an addendum to the State purchasing contract with that company to allow for the enrollment in FirstNet subscriber plans. The prices in the addendum represent ceiling prices, with prices expected to decrease—as had already happened once. A copy of the addendum was distributed to those present. He asked Lisa Helme to give an update on outreach activities. Lisa Helme shared that the fall newsletter on the FirstNet project had been released. There were two outreach events in September. The first was a FirstNet technology demonstration at the Vermont Emergency Preparedness Conference on September 7-8 that had 70 attendees and a presentation before the Capital Fire Mutual Aid Association in Waterbury on September 19 to 24 people. An online survey of application uses will be opened to first responders this month and will remain open through

November. The intent is to provide the PSBC and DPS with planning information on the needs and interests of first responders in using broadband applications.

- **Update from FirstNet representatives Tom Shull & David Cook & AT&T representative Bruce Fitzgerald.** Tom Shull showed the PSBC a video on FirstNet's responses to Hurricane Florence, followed by a PowerPoint on basic features of the network. Terry LaValley asked that they address current developments in Vermont. Bruce Fitzgerald reported that AT&T was now working with landowners at the more than 30 new sites being built in Vermont under the FirstNet contract. He reported that several AT&T sites in Vermont have had Band Class 14 equipment installed. Currently there are approximately 1,500 FirstNet users in Vermont, representing more than 30 public safety organizations and more than 100 subscriber paid customers. Steve Locke asked how AT&T would re-credential first responders on the network. Fitzgerald explained that AT&T is still working to refine this process, but he believed it would be a yearly check-in with each approving authority of a public safety organization. Individual subscribers who lose their public safety status would have their phones eventually inactivated if the subscriber did not voluntarily switch to another AT&T plan. Discussion ensued regarding how AT&T was going through the permitting process in Vermont and what was the process for determining if a site gets Band Class 14 equipment. Commission members questioned the quality of the signal AT&T was offering in the Burlington area, pointed out several instances in which FirstNet subscriber plan prices for data-only devices were actually higher than the business plan pricing, and gave an example of a bonafide public safety member being refused service on a subscribing plan. Ron Kumetz, VSFA representative, expressed concern that FirstNet AT&T marketing is misleading first responders by touting the increased coverage provided by higher powered band 14 devices and not making it clear that band 14 will be selectively deployed by AT&T. Fitzgerald said he would look into these questions. Commission staff will email Fitzgerald a list of the questions and concerns voiced by the PSBC and will relay AT&T's and FirstNet's official responses to the commission members.
- **Commission Role.** Terry LaValley led a discussion with commission members on the future role and tasks for the PSBC. The commission discussed the ongoing need to provide guidance and recommendations to FirstNet and AT&T. Members also felt the PSBC should look at issues surrounding the process of utilizing deployables in Vermont, the network credentialing process, and confirmation of coverage. Members agreed there were larger public safety communication issues the group could provide input on. It was acknowledged that the current commission would have to be re-established through the Governor's office and that would present an opportunity to outline new tasks for the group and could also bring in additional members from other areas. The commission directed staff to draft a proposal to re-establish the commission and to circulate that among PSBC members for comment. The intent would be to eventually present the proposal to the Governor's office for action.
- **Other Business:** There was no other business.
- **Next Commission Meeting:** Terry LaValley said the next meeting would be announced once staff work is completed on the commission re-establishment proposal and project developments occur that warrant a meeting to be called.

- **Adjournment:** Chris Herrick made a motion to adjourn. Dan Manz seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm.