

Public Safety Broadband Network Commission (PSBC)
Department of Public Safety Headquarters, Emergency Operations Center, Waterbury
Minutes of Meeting
April 11, 2018

- Chair, **Terry LaValley**, called the meeting to order at 1:33 pm with the following **Commission members** present: **Al Barber**, Vermont Fire Chiefs; **Thomas Hango**, Vermont State Police; **Dan Manz**, EMS Representative; **Barbara Neal**, E-911 Board; **James Porter**, Department of Public Service (via conference call); **Robert T. White**, Agency of Transportation; and also **present**: **Lisa Helme**, DPS; **Suellen Royea**, DPS/CJS; **Michael Varney**, FirstNet; **Tom Shull**, FirstNet; **Karen Mae Smith**, DPS; **Rhonda Camley**, DPS; **Owen Smith**, AT&T; **Simon Brighenti**, Centerline LLC; **Jeff DelliColli**, Centerline LLC; **Bruce Fitzgerald**, AT&T; **Joe Sebastiano**, AT&T; **Joe Cusato**, AT&T; and **Steve Whitaker**, member of public. **Doug Johnston**, Springfield Police Department, arrived after the start of the meeting.
- **Agenda Review & Minute approval for November 20, 2017 meeting: Dan Manz made a motion to accept agenda as proposed and the minutes from November. Tom Hango seconded motion, but abstained from the minutes vote. Motion carried.**
- **Update from FirstNet Single Point of Contact, PSBC Chair, Terry LaValley:** Terry LaValley shared that several regional informational meetings have been held around the state and similar efforts will continue in the future. DPS has been discussing the network development and installation in Vermont with FirstNet and AT&T; working on a fair and best rate pricing of plans and devices for first responders; and working with BGS on the State of Vermont contract addendum for FirstNet pricing.
- **Public Comment:** Steve Whitaker commented on the role of the Commission and the need for Commission involvement in the SLIGP 2.0 grant process; AT&T roaming agreements related to microcells and lost coverage; completion of propagation studies; integration of work with the telecommunication plan; and monitoring of tower hardening standards to ensure sufficient backup and backhaul for the network.
- **Update from FirstNet Region 1 Lead, Michael Varney:** Michael Varney presented a PowerPoint that reviewed some accomplishments over the last six (6) months, which included: completion of the State portal and state plans; the building of a nationwide core and device testing; and Band 14 deployment. Owen Smith introduced the AT&T team present and their roles. He noted that quarterly updates will be provided to the commission; AT&T is building a set of new towers and they are in the first couple of months of the acquisition stage. He reviewed the process of identifying a site. AT&T is working on 30 Vermont FirstNet sites, plus some business as usual sites at the same time. A “COW-cell on wheels” was placed in Townsend on Sunday and is up and running. They hope to build a permanent site soon. A question was asked regarding the

arrangement with Great North Woods Wireless and how AT&T will work with that company. The response was that AT&T typically does not own towers. Companies are hired and tower space is leased. Another question was asked regarding how they harden sites. The response was that they have a 99.99% reliability standard with FirstNet and all the sites AT&T is building will have generators on them. A question regarding how backhaul is being handled was asked. It was noted that it has to get back to the switching center and is dependent on the site. FirstNet advised that there is a fleet of deployables being built and tested, which will be distributed by summer across the country. In addition, it was reported that AT&T has set up a separate public safety core, with security and enhanced services, and is not connected to the AT&T commercial core. There was a review of how the cores work. A question was asked regarding how the Verizon core will interact with the FirstNet core. It was noted that it would work as it does today in that there is no direct connection between Verizon and the FirstNet core. A Verizon based call would travel through the public internet to a FirstNet AT&T subscriber.

- **Commission Role:** Terry LaValley reviewed that the commission was originally formed to provide an opt-in/opt-out recommendation to the Governor. LaValley asked members what future role the commission should fill. He saw a need for advocacy for the public safety community and an accountability role to ensure the FirstNet system operates as promised in Vermont. Commission members were polled and the consensus was that the group should continue to serve a role in ensuring accountability and progress and the group should consider meeting quarterly. The commission was asked if there was more the DPS administrative team should be doing. The commission members thought the team was doing a good job but possibly could dig a little deeper to reach more first responders.
- **SLIGP 2.0:** Terry LaValley reported that when SLIGP 2.0 became available, an application was submitted. The application was approved for \$540,000 for the next two (2) years with an 80/20 match. He reviewed the areas the grant can be used for, which include: technical advising, consulting, additional data collection, and policy development. DPS will draft an RFP to engage a contractor to have on retainer to perform tasks outlined in the SLIGP 2.0 grant. The commission approved that DPS draft an RFP. The RFP will be circulated to the commission for review.
- **Other Business:** A question was asked regarding additional informational meetings for the southern part of the state. There is one additional informational meeting scheduled for the Northwest, but more meetings could be scheduled.
- **Next Commission Meeting:** Next meeting will be scheduled as needed. Terry LaValley thanked Suellen Royea for her assistance.

- **Adjournment: Dan Manz made a motion to adjourn. Tom Hango seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:43 pm.**