

Executive Board

City of Bellevue
City of Kirkland
City of Redmond
City of Mercer Island
City of Issaquah



Eastside Public Safety Communications Agency

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EXECUTIVE BOARD SUMMARY OF MINUTES

November 14, 2013
10:00 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-113
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Kurt Triplett, Rich Conrad, Ava Frisinger

ALTERNATES: Jane Christenson (John Marchione), Mike Eisner (Brad Miyake)

ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Noel Treat, Joyce Nichols, Marlin Blizinsky, Thomas Orr, Scott Hatfield, Jessie Morgan

1. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 10:18 a.m. by Kurt Triplett, who presided.
2. Roll Call
3. Approve Agenda
Scott Hatfield would like to move Action Item 6a in front of Report Item 5a. Rich Conrad motioned to approve the amended agenda, it was seconded by Jane Christenson and carried 5-0.
4. Consent Agenda
a) Approval of Minutes of October 10, 2013
Ava Frisinger motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, it was seconded by Mike Eisner and carried 5-0.
5. Action Items
a) EPSCA Maintenance Contract
Scott Hatfield reports that the ongoing Motorola maintenance contract is about to expire. Motorola and King County did presentations for the Operations Committee and the Operations Committee is recommending an extension to the Motorola contract for one more year without any price changes. Rich Conrad motioned to have the Executive Chair sign

a contract to extend the Motorola contract one year, it was seconded by Ava Frisinger and carried 5-0.

6. Reports

a) PSERN Report

Kurt Triplett introduced Marlin Blizinsky, Tom Orr and Joyce Nichols. Scott Hatfield reports that 2 proposals were received from 2 vendors for a Next Generation system. It has been decided after reviewing the proposals, we are unable to move forward. In the meantime, existing systems of the 2 vendors have been visited and evaluated and further clarification and instructions have been given to the vendors in order to move forward with the vendor process. This has affected the projected schedule and everything has been moved forward into next year.

Mike Eisner left at 10:26 a.m. and returned at 10:28 p.m.

The County Council has been briefed on the project every 6 months for the last 3 years and is aware of the delays and scheduling issues. Marlin Blizinsky presented a handout summarizing governance discussions for the new system. Kurt Triplett stressed that the PSAP consolidation is not connected to PSERN and encouraged Executive Board members to come to the PSERN meetings to discuss their perspectives on governance. All discussions regarding governance are tentative at this time. Issues discussed included membership, voting, operations, defining the responsibilities of PSERN and the end user, asset, license and radio ownership. There was also discussion regarding how the dissolution of EPSCA would be timed with the emergence of the new entity and the continued maintenance of our current system until the new system is ready to go online. Rich Conrad said it was likely that EPSCA would continue to exist for 6 more years until the transition period was complete. Ava Frisinger and Jane Christenson agreed that this is a thoughtful approach towards managing the two systems simultaneously during the build out.

Kurt Triplett introduced Marlin Blizinsky for King County, Tom Orr, Executive Director of Norcom and Joyce Nichols. The reason Kurt Triplett highlighted that is because the discussion we are going to have is also a little bit about the request for proposals for the radio system and we want to make sure that there is no one representing potential bidders in the audience that might hear this discussion. It is not completely protected but we want to keep it somewhat focused. Scott Hatfield will talk about the proposal process and then Kurt Triplett will discuss the meeting we had to discuss the potential PSERN group that he had with the deputy county executive.

Scott Hatfield: I will not be going into any detail about either proposal, I have some general overview things to talk about. We are at a point where we did receive two proposals from two vendors that we looked at for the NextGen system. After reviewing those proposals, we have decided we are not at the point with the proposals to move forward. So we have done a couple of things in the meantime. A group of us took a trip to visit some systems that are in place that use each of the manufacturers that have proposed and kind of compared those. We have also met with and are issuing instruction to both vendors that are basically to bring the proposals up to an acceptable level so that we can score them and then move forward in the process. Part of the change this really affects is the schedule. Previously, the schedule had us doing vendor interviews in a couple of days

and announcing an apparent winner in December as well as moving into the contract phase. There is no way to meet these timelines now. With the work that we have sent back to the vendors, we are expecting to be getting proposals back early next year. We had no choice but to extend the time frame out. The County has had discussion with their upper management about this and are aware of the extensions and what it is doing to our timeline. Presumably there is going to be more discussions around how that timing works as we move forward and see what the vendors bring back and see how that affects our time frame in January and February. It is our hope we will still be at least at the negotiation table with an apparent winner in March, to be in contract negotiations. That also causes some issue with being able to present this to city council the way we wanted to present it. It was our hope to be able to go in with a signed contract, a complete package to present to county council to move a ballot initiative forward for funding. Now there is discussion that we may not actually have as complete of a package as we want. This is very atypical of a normal initiative. Generally, in a system replacement like this somebody will say what do you think it will cost? Let's go to the council and get a bond for that number, secure your funding and go out to RFP. We have done that in reverse order so that we can have a very informed decision in going forward and I still feel regardless of if we have a contract signed when we take this to county council or if we are in negotiation with a vendor we still have a tremendously more clear picture of what the scope of the project and the cost of the project will be before we take this to the voters.

Jane Christenson: Was the follow up with the two proposers after your site visits that you saw things that needed to be expanded to get the system we are seeking?

Scott Hatfield: Yes, it was. We got back from our site visits week before last and then actually last week we met on Thursday and Friday with the vendors individually. That group consisted of the purchasing agent from the county and then a representative from each of the four subregions. We sat down with the vendors and had controlled informal discussions to make sure we stayed on track and did not in any way get out of line as far as giving an advantage to one vendor or the other. We were very careful and meticulous about that. But we were able to address a lot of things that perhaps were misinterpretations or even something we took on ourselves on the proposal saying you know we could have wrote that a little bit better, what we really meant is this is what we want. I had a very productive meeting with both vendors. We feel very confident that the vendors know what it is we want to propose at this point and bring forward a system that we can truly build out and move forward.

Rich Conrad: Continuing context, there are two vendors, Motorola and Harris Corporation. The chances that a third vendor would have or could have emerged is almost nil. This is a very large and complex system and there just are not other companies that do this type of work. That was pretty much known all along. The team that put together the RFP and the site visits in my observation is a very strong technical team. We do have the right people doing this work and this is really hard stuff and it is really expensive and I have a lot of confidence in the people that are doing the work. So when they come back and say Harris & Motorola's responses sucked, this is not what we wanted, we wanted more information, we can do better and we are going to insist that they do better. Get us what we need to know to make a good decision. I also heard a piece of good news in all of this that with what they did submit, the actual numbers of sites is not as scary as we thought it might be.

Scott Hatfield: With the re-proposal, that site count is going to increase but I feel very confident we are not looking at the numbers that we thought we were going to be looking at. Just from our conversations from the proposers, they know we want more but we are not looking at doubling or tripling our current number of site we have in the county.

Marlin Blizinsky: Both proposals were inadequate in many ways: lacking information, containing contradictory information within the single proposal. One company said we will give you something different than what you are asking for because you cannot afford the coverage you are asking for. Both vendors deliberately underbid so they would look competitive with each other and what it really is, is one phase of the negotiation. After the vendor meetings, things are much better on track but it will slow us down.

Scott Hatfield: Vendors were told to bid exactly what we asked for, if there is an alternative, the vendor may give the alternative but delineate between the two. Both companies knew what each other was going to bid and bid almost the same number of site to be competitive with each other.

Rich Conrad: You cannot have an ordinance to propose until you know if it passes how it is going to be governed. Getting all the parties in the current governance model to agree on a new one. So that is why I urged this group several times, realistically we need to run this thing to ground by first quarter of 2014 just to stay in some sort of path to get it on the ballot in the fall.

Marlin Blizinsky: I have brought presentations that summarize the discussions we have been having at the steering committee that Rich is on.

Kurt Triplett: At the last meeting I had suggested particularly Redmond and Issaquah should think about whether or not to participate as well being more skeptical of governance change

Marlin Blizinsky: Do we want multiple EPSCA reps? We want to end up with something that you feel comfortable with. If that means having multiple EPSCA reps then you should do that.

Kurt Triplett: I tried to capture the whole spectrum of opinion on EPSCA when I was at the meeting and made it clear that we have not taken a position yet. I think that at some point we have to decide how we are going to decide and if people are skeptical then we should talk that through. Those discussions are important.

Marling Blizinsky: We want your input but one of the things that is unusual about this region is that people have been working together for close to 20 years, pretty productively and happily and that is not the case with other regions. We would like to continue that.

Kurt Triplett: This is not connected to the PSAPS. At the steering committee meeting I raised this and I want to raise it again. I can tell you that the PSAP consolidation discussions are beginning to create tension and challenges among the NORCOM folks and their relationship with the county. I think again, what is the value of that 911 conversation with respect to why this could go well and be concluded will and whether or not that expenditure of effort is productive.

Scott Hatfield: From our Operations Committee meeting this came up and it was very obvious that at that level there was a tremendous amount of confusion and overlap between the two (PSAP consolidation and PSERN). These are separate issues, but the separate issues are causing issues amongst themselves.

Marlin Blizinsky: None of this is set in concrete but these are the discussions we have had so far. The discussion has been that we would have a five member board that the EPSCA cities would appoint one member, the ValleyCom cities would appoint one member, King County would appoint one member, City of Seattle would appoint one member and there would be a fifth at large member. We have not reached even a tentative agreement on how the fifth member would be selected. This is a conduit for our users to have input into the decision making for the organization.

Rich Conrad: If PSERN is created as the regional radio entity, ValleyCom continues on in the PSAP business. EPSCA goes out of business. When it says one EPSCA rep, we'll have to figure out how do we pick that because there really isn't going to be an EPSCA. It is going to be a rep representing the Eastside, what used to be thought of as EPSCA. That is a problem that will have to be resolved. This is the notion, PSERN will be the governance entity for radios, period. It is not like the RCB where EPSCA has a representative serving.

Marlin Blizinsky: One of the things I talked about before was the super majority vote. One of the things the steering committee decided is we should all be equal, there should not be any weighting by population so that has been eliminated. Items for the super majority vote remain the same. This eliminates King County and Seattle's veto power. It will take about 4 years to implement the system and there is a two year warranty period. That is important because what is being envisioned at this point is that basically PSERN will be responsible for the radios up to the end of the warranty period. The reason for the first four years is we want to have the ability to test the system as a system and the reason for the county continuing to be responsible for the radios during the warranty period is that every single user would have to deal with the vendor is there is a problem with their radios. The idea is it will be easier for the project if there is a problem with your radio during the warranty period, they will go fight the battle with the vendor and at that point then the ownership of the radios would be transferred to all the users and the users would be responsible for the operations and maintenance of their radios. Up to the warranty period, the project would take care of your radios.

Scott Hatfield: Has there been any discussion about between here and there? This is about timing of the PSERN entity to form as well as the several year transition for the new system. During that time, we have an existing infrastructure that has to be taken care of until changeover. Is it expected that PSERN will form earlier on and take care of the existing system and what is being put in or PSERN would form more towards the end of the project and status quo for now and PSERN will take care of the new?

Marlin Blizinsky: Neither of those. The infrastructure support today would continue through the transition period that PSERN would form early on and basically be project focused until the transition. PSERN would pay for operation until people transition to the new system and then subscribers would pay one fee rather than having to worry about two fees.

Rich Conrad: You would have two governance structures for a while.

Scott Hatfield: EPSCA lives on for a few more years to get us to be ready to make that transition when the new system is up and going.

Jane Christenson: This sounds like an evolution from the last conversation which was you guys need to hurry up and figure out governance so we can stay on track for this August decision for the November levy. It sounds like those have been decoupled?

Merlin Blizinsky: No. If I gave that impression, I gave the wrong impression. I do not think the council will vote to put something on the ballot measure without a pretty good idea of what the governance is going to be for the next system.

Rich Conrad: There will be a PSERN governance component in the ordinance but what I am hearing is there will be a delineation of roles and responsibilities between project and operations over the transition period leading to ultimately PSERN being this single governance structure for radio everything. But there will have to be a transition period. PSERN will only be focused on the project as you are dealing with your vendor to flip the switch. It will help the EPSCA Board continue to have a role, a selection of its rep, a clear way to reach a consensus on policy as PSERN is growing.

Jane Christenson: This sounds like a more thoughtful transition. Before it felt jammed.

Rich Conrad: It must have sounded like sometime 2014, flip a switch and we all go away. I wondered how is that really going to work and now we are hearing a little bit about the thinking and we wouldn't go away.

Ava Frisinger: The tentative agreement presented on page three addresses a lot of previous concerns. The size of the proposed board is a workable one. The previous one was too large. So that is workable and I believe equitable and I think that it is something I can see us proceeding with now that I understand that there is that transitional period. It is difficult to make the adjustment of you are here one month and gone the next.

Jane Christenson: I would echo Ava's comment that this is a more thoughtful approach and frankly echo Kurt's comment as the county is thinking globally about all these things, they are impacting locals in many different ways. We connect the dots. How is all this connected? It is good to know when things are coupled and decoupled because when it all comes home to roost at the local level it just doesn't feel right so this is a step in the right direction. Thank you.

Rich Conrad: Go EPSCA! EPSCA is the first of our Eastside entities to really show thoughtful coordination and cooperation and set the model for a whole bunch more so I guess in that sense I am always thankful for EPSCA and it sounds like even if things go the way I hope they go, EPSCA is around for another six years at least. Good luck and I will certainly be watching the project.

7. Other/Information

Jessie Morgan reports that the State Auditor will be doing an audit on EPSCA.

8. Executive Session
None

9. Adjourn
Being no further business, meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

**Next Meeting
Scheduled for:**

**December 12, 2013
10:00 a.m.**