

**HAMPDEN COUNTY RECC
REGIONAL 911 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION DISTRICT PLANNING COMMITTEE**

FEBRUARY 16, 2017

12:00 NOON

EAST LONGMEADOW FIRE DEPARTMENT

150 SOMERS ROAD, EAST LONGMEADOW MASSACHUSETTS 01028

APPROVED MINUTES

The mission of the Hampden RECC DPC is to develop and implement a governance structure and operational systems for a regional dispatch that meets the needs of all member communities today and in the future. The DPC member communities share a goal of enhanced and cost effective emergency dispatch services

The meeting was called to order at 12:15PM. Chair Stephen Crane welcomed Vincent Villamaino, Of the Board of Selectmen of Hampden, who is the new executive representative from the Town of Hampden on the DPC. The Agenda was approved without changes. The draft minutes from the January 31, 2017 meeting of the DPC were approved with an amendment to confirm that a motion to direct the Carell Group to focus its efforts on the design and construction of a new building on a municipally owned site was approved during the meeting.

The Committee considered budget and related financial materials submitted by the Carell Group. Greg Carell presented the construction budget for a stand-alone, commercial grade, 9,000 Sq. Ft. flat roof building, with mechanicals housed inside, for a cost of \$5.1 m, assuming no problematic issues with site preparation. A drawing of the building layout was presented.

Possible sites were discussed. Chief Farnsworth informed the DPC that a school property in Hampden may be declared surplus and may be available for a RECC. The facility has a generator, fiber optics and is in good shape. More information from the towns will follow. Ms. Menard reports nothing appears available in E. Longmeadow. Mr. Stinehart is investigating a potential facility in Southwick on municipal property and will report back to the DPC. Mr. Crane told the DPC that the Town of Longmeadow may have a 1 acre site adjacent to a proposed DPW facility. The DPW project is scheduled to be decided at upcoming Town Meeting. Benefits of this site are increased parking, suitable location for a proposed communications tower. Additionally, the Greenwood School remains an outside possibility. DPC members will report back at an upcoming meeting.

Chick Langone presented the Technology and Radio Equipment Capital Budget. Chief Madera said the funds for radios in Ludlow were sufficient only for the Police Department and Fire radios were needed as well. Michael Gardner represented that the Carell Group would check into that. Chief Madera said Ludlow could not wait until FY 2021 to get the new radios/system. Michael Gardner said the anticipated grant application cycle did not presume that the radios would not be available until FY 2021.

Michael Gardner presented the draft annual budget (beginning July 1, 2020, or FY 21) for the RECC. He explained the assumptions for personnel costs, and noted the inherent difficulties in

projecting costs (particularly volatile ones like Health Insurance and Retirement) that far into the future. He made the point that, whatever the growth line on these costs, they would affect budgets for the RECC and the Towns as well, making the inflation factor basically a wash.

Gardner emphasized that this presented budget's assumptions did not limit the Board of Directors and Finance Committee from structuring a pay and benefits package, prior to the opening of the RECC that was strategically advantageous as well as prudent in its expenditure plan.

There was general agreement that the budget was conservative, i.e. generous on costs, while assuming only a 250% (plus 10.38% inflation) increase in grant funding. Mr. Stinehart inquired about outside auditors confirming the financial information and suggested the Massachusetts Department of Revenue Enterprise Fund management techniques be employed. Mr. Gardner indicated that outside auditors were probably not feasible/practicable now, but agreed to check out DOR Enterprise fund guidelines.

Nick Breault pointed out several non-personnel line items where he had concerns. These included janitorial services. He suggested a \$20,000 appropriation there. He also questioned where heat and water and sewer costs were allocated. Greg Carell agreed to review those issues.

There was general consensus that the budget was appropriate, and, with the suggested changes by Nick Breault, it be approved and forwarded to Frank Pozniak to update him on our progress.

A motion was made, seconded and approved by voice vote to authorize the Governance & Finance Committee to recommend final language changes to the DPC for final approval. This did not include the Cost Allocation formula.

The analysis of Town costs for dispatch was discussed. Mr. Crane urged members to obtain the information requested by the Carell Group to analyze and make recommendations prior to the upcoming presentations to Boards of Selectmen/Town Councils. Mr. Gardner stressed that, ultimately, each Town needed to accept what costs were appropriate for their situation.

The cost sharing allocation formula options were presented next, including a new, "first \$200K payment, then allocation by population and call volume of the remainder" option. This time, the cost allocation formulas were augmented by actual (estimated) financial requirements to support the RECC. Several fire chiefs questioned the call volume numbers used. Michael Gardner promised that George Fosque would address that issue again.

A list of Next Steps that need to be taken was briefly presented. Blake Haskell said he would work with Chair Stephen Crane on logistics for a six-town joint Bd. of Selectman/Town Council meeting.

The group scheduled the next DPC meeting for 2:00 PM on March 8, 2017 at the East Longmeadow Fire Department. The meeting adjourned at 1:50 pm.

Minutes approved by the District Planning Committee March 8, 2017