

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 P.M. by Chairman Ron De Bruyne in the Vilas County Justice Center basement training room with the following committee members present: Ed Bluthardt, Jim Galloway, Gary Peske, Frank Tomlanovich and David Alleman. Kathleen Rushlow arrived while the meeting was in progress. Also present was Dave Leack and Jeff Nelson representing PSC Alliance. The Chair verified both proper open meeting notice and quorum present.

Approve agenda to be discussed in any order by the Chair:

Motion by E. Bluthardt, 2nd by F. Tomlanovich to approve the agenda with the order of discussion to be at the discretion of the chair. All voted aye. Carried.

Approval of the previous minutes:

Motion by G. Peske, 2nd by E. Bluthardt to approve the April 20, 2011 minutes as presented. All voted aye. Carried.

Tower issues:

E. Bluthardt asked about the recent zoning ordinance changes regarding the locating of and construction of communication towers. Some of his constituents are concerned that the new regulations will result in structurally substandard and unsafe towers. J. Nelson replied that the ordinance change really applies to wireless internet communication towers, which typically do not exceed 100' in height. He also stated that the ordinance strengthened certain requirements to the extent that it would be more difficult to site and construct towers like the two larger towers recently constructed by Vilas County. He felt that the engineering and structural requirements as they applied to the 100' towers were appropriate. G. Peske pointed out that these types of towers are comparable to residential TV and ham radio towers.

Proposed AT&T equipment upgrade and lease amendment Weber Tower:

G. Peske reported that AT&T has proposed an equipment upgrade at the Weber Tower site to enable 4G wireless service. The proposal will need to come before the committee for approval. As additional equipment will need to be installed at the site, the monthly lease amount may have to be reviewed and renegotiated. AT&T has yet to provide specifics.

APX 7500 Grant radios:

G. Peske reported that the five command radios, to be used to access the WISCOM system, have been installed. F. Tomlanovich stated that the radios were an improvement over their replacements. The radios were purchased using previously approved grant funding.

WISCOM system access:

G. Peske explained the statewide WISCOM system. This system provides for six levels of statewide and inter-agency law enforcement and EMS access. Levels 1 and 2 are accessible at no charge. Vilas County will primarily use level 1 of the system.

State of Wisconsin Boulder Junction Tower:

G. Peske reported that the State of Wisconsin began the permitting process to construct a communication tower in the Boulder Junction area. The tower will permit better communication with State Patrol officers operating in the highway 51 corridor. The proposed state tower is located about a mile from the tower on which Vilas County leases space. There would be no advantage to the county to request a co-location on the state tower.

Land O' Lakes tower project:

J. Nelson reported that representatives of the owner of the WRJO tower in Land O' Lakes expressed some interest in upgrading their current tower to suit Vilas County's needs. Vilas County would like to install up to two 6' diameter microwave antennas at that site as originally planned. The current engineered load of the tower prevents that installation. J. Nelson feels that the tower could be upgraded and strengthened to handle additional load capacity. Determining that capacity would initially require about \$16,000 to \$18,000 in site engineering and fieldwork in addition to about \$6,000.00 in soil borings. E. Bluthardt feels that it would be of greater benefit to the county to expend those funds on a county owned tower located on a county owned site. J. Nelson replied that county owned sites located in the vicinity of the WRJO tower would require extensive site work and utility hook-ups, thus raising costs, possibly to a prohibitive level. R. De Bruyne asked if the current system was operating adequately. G. Peske replied that the current leased T-1 telephone line experienced a number of unscheduled shutdowns. Additionally, the T-1 line lease costs the county about \$7,000.00 annually. There would be a long term savings in installing the previously planned microwave link in Land O' Lakes. K. Rushlow feels that the initial cost to re-engineer the WRJO tower is reasonable. G. Peske feels that the total costs of upgrading the WRJO tower could be expensed from surplus funds in the Communication Project account. E. Bluthardt agrees but opposes going forward without an agreement with the tower owner. R. De Bruyne wants to maintain the status quo until the committee and the tower owner can meet to discuss the issue and work out agreement. G. Peske was instructed to arrange a meeting between both sides.

Financial update and budget:

G. Peske handed out copies of four communications related budgets. The Communication Project is projected to end with a \$380,000.00 budget surplus.

Dispatch console speaker replacement:

G. Peske again asked the committee to consider using the Vilas/Oneida Interoperability outlay budget surplus to fund the relocation of the audio speakers on the dispatch console. Refitting four consoles would cost about \$11,200.00.

Narrow banding:

G. Peske reported that the conversion to FCC mandated narrow band frequencies was almost complete. Some issues regarding the paging of local fire fighters have again surfaced, probably due to the conversion to the new frequencies.

Approve bills and requisitions:

The following bill was presented for payment:

Northway Communications – radio installation 1475.00

Motion by G. Peske, 2nd by E. Bluthardt to approve the bill as presented. All voted aye. Carried.

Fire and EMS radio system:

Nothing presented.

OJA IFERN Grant:

G. Peske reported that the grant application was approved by the County Board, submitted and awarded. The local fire departments provide the required \$2,400.00 in matching funds. The grants funds were used to provide the fire departments with the equipment to become part of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS).

LDF Town siren:

G. Peske reported that the Town of Lac du Flambeau continued to employ a town siren for severe weather warnings. The town fire chief was responsible for activating the siren but has now retired. The town is requesting that Sheriff's Dept. dispatch be enabled to activate the alarm. G. Peske stated that the costs to install the necessary links would be borne by the town. D. Alleman questioned why Sheriff's dispatch would want to assume the responsibility. K. Rushlow asked if the Code Red system made the siren redundant and unnecessary. G. Peske replied that siren activation was the responsibility of Sheriff's dispatch in most other counties and that Lac du Flambeau wanted to retain the use of their siren. As Sheriff's dispatch monitors weather warnings on a 24/7 basis and initiates weather warnings using the Code Red system, it made sense to include the warning siren activation. **Motion by K. Rushlow, 2nd by E. Bluthardt to authorize G. Peske to purchase and install the equipment necessary to activate the Lac du Flambeau town siren from Sheriff's Dept. dispatch, contingent upon the Town of Lac du Flambeau covering all costs. All voted aye. Carried.**

Letters and communications:

Nothing presented.

Set Next Meeting Date:

The next meeting date will be determined.

Adjournment:

Motion by E. Bluthardt, 2nd by D. Alleman to adjourn. All voting aye. Carried.
Meeting adjourned at 2:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by:
David R. Alleman, Vilas County Clerk