

Note: These minutes are a draft and are not to be considered official until approved at the next meeting.

**Poweshiek County 911
Board Meeting Minutes for October 22, 2024**

This meeting was held in person and via ZOOM

Members Present: Rusty Massengale-Malcom, Brian Paul- EMA,
Ruth Moore-New Sharon, Tom Kriegel-Sheriff

Via ZOOM: Jason Roudabush, Poweshiek County

Members Absent:

Barnes City, Chelsea, Sully, Searsboro, Belle Plaine
Victor, Hartwick, Deep River, Grinnell, Montezuma, Brooklyn,
Gilman (Excused – attempted to join via Zoom but having cell
services issues).

Guests:

Doug Groenenboom and Michael Northness – Racom

Call to order and Roll Call

Massengale called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. - Members present as listed above.

Approval of Agenda

Motioned by Paul to approve the agenda as presented, second by Moore. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes from August 27, 2024, Meeting

Motioned by Moore to approve the minutes as presented, second by Paul. Motion carried.

Business Items

Recorder Purchase Update

There was discussion about whether or not Massengale had received the invoice from Racom on the Recorder. Massengale stated that he would follow up with Vos from Racom on October 23rd and see where we are at on it.

Massengale said that they were going to take photos of the shelter so that they could flip-flop the shelter for the recorder and that he will get in touch with Vos and then forward an email to Disney to push out to the Board once it is received to keep everyone updated.

Malcom Tower Site Update

Massengale said that we are waiting to get everything up and online before we want to shut this site down. He also advised that we went ahead and had the generator serviced just in case there were any delays or anything comes up so it would be ready and in good shape.

Radio Project Report

Massengale asked Northness with Racom to give the board an update on the finalization of the project.

Northness offered to give a verbal update or he also brought a slide presentation that he could share. He shared his screen and started off with the summary, starting with the outdoor warning system which was completed before the starting the new radio system project. All outdoor warning sirens were either replaced or upgraded. Some of them were relocated for better coverage and all in all the system now covers better than it did before. It has been completed for over a year now.

He shared a map showing the towers and coverage throughout the county. Everything with the exception of the southwest corner of the county now has warning siren coverage. The southwest corner because of the terrain and siren are unable to reach that area, but there are no towns in that area which is good.

Continuing to share additional maps with the tower coverage, Northness continued to explain how it all works and that we are now able to connect with 200 agencies. There are four new sites in the county and two of the sites received new equipment in order to connect them to equipment in Marshall County and providing redundancy. As more and more agencies come on board the system and our coverage continues to grow.

Grinnell has a 300' tower, Holiday Lake has a 220' tower, the central tower is also 300' and ended up having to be raised because of the three dishes on it which communicate to the other three sites. They found that MidAmerican had a site that interfered with the dish on our tower to Grinnell so our had to be raised to go over theirs. We ended up with a dish at 295' which is higher than they wanted to go, but it is guaranteed to clear it and now done. He explained how we are able to connect to other sites with the schools, ISICS, etc. through the central site.

Two new consoles, Symphony systems, were installed in the 911 center. They have new graphics, completely IP based, and they connect to other SARA networks. In addition, the project included upgrading the recorder but a decision was made to replace it with a new one.

He shared the radio coverage; outdoor coverage, portable outdoor coverage, indoor light building (such as a wood framed home) and industrial coverage (which would include concrete, re-enforced walls, etc.). Starting with mobile outdoor is good. They drove as much of the county as possible and tested every mile except a couple that didn't have roads within the mile area. So out of 619 square miles, 617 were tested with zero failed, and the majority at 100%. Racom guarantees 95% coverage.

Outdoor mobile tested good as well, with the southwest corner of the county being the exception, the remainder of the county is receiving 100% coverage.

Indoor coverage, which is when you take a portable inside of a house, tested at 97.6% with again the southwest corner of the county being the area with less coverage. They tested beyond the county and received good coverage as well. The coverage test includes ground level and above, and doesn't cover basements. Also, the test was only done using our towers. Once live and connected to surrounding county sites the coverage will only increase and improve. The system was designed to self-sufficient should Poweshiek County lose connection with the outside world, and what the test results reflect.

On our contract we listed specific towns that there were concerns about and wanting to make sure that the new system would cover. Typically, contracts are more generic and just state towns of 500 or more, but our contract was more specific and listed towns by name.

Testing quarter mile grids in specific towns starting with Brooklyn which tested at 100%, Grinnell at 100%, Hartwick at 100%, Malcom at 100%, Montezuma at 100%. During the process of determining site locations, one had to be moved because of a little cemetery that no one was aware of. Northness explained that the laws have changed and you can no longer install a tower within something like $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from a cemetery. Moore stated that is interesting since those residing there don't care. Northness said those previously installed are grandfathered in, like our previous tower at Holiday Lake near Kent Church and cemetery. Some changes had to be made, and a new location found for the south tower site location. In doing so it decreased the coverage a little bit in Deep River, but drastically improved the coverage in Searsboro. This level wasn't tested in Searsboro because it was not on the list but it would have shown a big improvement.

The coverage in Deep River is good as well, with the exception of the handheld in Industrial buildings and a few low-lying areas, but that there weren't any industrial buildings in those specific areas. Kriegel said that he tested the low-lying areas with his handheld and it worked fine. Paul said that he knows that there is coverage in the Post Office as well. The exception may be the old school house, and fire station.

That completed the presentation and Massengale asked if there were any questions. He complimented Racom and said that the entire project has been basically a painless process and that we all appreciate everyone at Racom, the Poweshiek County Board of Supervisors that the experience has just been awesome. That everyone came together on this project. He said that Paul, along with Kriegel put in a lot of extra hours on this project as well and wanted to recognize them for their time and help as well. Kriegel said that we got what we always wanted, which is a radio system that works. Roundabush said that the communication between everyone throughout the project was key, and any problems that came along were addressed and fixed.

Groenenboom said he only had a small list of things left to complete. There is an inoperability system that needs upgraded, a few small console things and a cable that needs to be plugged in at a tower site. Once the punch list is completed that the final documentation will need to be signed.

Massengale asked what their opinion is on when to disable the old system. Groenenboom said that in reality we probably haven't used it for the last four months, and would think that waiting another six months wouldn't hurt. Northness suggested giving it some time. Masengale said it is just something that we need to consider and that we need to communicate with Poweshiek Water Association, as well as Criswell Propane, and the electric companies. Kriegel said that he spoke with Criswell Propane and advised that they continue to fill the tank until notified differently and if the tank is full when the board decommissions the site that he can pump it back out.

Moore said that she is just excited that it is now running and the surrounding counties can share in the benefit of it as well, and thinks it is all awesome. Paul added that Grinnell has already seen the benefit of the new system, the ease in talking with the helicopter's, communicating directly with services in Jasper County, etc.

Massengale asked if anyone knew of any more damage in the Grinnell area that needs to be addressed. Kriegel said he thought that he had barbwire and was going to replace whatever was damaged, but was wrong and doesn't have any. Massengale said that he does as well as the crimpers and can get that taken care of. Kriegel said someone cut the barbwire and climbed the fence and stole some signate with contact information on it, but didn't get into anything. Massengale asked Kriegel to get a hold of him when he was ready and that he would meet him up there and take care of it. Northness advised that the sign has been already been replaced.

Massengale thanked Northness and Groenenboom once again.

Discussion

Massengale asked if anyone had anything else that needed discussed. Hearing nothing from those in attendance, he said that we need to plan the next meeting which will be our budget workshop with Stacy Gross. There is nothing that requires attention at this time. He asked if the board wants a final project review with Racom. Northness advised that it will be exactly what he presented this evening only five times longer. Moore said that as long as someone from the 911 Board verifies that the punch list gets completed that we should be good. Massengale said it has typically been Roudabush, Paul, Kriegel and he that have been meeting on a regular basis with Racom. He suggested that if the board is good with it, that the same group can finish everything up with Racom. Roudabush asked that Racom provide a final presentation to the Board of Supervisors so that they can answer any questions or concerns that may come up as well. Moore agreed stating that they are providing the check from the taxpayers. Roudabush requested that they do so in person on either a Monday or Thursday scheduled Board of Supervisor meeting. Northness said to just let him know when and that it wouldn't be a problem. Roundabush said that they paperwork could be finalized at that time as well. Massengale said to get the punch list completed first and then they could get it set up.

Next Meeting: January 7, 2025 or January 14th @ 6:30 p.m. – Poweshiek County Public Safety Building (Disney will check with Stacy and email the board once it is scheduled).

Paul said that if our next meeting isn't until January, that would make this Kriegel's last meeting, and thanked him for his service on the board. Kriegel said that he always thought this board is well ran, and has enjoyed being involved on it.

Massengale said that he has seen a lot of changes over the years, like EMA being included and all of Paul's involvement and help with the different departments, and adding a member of the Board of Supervisor to the board, etc., that it's all been good.

Kriegel motioned to adjourn at 7:10 p.m., seconded by Moore. Motion carried.