



NORTHEAST HOMELAND SECURITY REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Interoperability Committee Meeting

Minutes

March 9th, 2021

9:30am

Remote Conference Call

Call to Order

- The March 9th, 2021 meeting of the NERAC Interoperability Committee was called to order by Chair Chris Ryan at 9:30am. He asked for approval of the minutes from the February 9th, 2021 meeting.

MOTION put forth by J. Griffin.

- Approve the January 12th, 2021 meeting minutes.
 - Seconded by M. Mansfield.

Vote taken by rollcall: C. Ryan, R. Patterson, M. Collins, T. Dechene, M. Foster, J. Targ, D. Spinosa, J. Brickett, B. Roberts voted in favor.

Budget Update

- All Committee members were provided, via email, with the following budget update:

Project Name	Funding Year	Allocated Amount	Encumbered Amount	Invoiced Amount
NSR911 Center Communications Shelter Wiring	FFY2018	\$24,175.00	\$24,175.00	\$24,175.00
NSR911 Center Surge Protection	FFY2018	\$2,820.00	\$2,820.00	\$2,820.00
CMED MUX Conversion	FFY2018	\$43,870.00	\$43,870.00	\$43,870.00
CMED Console Upgrade	FFY2018	\$15,537.00	\$14,980.00	\$14,980.00
Fire District 14 Portable Radios	FFY2018	\$85,992.50	\$85,992.50	\$85,992.50
Beverly Cache Site Portable Radios	FFY2018	\$96,473.94	\$96,473.94	\$96,473.94
Fire District 5/15 Radio Upgrades	FFY2018	\$76,480.00	\$76,480.20	\$76,480.20
District 5 Microwave Tower	FFY2019	\$91,045.29	\$0.00	\$0.00
NEMLEC Portable Radios	FFY2019	\$45,000.00	\$44,330.25	\$44,330.25
Field Communications Unit Upgrades	FFY2019	\$25,000.00	\$21,123.64	\$4,500.00
COML Programming BF/OT Support	FFY2019	\$14,364.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fire District 5/15 Radio Simulcast Upgrades	FFY2019	\$11,883.16	\$11,883.16	\$0.00
COML/COMT Training	FFY2020	\$50,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Communications Unit Upgrades	FFY2020	\$14,299.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Cybersecurity Initiatives	FFY2020	\$20,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fire District 5/15 Portable Radio Cache	FFY2020	\$120,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fire District 5/15 Simulcast UHF	FFY2020	\$15,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fire District 5/15 Wide Area VHF	FFY2020	\$85,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Fire District 6 Communications Upgrades	FFY2020	\$100,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Amesbury Feasibility Study	FFY2020	\$30,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
NEMLEC SWAT Portable Radios	FFY2020	\$150,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

*Cache/Interop Committee Joint Project

Unallocated Amounts:

- FFY2018: \$556.12
- FFY2019: \$669.75
- FFY2020: \$0.00

Current Grant End Dates:

- FFY2018: March 31st, 2021
- FFY2019: July 31st, 2021
- FFY2020: July 31st, 2022

Project Updates/Discussion

Fire District 5 and 15 Portable Radio Cache

- This project is the purchase of 12 all band portable radios for the Essex County Fire Chiefs Association.
- MAPC held an IFB over the last two weeks.
- Bids were opened Monday, March 8th. Motorola was the only bid and that bid came in at a total of \$98,145.84.
- This is \$21,854.16 under what is allocated for this project (\$120,000.00).
- Under MA procurement law, MAPC is able to increase the contract by 25%, so if we do that we should be able to get two additional radios.

MOTION put forth by M. Mansfield.

- Increase the contract amount to purchase one additional radio and 13 batteries.
 - Seconded by J. Griffin.
- Vote taken by rollcall: C. Ryan, R. Patterson, M. Collins, T. Dechene, M. Foster, J. Targ, D. Spinosa, J. Brickett, B. Roberts voted in favor.

Fire District 6 Communications Upgrades

- SIEC and EOPSS approval was received for this project last week at the SIEC meeting.
- MAPC is putting together the EHPs for this project.
- EHP approval can take anywhere from a couple of weeks to a month or more, but once EHP approval is received we will conduct the procurement. We have updated quotes for all equipment and installations, and a list of vendors.

District 5 Microwave Tower

- M. Mansfield would like to reallocate the funds that are currently allocated to building a tower in Topsfield.
- The remaining funds will be split between two projects:
 - A feasibility study for the construction of a microwave tower on Pow Wow Hill in Amesbury, MA. It would be the only non-privately-owned tower in the area, and Amesbury Fire seems to be on board with the plan, at least based on preliminary discussions. The Committee also encouraged Chief M. Mansfield to explore cost-

sharing options with MEMA, since they State may want to also utilize such a tower for the State's interop system. (\$50,000.00)

- 3 UHF receivers, antennas, and cables at three sites using the existing UHF wide area network. The second half of this project will be submitted as part of the ECFCA's FFY21 funding request. (\$41,000.00)

MOTION put forth by J. Griffin.

- Reallocate the District 5 Microwave Tower funds to cover the Pow Wow Hill Feasibility Study (\$50,000) and UHF Upgrades for ECFCA (\$41,000).
 - Seconded by R. Patterson.

Vote taken by rollcall: C. Ryan, M. Mansfield, M. Collins, T. Dechene, M. Foster, J. Targ, D. Spinosa, J. Brickett, B. Roberts voted in favor.

Fire District 5/15 Radio Simulcast Upgrades

- A PO was issued to Motorola for \$11,883.16 in early March and the equipment should be delivered within the next few weeks.

NEMLEC SWAT Portable Radios

- MAPC reached out to Motorola for a price estimate for 50 portable radios. The quote they sent to us was \$77,846.50 over what we have allocated for this project. The 50 radios came in at a total of \$227,846.50.
- The radios came in at \$4,556.93 each, so \$150,000.00 would cover 35 radios and chargers.
- NEMLEC will hold a meeting to discuss how many radios they want to procure with their \$150,000.00 budget.
- D. Spinosa thinks the added costs were because of the WiFi programming capability and encryption that was included.

NERAC Region COML/COMT Radio Programming Initiative

- A kick-off meeting was held on February 23rd with the COMLs and COMTs who responded to our solicitation letter. 6 COML and COMTs attended the meeting.
- D. Spinosa provided a summary of the kick-off meeting.
- D. Spinosa will develop a list of equipment required for this project.

FY2021 NERAC Plan Project Review

- The NERAC Council will be meeting on Thursday to put together the first outline of the FY2021 budget and Plan.
- MAPC reached out to the region soliciting project requests to be included in the FY21 Plan.
- There were 6 Interoperability projects received for the Committee's review.
- Each Committee member received copies of the project request forms in their meeting packets.
- All NERAC projects need to:
 1. Provide a regional benefit to a minimum of three (3) municipalities.
 2. Have a clear connection to homeland security/anti-terrorism (projects may serve a dual-purpose of improving preparedness for natural disasters as well but must also have a clear connection to terrorism).
 3. Have the primary purpose of supporting homeland security needs for non-routine events, rather than day-to-day operational needs.

- The Committee reviewed the projects for recommendation for inclusion in the FY21 NERAC Plan.

Boxborough Police Department Radios

- This request was submitted by Chief Warren Ryder of the Boxborough Police Department.
- This request is for the purchase of ten (10) Motorola all band P25 portable radios and ten (10) all band P25 mobile radios for the Boxborough Police Department for a total of \$140,000.00.
- The Committee decided not to recommend this project for inclusion in the FY21 Plan due to not serving a regional benefit.

Essex County Fire Chief's Association Communications Upgrades

- Three requests were submitted by the ECFCA.
- The first request is for a VHF Combiner for installation and use at the North Shore Regional 911 Communications Center for a total cost of \$50,000.00.
- The second request is for upgrades to the ECFCA Field Communications Unit, specifically the installation of a four-channel digital logging recorder, two fixed wireless modems, and installation for a total cost of \$13,000.00.
 - This upgrade was identified in the AAR for the Merrimack Valley gas explosions.
 - 34 communities would benefit as a result of this upgrade in the event that this unit is called out to assist in regional incidents.
- The third ECFCA request is for upgrades to its VHF and UHF Wide Area Network, specifically the purchase and installation of 6 UHF receivers and associated antennas and cabling at 6 sites within the existing UHF Wide Area Network to allow for increased radio communications reception.
 - The total cost of this request is \$80,000.00.

Essex County Chiefs of Police Association Radio Cache

- This project was submitted by Chief Neal Hovey of Topsfield on behalf of the Essex County Chiefs of Police Association.
- This request is for the purchase of 60 APX4000 portable radios for the Essex County Chiefs of Police Association to replace their existing cache which has been in use for over 20 years.
- The cost of this project would be \$175,000.00.

Fire District 6 Communications Upgrades

- This is a joint request between the town of Groton and Fire District 6.
- The request is for a new microwave tower at Gibbet Hill in Groton and upgrading a receiver site Ayer, as well as a two microwave hops from Ayer to Groton and Groton to Westford.
- There are two cost options for this project; option A includes a microwave hop from Ayer to Groton, replaces the end of life receiver, and adds an interop vfire 26 receiver. Option A is \$345,666.30.
- Option B includes the microwave hop from Groton to Westford, but deletes Ayer. Option B is \$263,108.00.

Littleton Police Department Radios

- This request was submitted by Chief Matthew Pinard of the Littleton Police Department.
- This request is for one Motorola all-band console radio and installation at the Town of Littleton Public Safety Communications Center and 12 Motorola APX 8500 all band mobile radios.
- The total request is for \$126,000.00.

Woburn/Zion Hill Generator

- This project was included in the FY20 Plan but the funding was reallocated to purchase ventilators for regional hospitals.
- The Committee has already decided to include this project in the FY21 Plan.

- The Committee discussed the Interoperability-related projects, and came up with the following list to recommend to the Full Council:
 - ECFCA VHF Combiner: \$50,000.00
 - Field Comm Units 20 & 60 Upgrades: \$13,000.00
 - ECFCA 3 UHF: \$40,000.00 (Reduced from original \$80,000.00 request due to FFY19 funding that was made available.)
 - ECCOP Radio Cache: \$175,000.00 (M. Foster did not support the inclusion of this project on the “A” List due to the fact that the radios requested were single-band.)
 - Littleton All-Band Console Upgrade: \$21,000.00 (Reduced from original \$120,000.00 request, all-band mobile radios for squad cards not funded.)
 - Woburn/Zion Hill Generator (Cost Shared): \$40,000.00
 - MetroFire North District Communications Feasibility Study: \$30,000.00
 - TOTAL: \$369,000.00
- The following project was placed on the recommended “B” List:
 - Fire District 6 Communications Upgrades: \$100,000.00 (Partially funded)

MOTION put forth by J. Griffin.

- Approve the above list as a recommendation to the Full Council for inclusion in the NERAC FY21 Plan.
 - Seconded by R. Patterson.

Vote taken by rollcall: C. Ryan, M. Mansfield, M. Collins, T. Dechene, J. Targ, D. Spinosa, J. Brickett, B. Roberts voted in favor.

M. Foster voted against including the ECCOP Radio Cache but in favor of the rest of the list.

SIEC Report Out

- D. Spinosa provided a summary on the most recent SIEC meeting.
- The NERAC ICIPS were approved at this month’s meeting.
- C. Ryan requested that MAPC send the updated helicopter communication guidance and the new MIFOG (Massachusetts Interoperability Field Operations Guide) to all Committee and Council members.

New/Old Business

Next Meeting

- The next regularly scheduled meeting is Tuesday, April 13th at 9:30am.
- All NERAC meetings will be held virtually until further notice.

ATTENDEES-COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chris Ryan: Deputy Director, North Shore Regional 911 Center*

Dave Spinosa: Communications Director, Essex County Sheriff's Department*

Chief Michael Mansfield: Andover Fire Rescue

Mike Collins: City of Beverly, Commissioner of Public Services and Engineering

Tyler Dechene: Middleton Fire Department

Jon Brickett: Executive Director, Northeast EMS Inc. *

Joe Griffin: Greater Boston Police Council

Chief Joe Targ: Westford Fire Department

Mark Foster: Beverly Emergency Management*

Rich Patterson: Preparedness Coordinator, Northeast EMS, Inc.

ATTENDEES-OTHER

Caroline Graham: MAPC

Austin Murray: MAPC

Neal Hovey: Chief, Topsfield Police Department

Vicky Mboka-Boyer: EOPSS

Melissa Nezarro: EOPSS

Dave Frizzel: MetroFire

Steele McCurdy: Chief, Groton Fire Department

Melissa Nazzaro: Statewide Interoperability Coordinator

Matthew Pinard: Chief, Littleton Police Department

ABSENT

Chuck Jessico: Andover Public Safety

Mike Kass: Armstrong Ambulance Service

Michael Torosian: Ashland Fire Department