



NORTHEAST HOMELAND SECURITY REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Interoperability Committee Meeting

Minutes

December 12, 2023

9:30 am

North Shore Regional 911 Center

18 Manning Avenue, Middleton, MA 01949

- **Call to Order**
 - Chair C. Ryan called the meeting to order at 9:37 am.
- **Approval of Minutes**
 - September 12, 2023 Meeting Minutes
 - There was no October meeting, and there are notes included in the meeting packet from the November meeting which did not have quorum.

MOTION put forth by J. Griffin.

- Approve the September 12, 2023 Meeting Minutes.
- Seconded by R. Patterson.
 - In favor: All.
 - Opposed: None.
 - Abstain: None.
- The motion passed.
- **Budget Updates**
 - FFY20 – MAPC requested an extension for all regions. The extension was approved, and the contracts are being signed. New Grant End Date: June 30th, 2024
 - FFY21 – Grant End Date: June 30th, 2024
 - FFY22 – Grant End Date: July 31st, 2024
- **Project Updates**
 - *ECCOPA Radio Cache Transport Cases*
 - T. Dechene sent specifications for the transport cases and power strips, and MAPC conducted the procurement. Quotes were received for both items and are being reviewed by T. Dechene before a PO is issued.
 - *ECFCA UHF Receivers*
 - MAPC received specifications from T. Dechene. MAPC is looking into whether a sole source procurement can be conducted for the remaining components of this project since TXRX may be the only vendor capable of supplying what is needed.
 - *ECFCA Wide Area Network VHF Consolette Radios*
 - MAPC is following back up with the Chiefs to get the remaining EHP information.
 - North Reading may no longer need to be included in this project.
 - *Field Comm Units 20 & 60 Upgrades*

- MAPC conducted combined procurements with FD-5/15 Mobile Gateway Radios and Recorders equipment because there was overlap in items.
 - The remaining RFQs were conducted, the POs were issued, and the routers and PDUs were delivered. Invoices will be processed once the Receiving Documents are signed.
 - Another RFQ was conducted for the remaining cabinets, and the quote is being reviewed by D. Spinoso.
 - Once all equipment is received, MAPC will conduct another procurement for installation services for the Field Comm 20/60 installation.
- *FD-5/15 Mobile Gateway Radios and Recorders*
 - (See above.)
- *FD-6 Communications Upgrades*
 - This project is complete, MAPC is waiting for the final invoice and the certified payroll records/OSHA cards required for prevailing wage documentation in order to pay the invoices.
- *FD-6 MW Groton to Westford*
 - All necessary approvals are in place, and the IFB is due this week.
- *Littleton All-Band Console Upgrade*
 - This project is complete, MAPC is waiting for the final invoice and the certified payroll records/OSHA cards required for prevailing wage documentation in order to pay the invoices.
- *GBPC Microwave Routers and Switches*
 - The PJ amendment adding SFP receivers was submitted to EOPSS. MAPC is also confirming with EOPSSs that this amendment doesn't need SIEC approval.
- *NERAC Radio Programming Initiative*
 - MAPC is working on the MOU and the procedure document to add in edits/language discussed during last month's meeting. Specifically to include language that also indicates that COMLs/COMTs could also be tasked with assisting with NERAC Trainings and Exercises when needed.
- **NERAC Radio Communications Checklist**
 - Edits were made to the checklist and workflow based on previous Committee discussion.

MOTION put forth by R. Patterson.

- Approve the NERAC Radio Communications Checklist and workflow as written.
- Seconded by J. Griffin.
 - In favor: All.
 - Opposed: None.
 - Abstain: None.
- The motion passed.
- **School Radio Best Practices Discussion**
 - S. Morrison sent a survey to Northshore Superintendents. The responses submitted from 16 districts were discussed.
 - Nearly all responding districts use walkie talkies, most of which are purchased through their central office (or would like for it to be handled by the central office).

- Most districts consult with their police/fire departments ahead of purchase but responses were split regarding whether their radios are programmed to immediately join police/fire frequencies in case of emergency.
 - There are commonly issues with public safety communications in schools, even though we know that schools are investing funding in equipment and services. Therefore, it is important to promote some degree of standards so that schools have a stronger understanding of the best practices for functioning and capabilities they should be ensuring their radios have.
 - Different schools may have different needs, funding levels, and available resources, so it may be helpful to offer multiple best practice options and/or have the document address minimum standards for features and then what questions/considerations they should be thinking about to determine what will work best for them.
 - Encryption to protect personal information should be addressed in the best practices the document.
 - MGL ch.71, § 37R (b) states: "Every school shall, subject to appropriation, possess and have access to a two-way communication device to be used solely for communicating with police and fire departments of the city or town where the school is located during an emergency situation." Many schools and police/fire departments may not be aware of this, so highlighting that would be helpful towards encouraging them to share access to frequencies.
 - S. Morrison and R. Patterson will work on a draft document.
- **State Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) Updates**
 - PSAP COOP Planning Document was released through the SWIC's office.
- **New Business Unforeseen by the Chair**
 - MAPC received the following EOPSS Guidance regarding committee appointments: As long as there is transparency for any appearance of conflicts within the region and other interested and qualified parties are afforded the same opportunity for consideration, OGR supports the idea of appropriate private sector representation on the subcommittees.
 - Mike Kass, a previous Committee member, would like to re-join the NERAC Interoperability Committee.

MOTION put forth by R. Patterson.

- Recommend to the NERAC Full Council to appoint Mike Kass as an Interoperability Committee Member.
- Seconded by J. Griffin.
 - In favor: All.
 - Opposed: None.
 - Abstain: None.
- The motion passed.

MOTION put forth by J. Griffin.

- Adjourn the meeting.
- Seconded by S. Morrison.
 - In favor: All.
 - Opposed: None.
 - Abstain: None.
- The motion passed.

*** Next Meeting: January 09, 2023 ***

ATTENDEES-COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Stephanie Brown: Beverly Public Safety Dispatch
Alex Chadis: Newton Fire Department
Joe Griffin: Greater Boston Police Council
Scott Morrison: Tri-Town School Union*
Chief Rich Patterson: Dracut Fire Department
Chris Ryan: North Shore Regional 911 Center*
Chief Joe Targ: Westford Fire Department
Mike Collins: Beverly Public Services & Engineering*

ATTENDEES-OTHER

Mike Kass: Northeast Regional Ambulance Service
Jake Pike: Massachusetts Task Force 1
Lauren Sacks: Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Rosemary Volinski: Metropolitan Area Planning Council

ABSENT

Tyler Dechene: Middleton Fire Department
Dave Frizzell: Metrofire
Chief Michael Mansfield: Andover Fire Rescue
Dave Spinosa: Essex County Sheriff's Department*

The following documents were used/referenced during the meeting:

- December 2023 Meeting Agenda
- September 2023 Meeting Minutes
- November 2023 Meeting Notes
- FFY20, FFY21, and FFY22 Budget Updates
- NERAC Radio Communications Checklist and Suggested Workflow