MEETING MINUTES

Joint Emergency Communications Services Association of Johnson County
Policy Board
Wednesday, November 10, 2010, at 6:00 p.m.
4529 Melrose Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa
Policy Board Conference Room

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Coralville: John Lundell
                    Iowa City: Regenia Bailey; Mike Wright
                    Johnson County: Lonny Pulkrabek; Pat Harney
                    Johnson Co. EMA: David Wilson
                    North Liberty: Tom Salm

1.   **Call to order; recognize alternates.**

      Wright called meeting to order. All Directors were present. Representatives from
      Coralville, Iowa City, Johnson County, North Liberty, and the University of Iowa
      were also present.

2.   **Comments from the public.**

      Introductions were made.

3.   **Discussion with non-public safety radio users regarding use of JECSA's radio
      communications system.**

      Loney provided some background information on the P-25 system. Loney stated
      there were seven tower sites, 95% coverage throughout Johnson County, and greater
      than 95% coverage in the core area. Loney stated there will be approximately 750
      public safety users and all the public safety users will be interoperable. Pulkrabek
      asked about the system's capability and the number of users. Loney stated there were
      11 channels at each site, for a capacity of 1100 users. Loney said the system could be
      expanded. Wilson asked about mobile data and automatic vehicle locate. Loney
      stated data could be handled and automatic vehicle locate was possible. Harney
      asked about the capacity. Loney stated the capacity depends on data usage. Jones
      stated the automatic vehicle location was going over cellular cards. Pulkrabek
      wanted public safety to have the first bite at any additional capacity, so the cellular
      cards could go away. Wilson asked about the frequencies held in Iowa City's name.
      Loney said additional capacity could use these Iowa City channels. Stone
      commented about the cost. Lundell did not want to focus on the cost. Wright
      expressed support for a county-wide unified communications system. Loney stated
      they would be in-building portable coverage. Wilson commented about the
      interoperability. Loney stated each user would have its own talkgroups.

Fosse, Iowa City Engineering Department, stated that Iowa City wanted to price out a system. Hansen stated in February, Iowa City sent out a request for proposals for a non-public safety user radio communications system. Iowa City received two responses. Hansen identified a need to be able to communicate with police and fire and to have a backup system. Hansen recognized the robustness of JECSA's system. Hansen had previously been under the impression that data was not available. Hansen commented that data really means automatic vehicle locate. Hansen stated that he had been informed by Kaun, Elert & Associates, that data was not available. Wilson inquired about the capacity. Loney stated that if it was basic automatic vehicle locate, which pulled for location, the system was more than adequate.

Thorsteinson, Involta (Iowa City's Consultant), said the instruction he received was to make this work. Thorsteinson expressed some reservations about using the radio network to handle data for public safety users. Thorsteinson stated he was looking at handling approximately 335 Iowa City radios plus between 75 and 175 radios currently operating on the Iowa City system. Thorsteinson asked who would pay for the additional channels for these approximately 500 radios. Thorsteinson said there must be some additional channels, perhaps two or three channels for data. Thorsteinson stated the proposals were dated and inquired about automatic vehicle locate software. Thorsteinson commented about testing and interoperable patch to communicate with the dispatchers. Thorsteinson also asked about radio-to-radio communication not using a tower. Thorsteinson stated the Motorola radios could not talk directly with the Harris radios because the radio identification number could not transmit. Thorsteinson asked whether the user fee covered the cost for channels.

Wilson stated an assumption that the eight frequencies would be brought over to JECSA. Thorsteinson stated the Harris radios were more expensive and not automatic vehicle locate capable. Loney clarified the radios were automatic vehible locate capable, but needed third-party software. Loney stated a better capacity analysis could be completed by the end of the year. Kaun stated the capacity must be added at all sites. Bedford stated that cost was an issue, recognized the benefit to public works, and stated the cost of these radios was substantially less than the cost of the public safety radios. Thorsteinson distinguished between the public safety and non-public safety markets. Loney stated the list price was approximately $1600 per non-public safety radio. Bedford asked if it was true interoperability. Thorsteinson stated the Harris proposal was the lowest cost to use the JECSA system. Thorsteinson stated the interoperability patch could be used in different ways. There were comments that the current patch was less than ideal because of the delay of up to three or four seconds, which made it difficult to communicate. Thorsteinson identified a need to test the patch and recognized that a patch is not ideal for routine communications with public safety users. Kaun presented an option to retune the systems so that the systems could potentially work together. Kaun also stated dispatch must be in control of the channels. Thorsteinson stated dispatch could turn on and off any patch. The representative from North Liberty stated North Liberty could be happy with anything because it had so few radios. Salm expressed support

for coming onto the system and perhaps eliminating some mobiles. Salm stated North Liberty might have twenty-five radios.

Ricketts, Director of Parking and Transportation Services for the University of Iowa, identified a need for approximately 75 to 90 radios. Ricketts stated the University of Iowa needed someplace to go. Ricketts wanted interoperability with University of Iowa Public Safety. Visin stated the old system was abandoned. Wilson asked if the University of Iowa Parking and Transportation Services wanted to be with JECSA. Wright stated University of Iowa Parking and Transportation Services was welcome. Wilson stated non-public safety users were invited to be with JECSA. Bedford assumed non-public safety users would be on the system. Wright stated this was a big tent. Thorsteinson identified a need for University of Iowa Parking and Transportation Services to communicate with Public Safety. Thorsteinson stated there will be more testing done in the next 30 days. Thorsteinson stated the interoperability was not what was desired. Pulkrabek stated this was a temporary issue, which is less than satisfactory. Loney described a potential interim solution. Visin stated a quick fix might be possible.

Parker, County Engineer for Johnson County, stated Johnson County had approximately 100 radios, which were mostly mobiles and approximately 25 portables. Parker recognized the need to comply with the narrow banding requirements by 2013. Parker stated money was an issue, especially in times of shrinking budgets. Parker recognized JECSA had great capabilities, however, it may be less money to do something else. Parker stated an interest in waiting to see what Iowa City decided and was continuing to investigate different options. Parker stated a potential interest in upgrading to data, although data was not being used now. Wilson asked why not use the JECSA system. Parker stated any final decision would come from the Board of Supervisors.

Hansen stated the JECSA system was a good solution. Hansen stated cost was an issue, but there was some flexibility. Hansen stated the highest scores were for the JECSA system. Hansen stated that data was a big issue and it would be crazy to upgrade without automatic vehicle locate. Johnson County SEATS currently uses cellular cards at a cost of $13 a month for the manifest/mapping, and the cost to upgrade the old radios is about $8,000, while the cost to purchase all new radio is about $45,000. Harney raised questions about interoperability. Harney expressed support for planning the talkgroups in advance.

Wright wanted this to be a future agenda item. Pulkrabek wanted information about the cost to add an additional channel. Loney suggested the cost at four additional channels also be compared. Pulkrabek said this is something for the Policy Board to consider. Pulkrabek had questions about data usage. Thorsteinson said this data should be available in the SmartNet system. Loney said was a need for additional data.

4.   Other business.

There was a discussion about time for the next meeting. The next meeting will be at November 22, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.

There was a request that a quote be developed and forwarded to the Policy Board.

5.   Consider a Motion to Adjourn the meeting.

Motion to Adjourn by Bailey; seconded by Lundell. Motion passed unanimously.