

**STATE OF COLORADO
COUNTY OF ROUTT**

**ROUTT COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY BOARD
July 28, 2005**

Chairman Bob Struble, Steamboat Springs Fire and Rescue; called the meeting to order. Faith Mendoza, Routt County Communications Director; Chuck Wisecup, Oak Creek Fire Protection District, Kristia Check-Hill and Tim O'Brien, Routt County Search and Rescue; Tyler Whitmore, Yampa Valley Regional Airport; Chuck Vale, Emergency Management; Bob Reilley, North Routt Fire Protection District; and Dan Taylor, Undersheriff, were present. Dee Bolton recorded the meeting and prepared the minutes.

EN RE: REVIEW OF MINUTES

Due to the lack of a quorum, no minutes were reviewed.

EN RE: COMMUNICATIONS REPORT / FAITH MENDOZA

Ms. Mendoza said that she had reviewed the CAD system and printed the first half of the year information that included all agencies then divided the reports by department. She had also used CAD to develop a report on the number of calls by day and time of day as well as the number of calls categorized by content such as administrative and 911. She provided copies of the former report. The latter report was available on request. She noted that the new telephone system was installed in November, 2004, so the statistics for November and probably December would be inaccurate since many test calls were made during that period. She then handed out and reviewed the Calls Received summation sheet that covered the period from January 1, 2005 to June 30, 2005.

Ms. Mendoza said that one dispatcher left in July; another will leave August 8th. Four new trainees will be hired at the same time to facilitate training, the first month of which will be spent learning to use the various equipment in a classroom setting prior to the trainees being in the Center working with a trainer.

Ms. Mendoza reported that the Farwell radio system site was being worked on. The County Fire repeater receiver was inoperable. The repeater had been removed so she advised users to use the Road and Bridge repeater at Farwell for the time being. She hoped to be able to reinstall the repeater after it had been repaired prior to the first snowfall. The remainder of the system was working well. King Mountain was currently working, but new cards might be needed.

Mr. O'Brien noted that the ambulance had to use the Hayden repeater last weekend. Ms. Mendoza was unaware of any problems. Mr. Wisecup suggested that

people might be confused as to whether to use the Hayden repeater frequency or the West Routt frequency.

Mr. Wisecup said that confusion as to the correct time to enter on Page 2 of the reports was occurring. Ms. Mendoza said that Page 2 was a notation. Mr. Wisecup said that he often had problems when requesting a specific pager number. Mr. Vale said that when the paging system was reconfigured, the West Routt tones were connected to County Fire on all three repeaters, which was a waste of air time.

Mr. O'Brien asked how the frequency assessment timeframes project was progressing. Ms. Mendoza said that Sue Heineman was processing licenses for Search and Rescue and the Steamboat Springs Police Department.

EN RE: ROUTT COUNTY RADIO SYSTEM AND 800 MHZ / FAITH MENDOZA

Ms. Mendoza said that since the 800 MHz system did not provide paging capabilities because radios always had to be kept on and close by, the County would always carry the VHF system. She said that the 800 MHz system was in use in Craig, and other counties were also incorporating the 800 system. Many problems were still being worked through.

She and Mr. Vale had recently discussed the availability of Wireless Interoperability Network (WIN) grants with the County Commissioners and the County Manager. The grant provides funds to purchase infrastructure equipment for the 800 MHz system. The Board had directed Ms. Mendoza to write a grant for a study of the equipment needed in Routt County. After discussing the suggested purpose of the grant application with the agency overseeing the 800 MHz system, it was determined that a study had already been conducted that assumed that the system was installed in Oak Creek, Hayden, and on King Mountain. The northern portion of Routt County was still a concern. She wrote two grant applications, one for site survey studies as directed by the Commissioners, and the other for actual components that would include 800 MHz radio units to be installed at each of the three-mentioned sites. She noted that no mobile or pac set units could be purchased with the grant funds, and the match was in-kind and non-specific as to amount. She noted that some of the equipment might serve as back-up to the VHF system or enhance the current system by furnishing air conditioning units, generators, or buildings.

Mr. Vale said that the Commissioners wanted staff to apply for a WIN grant to write a plan, but that was not an acceptable use of the WIN grant funds. He said that a WIN grant would pay for a new building at King Mountain as well as a new generator and air-conditioning. Oak Creek needed better generation and air-conditioning; back-up generation could be installed in Hayden. Thus, Routt County could benefit from receipt of grant funds. He would put units in the Police Chief's vehicle, the Fire Chiefs' vehicles, the Search and Rescue Command vehicle, the Sheriff's and Undersheriff's vehicle, and the Patrol Lieutenant's vehicle. With those radios installed, communication

from anywhere within Routt County would be assured. He said that the 800 MHz system was coming whether Routt County wanted it or not. The \$24 million in Energy Impact funds were being made available at present but might not be for long.

Mr. Taylor said that if Routt County installed the 800 MHz equipment, sites would be upgraded without cost. He stated that the State really wanted 800 MHz coverage in Northwest Colorado. Mr. Vale said that if the County did not incorporate the 800 MHz system at its sites, the State would find its own sites. He said that for Moffat, Routt, Grand, and Jackson County to all be able to communicate would be a true advantage.

Mr. Taylor recommended that the Communications Advisory Board support Faith Mendoza and the Board of County Commissioners in their endeavors to complete the study and to develop a list of the 800 MHz components needed for the three County sites and then purchase the necessary components with grant funds. Mr. Vale noted that the list had already been compiled. It was the consensus of those present to recommend to the County Commissioners that the Communications Director apply for a WIN grant to purchase components for the 800 MHz system.

EN RE: UPDATING THE DISPATCH CENTER FOR WIRELESS 911 CALLS / FAITH MENDOZA

Ms. Mendoza said that all Nextel cell phone calls can come into the Communications Center, and dispatchers can determine the phone number and from which tower it is being sent, which should assist search and rescue efforts significantly. Verizon's should be completed by October. After that, all other companies, including Sprint and Singulair, would follow.

EN RE: SALE/DISPOSAL OF RADIO EQUIPMENT

Ms. Mendoza reported that all of the surplus radios, chargers, and other equipment had been distributed, except to Chuck Wisecup. She asked whether anyone needed extra parts or assistance with installation or programming. No one did at present.

EN RE: CRITICAL INCIDENT DISPATCHING / FAITH MENDOZA

Ms. Mendoza said that recently a search for a child was conducted using a dispatcher without the Dispatch Supervisors' or Ms. Mendoza's knowledge. She said that it was essential that critical incident dispatching be well coordinated. Although each situation was different, some of the dispatchers had received specific training. She said that if dispatchers were at the scene of an incident, equipment would be brought with them. She said that it was essential that a request for an on-scene dispatcher be approved by her or by a Communications Supervisor. She will devise a protocol for whom to contact and when and provide it to member agencies.

Mr. Vale said that sometimes people who arrive at an incident and want to help have multiple related skills. The incident commander must ascertain which role such a person is playing before utilizing those skills. Mr. Vale added that it was important to establish that those on the scene had been requested. Mr. Taylor said that if assistance were requested from another county, the requested county should be in charge of the mission.

Mr. Vale said that 19 people had been deployed to an incident in Vail. Ms. Mendoza and three dispatchers and the County Finance Director were among those from Routt County. He said that the experience was an educational one for all who participated.

EN RE: NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Wisecup said that a call was made recently to the Center, and poor directions to the scene were provided. He had clarified the directions via his radio. Mr. Vale said that getting a correct addressing database system in the Dispatch Center was crucial, and mapping needed to be on the 911 system. Ms. Mendoza agreed that mapping was an issue.

Ms. Check-Hill said that paging-out for a rescue was an issue. Generally, rescuers should be instructed to meet at the barn rather than to go directly to an incident location so that Search and Rescue knew how many responders it had, who the responders were, and what equipment rescuers needed. She said that a brief description of the incident and its location were helpful information so that volunteers at work could estimate the length of time they might need to be absent. Mr. O'Brien said that the dispatcher's first words should be, 'Search and Rescue, respond to the barn', especially since many of the older pagers had a short memory time for play-back.

Mr. Taylor asked about providing so much information and jargon that air time was wasted. He said that officers should either be in service or on a pager rather than informing Dispatch whenever their location changed. Mr. Wisecup agreed that some traffic might be excessive, but he said that acknowledgement of receipt of a call was essential. Ms. Mendoza said that if a sender wanted certain information to be heard, recorded, and documented by Dispatch, that information should be provided. Mr. Reilley noted that many volunteers did not know how to talk on the radio. He suggested that volunteers practice once a week. Mr. Taylor offered to provide an in-service workshop on radio and pager protocol.

Mr. Vale announced that on Sunday, October 2, 2005, a full-scale, all-day exercise would take place in Hayden at the Yampa Valley Regional Airport. Everyone should attend.

EN RE: NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Communications Advisory Board will be held on October 20, 2005, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room. Agenda items should be submitted to Sue Heineman.

No further business coming before the Board, same adjourned sine die.

Dee Bolton, Recorder

Bob Struble, Chairman