

MISSISSIPPI WIRELESS COMMUNICATION COMMISSION

August 1, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Place: 6th Floor MDOT Conference Room
401 North West Street
Jackson, MS

Commission Members Present:	
MS Association of Fire Chiefs	Vice Chairman Tom Lariviere
MS Office of Homeland Security	Rusty Barnes
MS Association of Supervisors	Steve Gray
MS Department of Environmental Quality	Richard Harrell
MS Department of Transportation	Willie Huff
MS Department of Health	Mike Lucius
MS Department of Public Safety	Ken Magee/Timothy Smith
MS Department of Corrections	Audrey McAfee
MS Association of Sheriffs	Steve Rushing
MS Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks	Curtis Thornhill
MS Association of Chiefs of Police	Perry Waggener
Advisory Board Members Present:	

Vice Chairman Lariviere called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM and welcomed everyone. The Vice Chairman asked if there were any changes to the July 11, 2013 minutes which had been emailed to Commission members. There were none and the Chairman called for a motion to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2013 meeting as written. Mr. Rusty Barnes made the motion to approve. Mr. Willie Huff seconded the motion and the motion passed with none opposed.

Ms. Helfrich was asked to provide the MSWIN Project update. Ms. Helfrich noted that all LMR site construction has been completed. A few areas need to be finalized such as electronic equipment installations and some temporary configurations that are being worked on. At the DPS Batesville Dispatch tower, microwave equipment has been installed and a temporary shelter put in place pending the construction of a new dispatch center. DPS radio console audio interface equipment is being installed and will be completed shortly. Console training has already been completed. The LMR system is up and operational and the system is working as designed.

Ms. Helfrich stated that over the past week we had 268 thousand Push-to-talks (PTTs) and 49 busies which equals to .01% busies which is well under the threshold of how the system was designed. July statistics are not yet available but in the month of June we had 1.21 million PTTs and 154 busies and that is again .01% for busies. Ms. Helfrich shared that we have a lot of entities expressing interest in joining MSWIN. Some of the entities that the process is complete for are: Jackson State University Public Safety, Washington County, City of Harrisville Volunteer Fire Department, City of Corinth Police Department, Yalobusha County, Grenada County Sheriff's Office, US Army Corp of Engineers, and Bolivar County.

The WCC has a radio cache which is used to provide MSWIN users/potential users radios for coverage testing or if they have any kind of emergency they can have coverage if their current system should go down. Radios have been provided for Benton County for coverage testing, Yalobusha Fire Department, City of Grenada, Crystal Springs Police Department, and the Department of Agriculture Theft Division. Radios were also provided to Clarke County because they had some issues with their current system and did not have coverage. Radios are on loan to the US Marshal Service. They will use them until they get permanent radios in place for their entire task force. We also have radios on loan to the MS Department of Homeland Security Force Protection Unit for two events in the northern part of the state. The

Motorcycle Rally is going on now and we will provide radios and technicians for the Congressional Black Caucus as we do each year. During the past month the WCC has been working on hurricane preparedness. Currently MDOT personnel are helping to make sure all cache radios batteries are charged; the firmware updated; and radios are programmed as they need to be. Work is being done with Motorola and other vendors to provide preventative maintenance on all sites and provide repairs if needed.

The Budget was filed as approved at the last meeting. ITS again handled most of that workload as far as putting the budget together, the GAP analysis and any other forms that were needed for the process.

Since the Commission passed the Resolution at the last meeting, the Governor has sent a letter to the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of Commerce stating that the State has tried to work out a resolution on two occasions and were not successful and that when a BTOP modification is filed we would like them to process and approve it as quickly as possible. So we are still working with NTIA and FirstNet to come to a resolution either on the LTE Network or a BTOP modification if that is necessary to ensure that no stimulus dollars go to waste. In the last meeting Chairman Latham asked about the FY15 budget and if we were to reach an agreement with FirstNet and if they picked up all of our expenses that were included in the FY15 budget, how much would the budget potentially go down. Ms. Helfrich stated that the only thing included in the FY15 budget related to LTE was for the current leased towers – increases we would have to absorb because of LTE antennas and increased microwave backhaul. That number is \$1.6M dollars and that would be the most that the budget number would go down. It is likely, however that if any agreement is reached the amount could range from \$0 to the full amount.

Vice Chairman Lariviere asked how many of the radios in the cache are encrypted. Mr. Buffington noted that all radios in the cache are encryption capable. Mr. Buffington further stated that FEMA and Homeland Security in earlier grants had a requirement that any radios purchased with their funds be AES Encryption capable.

Vice Chairman Lariviere noted that there was no report for the Procurement Review Committee. No requests were received.

The Vice Chairman called for the report of the Governance/Interoperability Committee. Mr. Huff advised that the hurricane evacuation interoperability with LA has been re-established. There is still an interoperability link set up with LA so that if an event comes up other than the hurricane evacuation, we have interoperability capability with LA into their system. An interoperability link between the State of AK and our system has been established. We are able to talk back and forth car-to-car into their system. MDOT Law Enforcement is talking with TN up around Memphis to see if interoperability can be set up. We met with representatives from the Alabama First Responder Commission this week and talked about interoperability between our system and AL. We are working on getting Interoperability agreements between these states for the hurricane season.

The Vice Chairman called for the report of the Revenue Committee. Mr. Gray brought two possible revenue streams to provide maintenance and operations funding as it relates to public safety to the Commission. A handout was given to all Commission members present. The information was provided by the Department of Revenue and is dated 6/13/13. The first option deals with a fee increase on Motor Vehicle Titles and the second option deals with a fee increase on new tire sales. If the smaller increase in both options could be secured, it could generate \$14.2M dollars which is close to the range the WCC is trying to reach. Mr. Gray noted that this could be an opportunity for the Commission and could be possibly put in the Business plan to help us meet Legislative requirements.

Mr. Huff commented that the options are worthwhile but that the Commission will have to pull together and work with Mr. Gray about what we want to do as a Commission to generate revenue. He further stated that he thinks it is explainable to the public and if the public knows where that increase is going, they would support it. Another possibility is that this funding could go to help the locals that cannot afford to buy radios to get on the system (a revolving fund or grant fund to allow the more rural parts of the state to become interoperable). Ms. Helfrich asked if we want to include a section in the Business Plan for

these types of potential funding sources. The response was yes and Ms. Helfrich said she would work with Mr. Gray to get that done.

Ms. Helfrich provided the Report of Monthly Expenditures. Ms. Helfrich stated that the remaining FY13 balance is \$624 thousand dollars. We have through August to pay June obligations and most of that balance will be spent. The FY14 appropriation of \$6M dollars has been received. The balance of state funds with the FY14 appropriation is \$6.3M dollars; the balance of grant funds (BTOP and MICG) is \$51.6M dollars. The total expense for the month of July was \$5.2 M dollars with the bulk of the expense, nearly \$4.6M dollars in MSWIN LMR milestone payments paid out of MICG funds. Mr. Huff made a motion to approve monthly expenditures. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Gray and passed with none opposed. Mr. Huff noted that he asked several months ago for an estimate of the amount of MICG grant funds that might be left after construction is completed. Ms. Blocker stated that Mr. Buffington and Mr. Johnson had been in discussions about that and that she thought the figure was about \$1-2M dollars. Ms. Helfrich stated that Mr. Buffington and Mr. Johnson will be getting back together to continue their discussion and will have more information at the next meeting.

Vice Chairman Lariviere called for other business. Ms. Helfrich was recognized to discuss the renewal of the thirty-seven (37) Spectrasite tower leases. Ms. Helfrich stated that these leases were entered into from 2008-2009; all were 5 year term with option to renew for 5 additional 5-year terms at a 10% increase at each renewal period. Ms. Helfrich also stated that we need to exercise our renewal and pay the 10% increase. These renewals will take place over the next year and a half from July 2013 to December 2014. Currently we are paying \$2.22M dollars annually. The increase will bring the annual amount to \$2.44M dollars. The 10% increase takes the place of the annual CPI increase and is a reduction of what would normally be paid – about 3% a year. Ms. Helfrich asked for approval to move forward with exercising the renewal and renewing the leases with the terms and conditions we currently have for an additional 5 year period with a 10% increase. Mr. Rushing made the motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Mr. Huff.

Vice Chairman Lariviere noted that these leases were for 30 years and all this was built into the original lease and already in the contract. Vice Chairman Lariviere called for a vote and the motion passed with none opposed.

Vice Chairman Lariviere welcomed Mr. Richard Harrell, the new representative for the MS Department of Environmental Quality to the Commission.

There was no other business for discussion.

Mr. Huff noted the need for a Special meeting on August 29, 2013 to adopt the Business Plan which is due on August 31, 2013. He suggested the possibility of not having the September 5th meeting and handling all Commission business during the August 29th meeting. Vice Chairman Lariviere said that he will contact Chairman Latham to discuss this but asked everyone to plan on meeting on August 29, 2013 at 1:30 PM in the 6th floor MDOT Conference Room for a Special Call meeting and that the next scheduled Monthly meeting will be held on September 5, 2013 at 1:30 PM in the 6th Floor MDOT Conference Room. The Commission members will be notified. Mr. Huff made the motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gray and passed with none opposed.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:09 PM.