

**MISSISSIPPI WIRELESS COMMUNICATION COMMISSION**  
**September 3, 2015 Meeting Minutes**  
Place: Woolfolk Building - DFA, Room 145, 501 North West Street  
Jackson, MS

<b>Commission Members Present:</b>	
MS Association of Fire Chiefs	Lariviere, Tom (Chairman)
MS Department of Public Safety	Magee, Ken (Vice-Chairman)
MS Office of Homeland Security	Barnes, Rusty
MS National Guard	Causey, Ray
MS Department of Corrections	Fisher, Marshall
MS Department of Environmental Quality	Harrell, Richard
MS Department of Transportation	Huff, Willie
MS Department of Information Technology Services	Johnson, David
MS Highway Safety Patrol	Smith, Timothy
MS Department of Health	Vaughn, Wayne
MS Association of Police Chiefs	Waggener, Perry
MS Emergency Management Agency	Wilson, Richard
<b>Advisory Board Members Present:</b>	
Public Utilities - Chairman	Beckett, Representative Jim
Wildlife, Fisheries & Parks - Chairman	Bounds, Representative C. Scott
Energy - Chairman	Burton, Senator Terry

Chairman Tom Lariviere called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM and welcomed everyone to the proceedings noting the presence of Senator Terry Button, Representative Jim Beckett, and Representative Scott Bounds. The Chairman directed attention to page 3 of the minutes in the handouts, noting that the paragraph which begins with 'Mr. Timothy Smith' had been added after the minutes had been sent electronically. Mr. Smith requested that this information be added to the minutes because of its importance. Time was provided for the reading of the addition to the minutes after which the Chairman entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the August 6, 2015, meeting. Mr. Richard Wilson made a motion to approve the minutes, the motion was seconded by Mr. Wayne Vaughn, and the motion passed with none opposed.

Ms. Vicki Helfrich gave the MSWIN Project Update for August 2015. She provided information on MOUs executed, radios loaned, and special events the WCC Staff participated in during the month. Special Event Talk groups were issued for multi-jurisdictional interoperability for the Hurricane Katrina 10 Year Anniversary events, the Brandon/Madison Central football game, and to Forrest County for USM football games. In preparation for hurricane season, the WCC Staff participated in the successful test between LA, MS, AL, and FL of the interoperability talk groups. Ms. Helfrich also provided information on the status of Generator and HVAC PMs, the number of current users on MSWIN, the number of users projected for the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, and on the top twenty (20) MSWIN users. Ms. Helfrich noted that MSWIN system PTTs for the month of August were at 4 million, compared to August of 2014 when the number was at approximately 2.8 million.

Ms. Helfrich reporting on contract status, noted that two (2) items had changed. SBA contract renewals have been fully executed. The FY15 lease payments are up to date and leases were paid with FY15 funds. Also, a contract amendment with Motorola to deconstruct the BTOP LTE network has been signed by all parties and was effective on August 19, 2015. A purchase order for the \$819,360 was approved in MAGIC and a draw down request was submitted to the Governor's office on August 27, 2015. The Governor's office submitted the draw down request to NTIA on September 2, 2015. When the grant funds are received, which should happen no later than September 15, 2015, a Notice to Proceed will be issued to Motorola to commence with the deconstruction of the LTE network.

Mr. Bill Buffington gave an update on build-out status reporting that there has been no change on the FEMA submissions for the Hancock County Co-location and the two (2) Camp Shelby builds. He noted that

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there was a meeting late last week with the MICG Grant Administrator, Cedric Cherry at the Homeland office. They discussed the issue of slow/no movement on the WCC FEMA submissions. Cedric Cherry was instrumental in getting things moving forward several years ago when we were stalled. Mr. Cherry said he would provide us with a direct contact in Atlanta. The WCC has provided all of the necessary documentation to FEMA and would like to determine what else is needed for approval. Cedric Cherry is leaving and taking a position out West, but he has indicated that his replacement is fully up to speed on our files. Ms. Helfrich indicated that Mr. Cherry understands that we do not want to request another extension for MICG and would like to finalize this project by the end of 2016. However, it is all dependent upon the how fast the FEMA submissions are approved.

Ms. Helfrich noted that there are lots of questions during the meetings about her role with FirstNet and wanted to clarify that there are two separate public safety broadband programs on which the WCC is currently working. The first is the BTOP grant. The Commission has made it clear that we will not commit any additional state funds to the BTOP project and we are now proceeding in the direction of the deconstruction of the BTOP LTE network. The second broadband program is the FirstNet deployment of the nationwide public safety broadband network. Ms. Helfrich serves as the Mississippi Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for FirstNet communications. Her intent today was to make it clear that she does have conversations with FirstNet representatives, but not to negotiate with them on the buildout of a broadband network using BTOP funds.

Mississippi is the only state that has terminated its SLIGP grant and the only state that has not scheduled a state consultation. However, every state has a SPOC and the Commission does need to keep up with the FirstNet process. FirstNet will be issuing a RFP at the end of this year to allow vendors to bid on the deployment of the nationwide public safety broadband network. The evaluation phase and selection will take approximately 9-10 months. At some point next year, FirstNet will present the Governor with a state plan and the Governor will have 90 days to determine if the state will opt-in or opt-out of the FirstNet network. If the decision is made by the Governor to opt-out, he will have 180 days to issue a RFP, select a vendor, and present a state plan to NTIA/FirstNet for approval.

The WCC has purview over broadband and data for public safety and will be acting as an advisory body to the Governor when he makes this decision. It is going to be extremely hard for any state to opt-out of the FirstNet network, the state will have limited options. If the Governor decides to opt-out and deploy a state Radio Access Network (RAN), the state will have to pay fees to use the FirstNet Core and determine how to sustain the RAN. Mr. Buffington re-stated that you basically have two options (1) the state can allow FirstNet to build and operate the network, FirstNet will have the switch, and the state will pay them to use it or (2) the state can build our own RAN and own/sustain the infrastructure, FirstNet will operate it, have the switch, and the state will pay them to use the Core.

Mr. Huff noted that this is how the legislation stands now, but that he understands that there is some movement to do away with that. The situation is ridiculous, we have a network that is operating today with a backbone that is taking care of a lot of the state agency needs today through microwave. We have our RAN. We've participated in meetings with FirstNet. How is Mississippi being portrayed? Did we make other states aware of how we were treated? Are other states looking at us to figure out if we're ahead of the curve or just treading water?

Ms. Helfrich stated that we do not participate in SPOC meetings as we did not accept the SLIGP grant money, but our neighboring states are very supportive of Mississippi. Ms. Helfrich noted that she was invited to the Alabama/FirstNet consultation because they wanted FirstNet to explain why Mississippi was not able to operate and sustain its BTOP funded LTE network.

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Mr. Barnes said that he had attended a meeting out of state in which FirstNet was on the Agenda. FirstNet did not discuss MS at all in the meeting he attended. They avoided the subject. One of the big questions that was discussed was user fees and they couldn't answer the question. They did answer that any income derived from FirstNet will go back to FirstNet – the states would not receive anything.

Col. Causey asked what would happen to our system. Ms. Helfrich noted that our LMR network would be fine. The plan now is that FirstNet will not be using any government assets and they are going to let the bidders to the RFP determine what existing infrastructure is best utilized to provide the necessary coverage and submit that information to FirstNet. FirstNet will take that information, information they have received from the states, information they have received from their federal user work group and then develop a state plans based on the input they have received. At this point, it is doubtful that they will use any of our MSWIN infrastructure.

Ms. Helfrich stated that the MSWIN LMR network will be needed for mission critical voice for the next 10-15 years. Mr. Buffington concurred. The question was asked if there is currently a way to prioritize data and allow public safety to have access when needed. Mr. Buffington stated that priority of access is not in use by commercial systems and that would be the greatest reason we may be interested in a public safety broadband network.

Chairman Lariviere commented that last Saturday the Chief from Brandon called WCC staff with concerns about coverage for the Brandon/Madison football game and asked if they could get a special event talk group for communication between their police forces. The WCC staff accommodated them. The Chairman noted that this system belongs to the state and all first responders should be made aware that if they need assistance for a special event, they can contact the WCC before the event and have a special event group set up for constant and seamless communication as needed.

Chairman Lariviere called for the report of the Procurement Review Committee. Chairman Waggener stated one request had been presented for review from Washington County for radios for the six (6) Volunteer Fire Departments in Washington County in order to provide updated and reliable communications. The amount of the request was \$414,720.63. The Procurement Review Committee did not have a quorum so the procurement request was brought before the full Commission. Mr. David Burford, Washington County Director of Emergency Management, was present to answer any questions from the Commissioners. Mr. Buffington stated that the request from Washington County meets all requirements and the technology being procured is completely in line with MSWIN. Mr. Waggener made a motion for approval of the Washington County procurement request, Mr. Tim Smith seconded the motion, and the motion was approved with none opposed.

Chairman Willie Huff stated that the Governance/Interoperability Committee had nothing to report. He did however, Congratulate Mr. Burford on working to get the Volunteer Fire Department the necessary equipment and joining MSWIN. This has been in the works for some 7 or 8 years and has finally come to fruition.

Mr. David Johnson gave the update on the expenditures for end of fiscal year 2015 and the FY16 Budget Report. Mr. Johnson noted that of the \$8M appropriated for FY2015, all general funds were expended with the exception of a little over \$4,000 which lapsed. The deficit that was afforded in FY14 and carried over to FY15 was completely spent and has a balance of zero. The Integrated Public Safety Communications Fund had no activity and has a balance of \$216,365.13. It is shown in the details that \$184,000 was spent on SBA leases and \$618,000 spent on quarterly LMR maintenance and repair. The report for Budget year 2016 shows \$33, 000 in Revenue. Of that amount, \$21,000 is reimbursement for the 2011 flood and \$11,500 is for revenue billed to users of the system. The available operational balance as of September 1st is \$9.3M

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for the remainder of the year. Mr. Johnson also noted that there has been no grant activity for the month of August.

Ms. Helfrich stated that during the meeting with the MICG Grant Program Officer there was discussion about revenues generated through MSWIN. That revenue is considered program fund income. The Commission will have to work with Homeland Security to determine how that money can be used while the MICG grant is still active.

Chairman Lariviere called for a motion to approve the monthly expenditures. Col. Causey made a motion to approve expenditures, the motion was seconded by Mr. Wayne Vaughn, and the motion passed with none opposed.

Chairman Lariviere then called for other business. The Chairman then noted that several committees needed to be appointed. The first committee was the Cellular RFP Review Committee - members appointed were: Mr. Steve Gray, Col. Causey, Mr. Ken Magee, and Mr. Wayne Vaughn. The second committee was the Broadband Committee - members appointed were: Mr. Willie Huff, Mr. Richard Harrell, and Ms. Audrey McAfee. Ms. Helfrich explained that the Broadband Committee is necessary because if the BTOP Grant award is extended (and we won't know until the end of September) we have been told that we will have 60 days to file a grant modification for approval and we need to begin work on that now. The third committee is the Legislative Committee - members appointed were: Mr. Willie Huff, Mr. Perry Waggener, and Mr. Tim Smith. This committee will work with Senator Burton and Chairman Beckett to discuss ways to make the Commission more efficient in its operation.

The Chairman stated that he would like to put together a small work group to determine what MSWIN will look like in the next 15 years and make determinations on how to keep the system alive and well.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, October 1, 2015, 1:30 PM in Room 145 of the Woolfolk Building DFA at 501 North West Street, Jackson, MS.

Chairman Lariviere asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Wayne Vaughn made a motion to adjourn and it passed with none opposed. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:13 PM.