

ERIE COUNTY, NEW YORK

Date: February 19, 2008 – 7:00PM
Location: Erie County Emergency Operation Center – 3359 Broadway – Cheektowaga, NY 14227 – Room 113
Meeting: Public Safety Communication Committee Meeting

Attendees:

Amherst Fire Control-	Ray Braun
Angola Fire Chief's Association-	Bill Hamm
NYS Supreme Court-Appellate-	
Buffalo Fire Department-	Robert Andrycha, Thomas Coyne, Paul Mezger
City of Tonawanda Fire-	
East Aurora PD-	
East Aurora Fire Control-	Randy Taylor
East Aurora-	Dave Monroe
Erie County Central Police Services-	John Buttino, Kevin Hughes, Jerry Whittington Jr.
EC District Officers/Fireman's Assc.	
Erie County Emergency Services-	Melissa Calhoun, Greg Stroh, Greg Skibitsky
Erie County Fire Advisory Board-	John Wicka, Robert Mathewson
Erie County Fire Chief's-	
Erie County Health Department-	John Adolf
Erie County Sheriff's Office-	Thomas Flaherty
Hamburg Fire Chief's Assoc.-	
Helmuth Fire Control-	Pete Loretto
L.R. Kimball & Associates-	Michale Harper, Kevin Karn, Steve Zak
Town of Cheektowaga PD-	Paul Hockwater
Town of Evans PD-	
Town of Grand Island-	Peter McMahon
Town of Hamburg PD-	
Town of Lancaster PD-	
Town of Amherst PD-	Steve Piotrowski
Town of West Seneca PD-	Dwayne Lang

Purpose:

To update the Pubic Safety Communications Committee on the status of the project.

MINUTES

Welcome/Introductions

Greg welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The County Plan-

There will be 2 digital simulcast channels for the Erie County Sheriff's Office. At the same time there will be a migration of the low band fire radio system to simulcast UHF system. The plan also calls for a single UHF channel for Countywide Mutual Aid Fire Simulcast, a single UHF channel for Law Enforcement and a single channel for Emergency Services. This is the direction we have been talking about.

There was discussion of possible available frequencies.

Jim Volkosh was at the last meeting and is willing to give us some frequencies. Once the frequencies are determined, Kimball will work on a letter of concurrence. They will use the

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frequencies for fire ground channels and they would affect Niagara County. Should have by next week.

Other frequencies are being looked at as well. There are possibly pairs available in the 421-430Mhz and the 450-470Mhz band frequencies. The county will attempt to license some of them. There was discussion about the viability of towers and a PE will need to do an analysis of the towers. Other items that need to be addressed with existing towers are: shelters, tower capacity, generator issues, grounding, and security for example.

Kimball asked Motorola and M/A Com to provide them with Coverage Studies. Motorola provided maps. Mike Harper explained the maps. Blue is where there is a 95% reliability and where you see white it doesn't necessarily mean 0 coverage it could be 94% coverage. Asked Motorola to provide an overlay to show what 90% coverage will look like.

Basic Equipment List-

Jerry passed out a sheet with basic subscriber requirements. The list will be posted on the communications website within the next few weeks when the website is operational. If anyone would like additional copies of the list to take with them tonight they will be available at the end of the meeting. A few members from the technical committee looked at 3 different radio brands, ICom, Kenmore and Motorola. When testing them each radio was able to talk to the other.

There was a presentation at the meeting and that will also be available online when the website is operational.

Greg told the committee that it is not mandated that the fire companies go to the county radio to get their radios fixed.

Microwave System-

Recently there was an auction on the Microwave System and T-Mobile won the auction. They are interested in Erie County's microwave. Erie County is currently in negotiations with T-Mobile. The new system will be more compatible and more flexible with modern microwave systems. The County will be able to use the microwave as a backbone which will eliminate reoccurring charges from T1 lines. The County is looking to create a redundant loop system with the microwave. This system could also support the County phone service and Lan services to those sites where the microwave will be used.

With T-Mobile being interested they will take on some of the costs so to replace the microwave will not cost as much as if the county would try this on their own.

Next Steps-

- Continue negotiations with T-Mobile
- Kimball will begin discussions with a firm to try to license 400 frequencies.
- Kimball will begin looking at narrow banding existing UHF frequencies on behalf of the county.
- County will investigate additional sites based on the results of the available coverage maps.
- Preliminary scope of work with Ellison Patterson

A timeline will be available at next months meeting.

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PSIC Grant-are hearing positive things about our application--should have the decision within the week.

AFG Grants-guidelines should be out in the next 2 to 3 weeks. Greg said the county can help write the grant and provide supporting documentation. Once the guidelines come out the companies will know what they will be able to ask for.

Mobile Data-

Scott Patronik asked Kimball to find a mobile data solution. There will be a meeting with Motorola to discuss a solution on Thursday. The reason for this is air card funding is running out and they may be able to build it on the 800Mhz frequencies. The meeting with Motorola will be on Thursday March 21st at 9:30am. The microwave system may be able to help with the mobile data solution as well.

Another company that is interested in speaking with us regarding a data solution is Data Radio. They have worked with Niagara County and Monroe County.

Funding-

The \$10 million is still available. This year with the UASI grant, OHS has added three more UASI areas to our region (Rochester, Syracuse and Albany) this could hurt the amount of funding we get because we are all fighting for the same amount of money. We anticipate getting the PSIC grant funding which is \$1.6 million, plus \$500,000 from NYS 20% hold back from UASI '05 money. Greg said that they can also now apply for the Maritime Security Grant.

Chief of Police Meeting-

There was confusion from the Chiefs of Police meeting. A M/A Com representative came in to talk about the 800Mhz system. When his presentation was over the chiefs were under the impression that 400Mhz was not going to be available after 2011. That is not true. There eventually will be some re-banding of 400mhz however the frequency will still be available. Greg reiterated that any equipment purchased from the equipment list will be capable to change with the re-banding that may occur in the future.

Greg reminded the committee that Statewide wireless is only providing portable, in vehicle coverage and emergency services needs mobile coverage as well. If we go with 800Mhz we will have to provide the money to build out all the towers, maintenance and radios for mobile coverage. As a gateway partner Erie County will be able to provide the agency the ability to talk to the state agency when they need to. Jerry let the committee know that he is still waiting for the policy and procedures about gateways from the state. Greg said that the state will pay for the gateways that the state needs to talk to.

Future Meeting Date-Will be 3/18/08 at 6pm for technical committee and 7pm for general meeting.