

Seward County Communications Board
June 11, 2020 7:00 PM
Seward Fire Station 222 N 3rd St., Seward, NE 68434

The Seward County Communications Board held a regular meeting on Thursday, June 11, 2020 at the Seward Fire Station at 222 N 3rd St., Seward, NE 68434. Notice of this meeting and the corresponding agenda were posted on the public bulletin boards at the Seward, NE County Courthouse, the Seward, NE City Hall and the Milford, NE City Hall and were duly transmitted to all members of the Communications Board.

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / ANNOUNCE LOCATION OF COPY OF OPEN MEETINGS LAW

Chm. John P. Singleton called the meeting to order and asked all present to rise for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and noted that meeting is conducted according to the Open Meetings Law.

ROLL CALL Chm. Singleton asked for roll call of members present. The following Communications Board members were present: John P. Singleton, Brian Peters, Mike Vance, John Culver, Forrest Siebken, Jessica Kolterman and Curtis Deremer. (Kolterman arrived at 7:05 pm; Deremer arrived at 7:20 pm) Members absent: Mike Mundhenke. Also in attendance were: Communications Director Barb Liska, Assistant Director Tyler Rexus, Dispatcher Troy Pickrell, Seward City Administrator Greg Butcher and Board Secretary Elaine S. Fortik.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Forrest Siebken made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2020 meeting. John Culver second the motion; voting aye: Siebken, Culver, Peters, Vance and Singleton; nay:none; not yet present: Kolterman and Deremer; absent: Mundhenke; the motion carried.

ACT ON BILLS Director Liska provided board members with a list of bills through June 9, 2020 for their study and noted that the county is paying bills every two weeks now. The surcharge set-aside amount is also listed.

Following study, Mike Vance made a motion to approve the bills. John Culver second the motion; voting aye: Vance, Culver, Kolterman, Siebken, Peters and Singleton; nay: none; Deremer not yet at meeting; absent: Mundhenke; the motion carried.

BUDGET REPORT/APPROVE E911 BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021

Director Liska provided members with copies of the proposed budget for their study and reported that Siebken and Singleton served as finance committee this year and worked with her on the budget with Rexus and Pickrell in attendance.

Liska said the budget starts with health insurance and salaries follow with salary numbers broken down for better information. Culver reported that the county has also been working on salaries and the plan now gives credit for years of service, noting that there was criticism of some of the past county salary studies and this plan should be better. Liska agreed that the pay scale is more

fair now. Singleton reported that the Zuercher payment will be made in this budget year from the Sinking Fund. The Covid flu has made it a tough year. Liska referenced Workmans Compensation and the property that E911 owns and the insurance for it and said she will not have those figures until the end of the budget year. Liska reported there will not be much travel this year because the staff is trained and what is needed can be done virtually. Liska noted that the Crime Stoppers program has its own budget.

Singleton said the committee really scrutinized the budget and the increase is only 3.52% and advised any supplies needed should be purchased now as there is little room in the proposed budget for that. Liska reported that the NCIC payment to the state has to be made monthly. It was reported that the final Zuercher payment is \$10,770.00. Butcher had some questions and said that the Council will want to know the difference in amounts and what is left in the carryover fund. Siebken noted that won't be known until the end of June when the last payments are made.

Study and discussion continued that included how utilities at the Justice Center are divided and paid. Liska also noted that the reimbursement of the Zuercher bills that she sends to the six users should come back into the E911 budget. Siebken noted that this is a unique organization, including the way it is funded and receipts need to get to the right place. Vance questioned why Great Plains can't bill direct to all the users and Liska said she will research that.

Jessica Kolterman made a motion for approval of the E911 budget for Fiscal year 2020-2021. Forrest Siebken second the motion; voting aye; Kolterman, Siebken, Peters, Deremer, Vance, Culver and Singleton; nay: none; absent: Mundhenke; the motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS AND FACILITY PLANNING

A. Update on status of amending Inter-Local Agreement

Work on this project has been stalled due to the Corona virus restrictions.

B. Update on Zuercher System

In answer to Singleton, Pickrell reported that he has created a check list and sign-off sheet for those who have trained on the new system. Zuercher is expected to go live in December. Singleton asked how this board can be sure all dispatchers are competent to use the system when it goes live. He said he would like this board to receive a monthly report on each dispatcher's use of the new system and he will hold users accountable. Singleton stressed how he wants everyone to be *safe* when this system goes live.

Discussion ensued. Vance said the jail staff uses both systems right now. Rexus said there is too much activity at the E911 Center for that, but Pickrell said that it can be done and he was on staff when the Sleuth system was started. Singleton said that this board will demand that it will be done. Vance reported on some of the problems/oversights that have happened during Sheriff's Office dispatching. Discussion ensued about dispatcher job performance and documenting dispatcher competence in use of the Zuercher system. Singleton said Dispatcher Pickrell has really been on top of implementing this system.

Siebken asked why the Zuercher system does not go live now. Apparently, all the four counties that are going to use the system wanted everyone to be ready. Singleton said he thinks Seward could start first. Pickrell said the jail information for the system should be ready by October. Vance noted that the system turns out to be a lot more complicated than was presented.

NEW BUSINESS

Chm. John P. Singleton announced that Communications Director Barb Liska has turned in her resignation and plans to retire on August 1, 2020. He congratulated her on her work and on her upcoming new status.

John P. Singleton made a motion that this information be brought to the County Commissioners and a plan made for the replacement of the Director. Mike Vance second the motion; voting aye; Singleton, Vance, Peters, Deremer, Culver, Kolterman and Siebken; nay: none; absent: Mundhenke; the motion carried.

Culver said this will be an agenda item for the County Commissioners at their June 16, 2020 meeting, which starts at 9:00 am and he asked Singleton to attend and explain the situation. Butcher suggested that the InterLocal Agreement probably outlines a process for the replacement of the Director. Culver explained the county's involvement in the process. He said that he feels that a committee of two from this Board for the interview process would be OK, too. Board discussed various places the position can be advertised.

Jessica Kolterman made a motion that John P. Singleton and Forrest Siebken serve as the Communication Board representatives on the Director interviews committee. Mike Vance second the motion; voting aye; Kolterman, Vance, Peters, Deremer, Culver, Siebken and Singleton; nay: none; absent: Mundhenke; the motion carried.

Singleton stressed that he wants Rexus and Pickrell to conquer the Zuercher system until a new Communications Director is hired. There was lengthy discussion about the transition and who has the authority to discipline dispatchers who are not up to performance standards as well as the competence necessary to serve as a Communications Director.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Barb Liska thanked the Communications Board members for allowing her to serve as E911 Communications Director for 24 years. Liska talked about the Zuercher System and her wish for it to be successful as well as other operations of the E911 Center.

USER BOARD REPORT

Deremer had no report because there haven't been any meetings.

GENERAL DISCUSSION – and – SET DATE AND AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be July 16, 2020 and will be held at the Milford, NE City Hall.

Regular agenda items will apply; and Zuercher System update; and Dispatcher Performance

ADJOURNMENT

Jessica Kolterman made a motion for adjournment at 8:55 pm, second by Forrest Siebken; voting aye: Kolterman, Siebken, Deremer, Culver, Vance, Peters and Singleton; nay: none; absent: Mundhenke; the motion carried.

Submitted by:

Elaine S. Fortik
Board Secretary