

**Seward County Communications Board  
August 20, 2020 7:00 PM  
Municipal Building 142 N 7<sup>th</sup> St., Seward, NE 68434**

The Seward County Communications Board held a regular meeting on Thursday, August 20, 2020 at the Municipal Building at 142 N 7<sup>th</sup> 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**

A quorum was achieved at 7:00 pm and at that time Chm. John P. Singleton called the meeting to order and asked all members present to rise for recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and announces that the copy of the Open Meetings Law is posted on the north wall of this building for everyone's reference.

**ROLL CALL of Members Present**

Chm. John P. Singleton asked for roll call of member present. The following Communications Board members were present: John P. Singleton, John Culver, Brian Peters, Mike Vance, Curtis Deremer. (Peters arrived at 7:02 pm) Members absent: Mike Mundhenke and Jessica Kolterman.

Also, in attendance were: Communications Director Andrew Matney and Board Secretary Chelsea Smith. The audience included the following: York County Communications Director Leila Luft, Detention Center Director Maria Hatfield, Auto Tow representative Jay Atkins, Seward County Commissioner Becky Paulsen, Dispatcher Shannon Arena, Meyer Tow owner's Bob and Bobby Meyer, Soarin Group CEO Tom Nielsen, and Hitz Towing owner Jo Hitz.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Vance made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2020 meeting. Siebken second the motion; voting aye: Singleton, Culver, Peters, Vance, Deremer, and Siebken; nay: none; absent: Kolterman and Mundhenke; motion carried.

**ACT ON BILLS/BUDGET REPORT**

Director Matney provided the board members with the proposed budget that was proposed by the County Clerk's Office. Singleton asked that Matney add what was spent in last year's budget to this budget sheet for easy comparison. Matney informed the board that there are numerous bill issues that are being found every day. Many past due bills. Singleton asked if it would affect the current budget. Matney explained that it is early to tell, but very likely. Culver mentioned some may be double invoices and reoccurring bills that Matney is going through. Matney explained some bills that are coming up, these included an \$11,000 bill from Zuercher, GeoComm \$7,000, and Motorola \$32,000. Matney informed that he is making notes of all finances and is meeting with every rep regarding contract and agreements for every bill. Siebken informed the board that some of those bills will come out of other funds. Matney reported that many of them seemed to be from last year's budget and they were just never signed or submitted. Another bill is on the recording system for \$35,000. Discussion was held on what needs to be done to get the bills in order for this budget. Singleton ended discussion. Siebken made a motion to approve the bills. Peters second the motion; voting aye: Siebken, Peters, Singleton, Culver, Vance and Deremer; nay: none; absent: Kolterman and Mundhenke; motion carried.

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND FACILITY PLANNING**

- A. Update of Zuercher System – Tom Nielsen. Matney made it very clear that he is not looking to pull the plug on Zuercher, he is just wanting to discuss what the options are if we do not go live on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vance informed that Sleuth is not going to be backed up in 2021 on their side. Scottsbluff is out of compliance to Jail Standards at this time, the SSO project does not want to go live until this is fixed in October. Mapping with GeoComm is not interfacing 100% properly with Zuercher. Matney asked Tom Nielsen to approach the board and update everyone on the project. Nielsen informed that Seward is the host and all five agencies are relying on Seward County. He believes that December 1 can go live. The issue that he is worried about is that York County will be the backup/fail over for the system and that there is still a lot of work to be done for this portion. At this time, he doesn't believe that York will be ready to be the fail over on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Nielsen believes that Zuercher is the right system for this project and to keep moving forward as it is 80% complete. Concern is that Seward County is the host and that it needs to be tested for the fail over. Also need to do a staggered go live with Seward first. Don't count on the failover to York on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Siebken asked if the interlocals have been completed, he was informed that they have been. Singleton asked York County Communications Director Leila Luft to give her insight regarding the Zuercher project. Luft informed the board that she is running two dispatch systems in York County and it is extremely important for her to get this project running. She has spent 100's of hours on this project and discussed the pros and cons of this project. Her staff has been using the system for months and the only reason they haven't gone live is because the interfaces are not finished. Singleton asked Luft if she is willing to work with Matney to get him up to speed. Both Matney and Luft responded that this process has already started. Matney asked Nielsen about redoing training on Zuercher. It has been scheduled to have another training with all agencies, free of cost. Matney asked Dispatcher Shannon Arena how comfortable he feels with Zuercher. Arena stated they have created many training logs and has been able to find help if needed. Director Maria Hatfield spoke about the lack of communication from Butler County, and how the jail has been affected in this project with jail standards. Luft stated that this project is groundbreaking for Nebraska, and we are the first counties that have created a multi-county system. Discussion ensued and it was decided that Seward will go live first, then York County. Singleton said to keep this on the agenda for next meeting.

Singleton asked that the agenda move to the Director's Report portion and let Jay Atkins with Auto Tow present as he needs to leave for a flight home.

### **Director's Report**

- B. Atkins explained that Auto Tow is a tow management company that works with law enforcement throughout the country. Explained how the technology worked and how they work with the local tow companies. This company will allow for tow companies to be automatically selected based off Auto Tows configurations, citizens would then have easy access to find their vehicles. The local tow agencies would be responsible for the fee to citizens of \$25, \$3 would go back to the tow company for their work. There would be no cost to the county. Matney spoke up about how simple the software is to use. Nielsen had several questions about how the software worked. Jo Hitz spoke up about how customers will be unhappy about having an additional fee of \$25 added to the tow bill. Bob Meyer spoke up about how this would take the liability away from the county. Singleton wants to make sure we are doing this for the correct reasons and that the taxpayers will be happy with this decision. Meyer stated that the county needs to think about safety. Vance and Singleton agreed that this would take the liability off the county. Singleton asked that Atkins comes back with proposals. No further discussion on topic, County Attorney has not reviewed the proposal yet.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND FACILITY PLANNING

- B. Dispatcher performance – Matney wrote up a log of his findings of how the culture is in the dispatch center. Working with the staff on morale and higher standards, so far everything has improved. Is going back to the basics with accountability and attention to details. Matney informed the board that he has renamed the new position to Operations Manager, she will handle all the day to day operations. Vance asked what shift the OM will work. Matney informed that it will be normal business hours so that she can work with staff on Zuercher.
- C. Approval of NRIN dish on Erickson Tower - Matney has not been able to locate anything on this, not sure exactly what this is. Vance suggested that he look at the old minutes. Discussion from members on what they thought it was. Matney will give update at next meeting. Singleton asked to keep.

### Director's Report

- A. Introduction of Operations Manager – Matney introduced the new OM as Anna Thomas she will start on August 31<sup>st</sup>. Thomas was the best fit for the position.

Added by Matney – Incident that happened this morning in Utica. There was an 18-minute response from Utica Fire. Matney would like to meet with all the Fire and Rescue and discuss mutual aid. Singleton suggested that Matney attend the users meeting to meet all the Chiefs and have these discussions. Discussion ensued about mutual aid and Gresham Fire approaching Matney about changing maps. Singleton stated not to change the maps. Discussion ensued about the history of the maps, how they were formed and who should be making those changes. Matney also suggested that the police departments carry AEDs in their vehicles to also assist with these calls. Peters and Siebken stated that there may be a grant to help pay for them. Discussion ensued about law enforcement carrying AED's. Discussion regarding frequent rescue calls and how they should be handled, especially with COVID-19. Matney and Deremer discussed the problems with the call in Utica along with the protocols with COVID-19. Arena asked the board if they know of any grants to help fund volunteer rescue workers who may be placed in quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure. Discussion ensued.

### User Board Report

Deremer reported that he got the maps from dispatch. He will be attending the next mutual aid meeting. He is dispersing the maps to all other agencies. Discussion continued regarding the map can be updated and who would make the agreement. If any agency wants to change the map, they will need to go to the User Board for a group decision. Deremer also informed the board that the Thayer Tower is now up, finishing touches should be done next week. Discussion on what the tower does and how the dispatching/frequency works for Utica Fire.

### General Discussion – and – Set Date and Agenda for next Meeting

Next meeting will be September 24, 2020 and will be held at the Municipal Building in Seward, NE. Regular agenda items apply; and items A., B., C. will remain under Communications and Facility Planning. Item A. will remain under Director's Report and B. will be dropped. Discussion ensued about Auto Tow and that they will need to draw up a contract for review, this could take several weeks, will wait to add to the agenda again. Nothing else to add. Culver announced that Chelsea Smith will be taking over as the new Secretary and thanked her for joining.

### Director's Report

Siebken made a motion for adjournment at 9:19 pm which was second by Vance and carried unanimously with two absent.