

Thurston 911 Communications  
Joint Administration & Operations Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 27, 2023 @ 3:30 P.M.

**This was a hybrid meeting both in person and via Zoom.**

**Members Present:**

**Administration Board**

Leatta Dahlhoff – Vice-Chair, City of Tumwater, Councilmember  
Gary Edwards – Thurston County Board of County Commissioners, County Commissioner  
Sylvia Roberts – Lacey Fire District #3, Fire Commissioner  
Holly Smith – City of Yelm, Councilmember  
Derek Sanders – Thurston County Sheriff's Office, Sheriff  
Meredith Hutchins – Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association, Fire Commissioner  
Todd Carson – Olympia Fire Department, Interim Chief

**Operations Board**

Jon Weiks – Chair, Tumwater Police Department, Chief  
Robert Almada – Lacey Police Department, Chief  
Ben Miller-Todd – Thurston County Medic One, Director  
Dave Pearsall – Thurston County Sheriff's Office, Undersheriff  
Brian VanCamp – TC Fire Chiefs Association (South Bay Fire Department), Chief  
Brian Hurley – Tumwater Fire Department, Chief  
Steve Brooks – Lacey Fire District #3, Chief  
Rob Carlson – Yelm Police Department, Chief

**TCOMM staff**

Wendy Hill – Executive Director  
Jonnica Elkins – Deputy Director  
Aaron Moe – HR Manager  
Carla Mai – Financial Manager  
Tim Klotz – Information Systems Administrator  
David Taylor – Radio Systems Manager  
Jeff Myers – General Counsel  
Bre Skaggs – Admin Assistant

**Guests**

Leonard Johnson - McLane Black Lake Fire Department  
Chris Patti - McLane Black Lake Fire Department

**Call to Order**

Vice-Chair L. Dahlhoff called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

**Approval of Agenda/Consent Agenda & Minutes**

M/S/C approval of the September 27, 2023 agenda/consent agenda with one agenda item added: #11.  
TCERN Implementation of TAC1. (H. Smith/G. Edwards)  
M/S/C approval of August 2, 2023 Administration Board meeting minutes (H. Smith/M. Hutchins)  
M/S/C approval of August 21, 2023 Operations Board meeting minutes (R. Almada/J. Weiks)

Thurston 911 Communications  
Joint Administration & Operations Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 27, 2023 @ 3:30 P.M.

**Correspondence** – None

**Public Testimony** – None

**Executive Director's Report** – W. Hill reviewed the Executive Director report with the Board. Highlights include:

TCERN-

Civil Site Work – The DuPont site lease renewal is expected to be finalized in mid-January 2024. Motorola and TCOMM staff are conducting site visits and reviewing the site plans to see what work can be done within the current site footprint. Motorola is also working on the subcontractors and their availability so work can begin once all permits are in place. The special use permit application went before the hearing examiner earlier this month for Fire Station 8-2. A decision is expected by September 28<sup>th</sup>.

Subscriber Equipment – The radio order portion of Change Order #5 is in progress; however, Motorola's internal process takes several weeks before production begins. Once the project manager for Motorola returns from vacation, he will provide an ETA on when TCOMM can expect the additional radios.

Subscriber Training – TCOMM hosted a Train-the-Trainer class for both Fire/Law User agencies taught by Motorola. Another training will be held in the first quarter of 2024 for telecommunicators on the radio dispatch consoles.

Staffing – The fourth academy of 2023 was completed a few weeks ago. The fifth and final academy of 2023 is set to begin October 9<sup>th</sup> with four new telecommunicators attending. While staffing levels are still below authorized FTEs, we have made progress this year and have made plans to hold four academies in 2024.

ESC Building Update – A meeting with the County took place on August 17<sup>th</sup> to plan for the UPS replacement. The contractor stated the UPS replacement would take approximately two weeks instead of the previously anticipated 72 hours. TCOMM was advised that staff will no longer need to leave the building as originally planned as they will not need to turn the power off. Without a UPS to bridge the gap between utility power and the generator, if an outage occurs, it was suggested that a temporary UPS be brought in. This will ensure that a temporary loss of power will not result in downtime while work is being completed. TCOMM staff are working with the County and their contractor on the best approach, including the possibility of purchasing an additional, permanent UPS that can be installed at a later date for better redundancy. The County Project Manager is also working on the security camera replacement, and anticipates the project to be finished sometime in 2024 but is still in the process of completing the contract with the selected vendor.

**Old Business**

None.

**New Business**

**2024 Directors Summary and Budget Committee Report** – W. Hill/L. Dahlhoff

Thurston 911 Communications  
Joint Administration & Operations Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 27, 2023 @ 3:30 P.M.

1. **Projected Revenue:** Revenue streams were conservatively forecasted for the 2024 budget, using historical trendlines as the determination for projections. TCOMM's largest revenue source, 2/10 of 1 % Sales Tax within Thurston County, was based on a one percent (1.0%) change from a 2023 year-end projection. This correlates with the Washington State Economic & Revenue forecast, which includes a 1.1% increase for FY24.
2. **Authorized Positions:**

Vacant positions are predicted to be filled in the 2024 budget, due to ongoing recruitment efforts. Two new FTEs have been requested for the upcoming budget year to support the current workload and future needs of technical services;

  - IT Systems Administrator, estimated start January 2024
  - Radio Systems Technician, estimated start May 2024
3. **General Wage Increase:**

There are two collective bargaining units within TCOMM, which comprise 80% of the agency's workforce. These collective bargaining agreements are the main drivers for the agency's budgeted annual general wage increase. The 2024 agreement with 618C includes a four percent (4%) increase and a one percent (1%) market adjustment. The 2024 agreement with L468 includes a four percent (4%) increase and a two percent (2%) market adjustment. The 2024 Director's Budget includes a four percent (4%) increase for non-represented staff.
4. **Health Benefits:**

Association of Washington Cities (AWC) projected rate increases are between 4.0 – 7.0% for both Regence and Kaiser medical coverage. No increase was projected for Delta Dental, Willamette Dental, or the Vision Service Plan.
5. **Service Levels:**

There are no proposed changes in dispatch operations for 2024. The agency is expecting an increase in technical service support as the TCERN project is moving towards completion.
6. **Operational Reserve:**

The operating reserve amount is set by the Administration Board of Directors at 16.67% of the total annual amount necessary to continue operations. TCOMM's overall fund balance is able to account for this operating reserve.
7. **NG911 Telephone System:**

With ongoing operational concerns, the agency has included funds for the replacement of the current NG911 system, estimated at \$800,000. The NG911 Consortium has determined that the current system has not yet proven to be reliable, and despite ongoing efforts to resolve the issues with the current vendor, it is anticipated that the system will need to be replaced.
8. **Motorola P25 Digital Radio System (TCERN):**

The 2024 budget includes the annual Motorola equipment lease payment of \$2,740,400. In addition, the agency elected to include Change Order Milestone payments totaling \$2,221,000. The adopted 2023 budget included funds for Change Order Milestones, but anticipating the possibility that the project milestones will not be completed in 2023, they have been rolled into the 2024 budget.

Thurston 911 Communications  
Joint Administration & Operations Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 27, 2023 @ 3:30 P.M.

**9. Liability Payments:**

New accounting standards were adopted to comply with the WA State Auditor’s Cash BARS manual. Qualifying lease payments and subscriber IT agreements are now reported as liability payments for a total of \$756,275.

**10. The 2024 Director’s Budget proposes:**

Revenue	\$ 20,372,274
Operating Expenditures	13,865,475
TCERN Equipment Lease	2,740,450
NG911 Telephone System	800,000
Liability Payments	756,275
Other Capital Expenditures	1,483,500
<u>TCERN Change Order Cash Payments</u>	<u>2,221,000</u>
Proposed Change to Fund Balance	(\$ 1,494,426)

**M/S/C to approve the TCOMM911 2024 Preliminary Budget, which includes Operating and Capital Expenses, in the amount of \$21,866,700. (H. Smith/G. Edwards)**

The preliminary budget will be posted on the TCOMM website for public response. The budget will be brought before the Administration Board at the November 1, 2023 meeting for final approval.

**Phone System Update** – W. Hill stated that the Consortium has been meeting regularly after the last issue with the phone system to figure out the next steps with Solacom. Overall, the Consortium has agreed that Solacom is not meeting the standards and workload requirements that are needed. A letter was sent to the General Manager of Solacom in August reiterating several concerns with the product and lack of confidence. A meeting is scheduled with Solacom on October 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss these issues further. After a brief discussion, the Board of Directors agreed to authorize TCOMM staff to begin looking at other phone system vendors to replace Solacom.

**TCERN Implementation of TAC1** – D. Sanders stated the Sheriff’s Office had some concerns with the previous TCSO Administration’s agreement to split TAC1 into two frequencies (talk groups) once the new radio system is in place. Due to staffing shortages, both with TCSO and TCOMM, doing so would not be feasible at this time. W. Hill stated that the TCERN project is still a ways off from deciding the future of TAC1 and that the discussion should be revisited once the new system has been operational for 6-12 months and a new use study can be done.

**Meeting adjourned:** With no further business or good of the order, the Board meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm.

**Next meeting:** November 1, 2023 @ 3:30 pm