



Kansas NG9-1-1

Special Session Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 25, 2017

1 Call To Order

Chairman Heitschmidt called the Kansas 911 Coordinating Council (“Council”) meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

2 Roll Call

Council Members in Attendance

Mike Albers, Robert Cooper, Jay Coverdale, David Cowan, Chief Dick Heitschmidt, Kathy Kuentler, Mike Leiker, Kerry McCue, Chief Robert McLemore, Josh Michaelis, Ken Nelson, Colonel Chris Stratmann.

Council Members Absent

Rep. John Alcala, Sheriff Troy Briggs, Jerry Daniels, Larry Dexter, John Fox, Sen. Marci Francisco, Adam Geffert, Rusty Griffin, Rep. Kyle Hoffman, Ellen Wernicke.

Also in Attendance

Michele Abbott, Lori Alexander, Toyia Bulla, Scott Ekberg, Phill Ryan, Gayle Schwarzrock, Randall White.

There were nine (9) voting members present for the meeting.

3 Presentation

Chairman Heitschmidt advised that in late February he began reviewing how much time he is spending on NG911, along with time spent by the two paid employees and two contract employees. He looked at what work has been completed and what is still to come, as well as the fact that the contract employees will be gone at the end of 2018. Chairman Heitschmidt conferred with Randall White and asked Randall to take the 2013 staffing plan and rework it with some of the upcoming tasks. In the next several months, we have several things happening:

- meetings are set up with Nebraska and Oklahoma to discuss border issues
- SMS texting is in process
- Geospatial call routing, which Sherry Massey, Ken Nelson, and Eileen Battles are working on, is geared toward starting pilot testing in November
- Later in the year, possibly in January, we are planning to transition the AT&T hosted call handling platform over to the nationwide ESInet platform
- And, we continue to hear that we are way ahead of everything that is going on with this technology.

In order to maintain this progress, it’s important to look at our resources – our time, our talent, and our money. Randall prepared the Program Organization and Staffing Plan and the Staff Responsibility Assignment Matrix that were disbursed to all members prior to today’s meeting. The staffing plan



shows a shortfall. Two of the primary reasons for the shortfall is that we will be losing our Program Manager and our Implementation Technical Support Specialist at the end of 2018. The Staff Responsibility Assignment Matrix reflects a change in job title for the NG911 Administrator to NG911 Director of Operations; that is Scott Ekberg's position. With the enormous amount of work that Scott is doing, it is Chairman Heitschmidt's recommendation that Scott's position be re-evaluated. Currently, Scott's salary is \$65,000.00 and he gets approximately \$20,000.00 per year in overtime. It is Chairman Heitschmidt's opinion that the salary does not match his job. It is suggested that a recommendation be sent to the State Human Resources that the job title be changed from the NG911 Administrator to the NG911 Director of Operations.

With regard to the new position of NG911 Executive Director, Chairman Heitschmidt asked Colonel Stratmann to present the position to the State Human Resources for review and approval, as well as ask the Adjutant General if he would accept the responsibility of having another employee, as our current paid employees administratively report to the Adjutant General. Human Resources approved the position and the Adjutant General agreed to add another position in his office, if the Council approves Chairman Heitschmidt's recommendation.

Chairman Heitschmidt asked the Council members for questions and feedback, and a subsequent Motion to accept this recommendation and proceed with hiring a third position. No questions were presented. Chairman Heitschmidt asked Chief McLemore for his thoughts on the matter. Chief McLemore responded that with the potential changes coming up with public safety broadband, there's been discussion on funding those positions with the State and Local Implementation Grant Program (SLIGP.2). He believes there needs to be some long-range planning on consolidating or doing some things with that. He feels that we need the people to keep the 9-1-1 program going, so it needs to be done. It's a good program and the funding is available to cover the additional position, so he does not see a problem with it. Chairman Heitschmidt advised there is enough margin in our business case to handle the cost of the position.

Chairman Heitschmidt called on Jay Coverdale for his thoughts on the matter. Jay advised from his viewpoint he sees the fantastic accomplishments in the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) putting their faith in the 9-1-1 Council in order to gain a solution, and that puts a responsibility on the Council to make good on our promises to the PSAPs. He feels that we will continue to need resources to fulfill the commitment. He would support the position, and feels it is critical for the transition from implementing the solution to maintaining the solution over a long period of time. Chairman Heitschmidt reiterated that NG911 is moving from an implementation mode into an operational mode, while continuing to implement.

Chairman Heitschmidt called on Michele Abbott for her thoughts on the matter. Michele feels NG911 has a great product and a lot of fluid movement with the need to bring up the ESInet and integration to FirstNet. She would like to see it kept in that professional setting and absolutely sees a need for the new position. It is a valid need and necessary to keep the program at the top level that it continues to be perceived as. Chairman Heitschmidt agreed with Michele.

Kerry McCue advised he agrees with a lot of what Robert and Michele said. He inquired regarding qualifications for the position, as well as how the recommended salary was determined, who determined it, and how it compares to other Executive Director positions. He advised that in his organization, that would likely be the top of the salary scale for anyone in the county. Chairman Heitschmidt asked Colonel Stratmann to assist with answers to Kerry's questions. Colonel Stratmann



advised that it was not just Human Resources that approved the position and salary. The Governor's Office also receives it and gave their approval as well. They do a lot of the research as far as comparing it across the state to like positions. He believes the first scale that was presented was \$5,000-\$10,000 less than the final amount. It was cross-referenced with State Human Resources, Department of Administration (DoA) and the Governor's Office to be comparative across the state for like positions. Kerry advised he just didn't want the Council to go through the motions and then have someone knock it down. Colonel Stratmann advised of the process for selecting the position classification and description. The position description, which is independent of the classification, is a key factor in driving the salary. Most agencies can write the position description to fit the job at hand. The Governor's Office and DoA then take that position description and justify the salary.

Mike Leiker inquired if the position will be advertised or if it would be a promotion for Scott. Chairman Heitschmidt advised that Executive Director position is an unclassified position that can be advertised or the Adjutant General, with the Chairman's recommendation, has the latitude to appoint the position. Mike mentioned the Chairman's recommendation to fill the position by September and a timeline if the position were to be advertised. Chairman Heitschmidt advised there will be additional discussion on this matter once a decision is reached regarding the position being approved.

Robert Cooper inquired if the Council will need to advertise for both positions, even if there is someone already in mind. Chairman Heitschmidt advised that the positions do not need to be advertised if the Council decides not to. We have the latitude to appoint the positions. Robert inquired if we need a motion or if there needs to be more discussion. Chairman Heitschmidt advised the motion can be made at any time to approve the position of Executive Director. He also asked for the authority to appoint the position.

Kathy Kuenstler made a motion to create the positions outlined in the documents provided to the Council. Robert Cooper seconded the motion. Chairman Heitschmidt acknowledged the Motion and second, and inquired of any additional discussion on the matter before voting. Mike Leiker inquired if the Motion was to approve the position or to grant the position and grant the Chairman the authority to appoint. Kathy advised it was just a motion to approve the position, leaving the second discussion for a separate motion. Robert agreed and advised it should be separate.

Gayle Schwarzrock took roll call of all voting members, regarding the Motion to approve the Executive Director position. All 9 voting members were in favor of the Motion. Chairman Heitschmidt confirmed all are agreed in approving the new position.

Chairman Heitschmidt advised the Council of Colonel Stratmann's interest in the Executive Director position, and his intention to appointment Colonel Stratmann to the position, if approved to do so by the Council. Robert McLemore asked for clarification that it is Colonel Stratmann who is interested in the position. The Chairman confirmed the same. Colonel Stratmann advised that he became eligible for retirement a few months ago and can depart his current position with the Adjutant General's Department any time between now and December 2017.

Kerry McCue inquired if there are any benefits or drawbacks to the appointment. He inquired if it would be better to advertise and not give a negative impression to anyone, and the best choice for the Council. Colonel Stratmann departed the conversation at this time to allow the remaining members to speak freely regarding the matter. Chairman Heitschmidt advised he also had considered the same with regard to advertising the position. He had a conversation with Scott regarding this position, which



would be in the office, not out in the field doing the kind of work that Scott is doing. He inquired if Scott was interested in the position at that time, and Scott declined. Chairman Heitschmidt advised Scott to please advise if that has changed. A short time after his conversation with Scott, Colonel Stratmann advised him of his interest in the position. Chairman Heitschmidt voiced his opinion that he is not aware of anyone else that is as knowledgeable about NG911, with the skill sets that Colonel Stratmann has, and therefore feels it would be a waste of time to advertise.

Kerry McCue agreed with the Chairman about the Colonel's qualifications and being the best person for the position, but voiced concern that the Council not catch grief for any reason. Mike Albers voiced his input from the technical side that advertising and finding someone that would be as knowledgeable as the Colonel would be difficult, and that the best person is already in position for that. In this technical environment, with the time constraints, he sees no negatives in the process. People are already doing the job, they just aren't being paid for it. Time is being taken from other duties to perform the work. He feels the State 9-1-1 program needs to take responsibility for that. Mike advised he would like to make a Motion to allow the Chairman to proceed with the process and appointment Colonel Stratmann to the position of Executive Director. Inquiry was made by Robert McLeMore on whether that would be the appointment of Executive Director or both that position and the Director of Operations. Chairman Heitschmidt advised his intention is for Scott to take the position of Director of Operations. The only thing that needs done with that is to present it to Human Resources to get the position name changed and get the salary changed. He sees no issue with that happening.

Mike Leiker agreed with Kerry's comment that Colonel Stratmann is more than qualified, and he is confident he can fill the position. He voiced his concern that with NG911 being in the spotlight nationally, we need to ensure there is no appearance of impropriety – purely a political issue. As far as technical, skills, and abilities, Colonel Stratmann is more than qualified.

Chairman Heitschmidt advised there are two issues. He is not sure that Colonel Stratmann will decide to vote. With there only being nine (9) voting members in the meeting, if he does not vote, then there are not enough votes to carry a Motion to appoint. If the direction from the majority of the eight (8) remaining voters is to advertise, then we will advertise. Chairman Heitschmidt inquired of Michele Abbott whether she had any comments regarding the matter. Michele advised she would like to hear what Scott's thoughts are on the matter. Scott advised he agreed with Kerry and Mike. Colonel Stratmann is the man for the job. He has had an excellent working relationship with Colonel Stratmann since 2008. However, he feels there is an appearance from the outside looking in that the position was created for him. He doesn't feel there will be a lot of time lost in advertising the position, and then closing the advertisement in a very short time. Anyone could have applied for the position, and would have been considered during that period. Then, if the position is offered to Colonel Stratmann at that time, those bases are covered. Robert Cooper advised he agrees with that perspective – better to play it safe with a clean slate. He feels he would be a great choice in the final decision. (Kathy Kuenstler asked Scott to repeat what he had said about Colonel Stratmann retiring, as Scott's audio was inaudible when he first started speaking.) Scott advised that Colonel Stratmann will either retire from the military or will be retired, and he feels that adds to the appearance that we are creating the position specifically for him as a perk for his having served on the Council, and that could look bad from the outside looking in.

Chief McLeMore asked for clarification that the request was to give Chairman Heitschmidt the authority to select the Executive Director. Mike Albers confirmed he made the Motion for that. Chairman Heitschmidt advised if there is not a second then that Motion dies. At that point, the direction will be that we advertise the position. Robert McLeMore inquired when the position is appointed, how the



Chairman will make it as transparent as possible to satisfy any concerns. Chairman Heitschmidt advised he would steer toward his knowledge, experience, and history with the program and how it makes sense. Chairman Heitschmidt reiterated that he has no issues with advertising the position, and agrees with Scott that the position be opened, have a short closing date, and move forward with it. He will discuss with Human Resources on how long to advertise the position. Chief McLemore feels that everyone agrees with that assessment; there's just a concern from a political aspect. Chairman Heitschmidt agreed and also advised he doesn't believe we have the votes needed to carry a Motion to allow him appointment. Robert McLemore inquired if 30 days will affect any work being done. Chairman Heitschmidt doesn't feel it will because if the Colonel ends up taking the position, he is already up-to-speed on everything. If it ends up being someone else, it still will not throw us much off the curve.

Chairman Heitschmidt asked for Jay Coverdale's feedback. Jay advised he is hearing the consensus that it makes sense to advertise. He also reiterated that everyone agrees on the Colonel's qualifications and that he would make an excellent candidate. However, there's always the possibility that another candidate may come to light. Therefore, he feels it best to advertise the position, so the Council can say it was done in a fair and competitive process.

Chairman Heitschmidt asked for Ken Nelson's feedback. Ken agrees with Jay. He is supportive of the position and feels it just reflects the evolution of the project. With regard to filling the position, advertising would be the better route to go. Chief McLemore inquired if that would give time for Scott's position to be worked through Human Resources as well, and Chairman Heitschmidt advised he has had Randall doing a bit of work on it already, and he will get that process rolling as soon as possible. He strongly feels Scott's salary is not sufficient with the amount of work he is doing and the type of work he is doing.

Josh Michaelis feels that Colonel Stratmann is definitely qualified for the position. Looking from the perspective that it is a political decision being made and that advertising is the best is prudent. His reasoning is that in representing a smaller PSAP, at some time, we will need to revisit legislation, and don't want a point brought up at that time that the Council is not doing things as they should. Going this route, the Council will have that transparency when going back to the legislature. Chairman Heitschmidt advised with the consensus - his position is that we should advertise. No opposition from the members. Chief McLemore inquired if there will be a Motion, and expressed that he feels we need a Motion to approve the documents the Chairman presented and the positions being mentioned. Chairman Heitschmidt texted Colonel Stratmann to rejoin the meeting and requested that once he has returned, that someone make a Motion to advertise the position.

Michele Abbott inquired if there is still room to make changes to the job description and responsibilities. Chairman Heitschmidt advised those are living documents, so they can be changed at any time.

Mike Leiker made a Motion to advertise the position of Executive Director. Chief McLemore seconded the Motion. McLemore advised Colonel Stratmann that for the sake of transparency, we feel this is the best way to go. He mentioned that the Colonel is very qualified for the job, but we need to make this political decision for the Council. Colonel Stratmann agreed fully. Gayle Schwarzrock took a roll call of all voting members. All nine (9) voting members were in favor of the Motion.



4 Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Josh Michaelis and seconded by Chief McLemore. Motion carries. The meeting adjourned at about 11:53 a.m.

Submitted by:

Scott Ekberg
NG911 Administrator