
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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IOWA 911 COMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL — OCTOBER 2019

Meeting. The Iowa 911 Communications Council met on October 10, 2019, at the Des Moines Parks and Recreation Board Room in Des Moines.

911 Program Financial Reports and Program Update. Blake DeRouchey, 911 Program Manager, provided the Council with the following updates on the 911 Program and its current financial standing.

Peer Assessment Evaluation Results. The State of Iowa took part in the National 911 Office's Peer Assessment Program in September 2019. The nationwide program consists of a self-evaluation based on 98 different criteria points to provide feedback on the diverse aspects of the 911 system. A public assessor's report will be available within the next two weeks, but Mr. DeRouchey was able to share some highlights with the Council at the October meeting. Assessors from the National 911 Program noted multiple strengths of Iowa's 911 Program, including:

- The 911 office has several excellent tools to affect positive change throughout the State by offering an effective incentive program, having the ability to withhold funding under specific circumstances, and administering a change management process to manage the 911 Program.
- The Iowa program has done an excellent job of tying data collection and reporting from the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) to the distribution of allocated 911 funding.
- The State of Iowa is commended for implementing a governance structure that appears to provide the State 911 Program with the authority and autonomy to do the planning and coordination to move the 911 system toward a fully i3 standard compliant Next Generation 911 (NG911) system.
- Iowa has significant advantages over other states in the statewide coordination of 911 as well as the extensive ICN network. It appears that the resources exist to create the political environment necessary to enable statewide interoperability in 911, computer-aided drafting (CAD), and radio resources (including FirstNet). Creating this vision for elected officials and policy makers will make it easier to secure the funding for the individual projects that will be necessary to make this vision a reality.
- The Program Manager has an excellent grasp of needed areas for improvement of 911 in the State and the effort and importance of coordination with all stakeholders to gain support for their consideration and implementation.

Assessors also noted the following areas of improvement for Iowa's 911 Program:

- The 911 office should obtain the authority to audit the surcharge collection.
- It is recommended the State develop or adopt nationally accepted standards for quality assurance (QA) and create guidelines for the Joint 911 service boards to implement QA data collection to the 911 Program by a certain date (two to three years down the road).
- The State 911 Program should conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the resources required to complete the transition from the current 911 system to a fully compliant i3-based NG911 system by a specified date certain (e.g. 2023).

- In conjunction with the 911 Communications Council, the State should establish minimum performance guidelines for PSAP call handling statewide.

GIS Grants Update. In September 2019, five counties received Geographic Information System (GIS) grants totaling \$36,000. Funding is contingent on verification that the applicant possesses 98.0% match rates with GIS and 95.0% match rates with Automatic Location Identifier (ALI). Year-to-date for FY 2020, 32 counties have received GIS funding for a total of \$204,000.

911 Council Travel, Public Education, and Training Fund. Mr. DeRouchey shared that as of October 10, the Council has approved a total of \$41,980 to be distributed from the 911 Council Travel, Public Education, and Training Fund. Approximately \$100,000 is allocated toward the Fund annually. The current Fund balance totals \$58,200. At the October 2019 meeting, Delaware County requested a total of \$5,000 for training provided by the Denise Amber Lee Foundation, Buena Vista County requested \$6,200 for an active shooter training and PowerPhone training, and Marshall requested \$12,000 for public education purposes. The Council approved the three requests totaling \$23,200.

Zetron Mission Critical Communications Solutions Contract Update. Mr. DeRouchey also provided the Council with an update on Zetron's work in updating the 113 existing PSAPs in delivering the NG911 solution to enhance public safety services across the State. The Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management awarded Zetron with an NG911 contract in December 2017. Zetron provides a call-taking system that offers CAD, 911 mapping, and emergency medical dispatch software in implementing NG911 protocols and systems.

Fayette County deployed the Zetron communications platform in September 2019, bringing the total PSAPs utilizing the technology to seven. The departments of public safety for Cedar Rapids and Storm Lake plan to deploy the technology later in the month of October, and Henry County is expected to deploy the technology in November 2019.

Next Meeting. The next Council meeting will be held Thursday, November 14, 2019, at 9:00 a.m. at the Des Moines Parks and Recreation Board Room, 1551 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway in Des Moines.

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