

OPEN SESSION
NASHOBA VALLEY REGIONAL DISPATCH DISTRICT – ADMIN BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, May 10, 2017
NVRDD, 270 Barnum Board, Devens, MA

Present: Chair Thatcher Kezer (Devens), Mary Arata (Berlin Alt.) and Selectman Christine Keefe, Don Lowe (Bolton), Timothy Bragan (Harvard) and Marie Sobalvarro (Harvard Alt), Heather Lemieux (Lunenburg), and NVRDD Executive Director Nathan Kenney.

Absent: Lancaster representation, Townsend representation

The meeting opened at 9:30 a.m. There was no March 2017 meeting minutes prepared for approval. The Board agreed that the duty to prepare Admin Board meeting minutes would rotate among member communities until an Administrative Assistant for NVRDD is hired. To update the Board on the Town of Shirley's interest in membership, Kenny advised the Shirley Selectmen would tour NVRDD this evening and that Frank Pozniak, Executive Director State 911 Department, would visit the June 7th Admin Board meeting. Regarding Townsend, Kenney said that the Town's IT coordinator is investigating why there are software connectivity problems despite new fiber and apparent router linkage (and so Townsend's Pamet subscription is still in use to log calls).

The budget discussion was deferred until later in the meeting. Regarding NextGeneration911 (NG911), Nathan reported technical issues over the last week with the transition to an entirely fiber (versus the former partial- and largely- copper) connected NVRDD network. Temporarily, Berlin, Bolton and Townsend were unable to make 911 land calls, while Harvard, Lancaster and Lunenburg wireless callers also received 'fast busy signal' errors when calling the NVRDD center. Temporarily, the Mass State Police dispatch center handled those wireless calls until cloud-based routing problems were fixed with some glitches still being watched. Next week, the IT server room is to be upgraded with new gear and the NVRDD rewired to complete the transition from copper- to redundant fiber lines (Comcast and BMI/State), as redundant fiber is required for NG911 (Chelsea and Springfield regionals are likewise redundantly fed). NVRDD dispatch NG911 training is also complete.

Regarding HR issues, Kenney advised that there are currently two dispatch vacancies, with one dispatcher resigning while within their initial 1 year probationary period, and a second dispatcher terminated while within their 1 year probationary period. Regarding the proposed Administrative Assistant post, Kenney circulated a draft job description for comment and said basic G.E.D. education requirements are to be added. The 18-hour/week, non-union post will not be qualified for benefits (<20 hrs/week). Board consensus was for a pay rate between \$16-\$19/hour, depending on qualifications. The description was to be uniformly formatted and presented for approval at the next Admin Board meeting (then posted for a 2 week period). Regarding notices and communications, Kenney reported contact from Ashby's Fire Chief who expressed tentative future interest in Ashby's membership in the NVRDD.

Regarding the budget, Kenney explained his need to fully attend to Townsend's new membership and NG911 fiber technical issues have slowed and that his attention could now return to the FY18 NVRDD budget. Kenney proposed scheduling a working meeting (to be held Monday, May 15th) with a subset of the whole Admin Board to work through remaining issues before presenting to the whole Admin Board for an approval vote (to be held Thursday, May 25th). Kenney said negotiations begin May 22nd with MassCops on a new dispatcher contract (current contract expires June 30, 2017) with compensation expected to be the key

issue. The Admin Board was copied on a May 4th email sent by Bragan/Harvard to the budget working group (Kezer/Devens, Lowe/Bolton, Lemieux/Lunenburg and Kenney).

In the letter (see attached), Bragan questioned the timing of the NVRDD Admin Board voting to adopt a FY18 budget at a time after member towns have approved assessments at their respective Annual Town Meetings. Bragan also requested that, in advance of a NVRDD Admin Board budget vote, that all members be copied on several documents, including: the budget, current CBA, payroll, the signed MOA between member communities, and a budget narrative from Kenney detailing, among other things: negotiation preparation, the need for administrative assistance, revenue sources, and capital needs planning.

Kezer provided an updated budget draft handout (with Townsend as a full member) and proposed: a 35% increase in the Exec. Dir. Salary (from \$75,000 to \$100,000 in FY18); the newly-created Deputy Director post (\$70,000); a \$20,800 Salary Reserve Fund (but no value for the proposed Admin. Assistant post). Kezer suggested a UMASS/Collins Center study of job descriptions, comparable pay rates, and suggested retirement withholdings.

Bragan asked about the creation of a capital equipment replacement fund, as the NVRDD is 4-years old (Kenney advised the dispatching technology generally has a 5-7 year life span). Lowe suggested NVRDD plan capital upgrades assuming a 5 year life span. Kenney advised that, in terms of capital planning, all dispatch stations would need to be upgraded simultaneously to future technologies (in current value terms, swapping out all dispatch stations would cost \$300K). Lowe noted reliance on future 911 capital grants is not reliable.

The working budget subset of the Admin Board is not a quorum of the whole Admin Board, as it has volunteered to work through pieces of the FY18 budget for presentation to the whole. Bragan noted that there has not been any Townsend (or steady Lancaster) Admin Board attendance.

Next Admin Board meetings: (1) Thur., May 25th at 9:30 a.m. (to include a Budget meeting and vote on a FY18 budget); and (2) Wed., June 7th at 9:30 a.m. (to include Pozniak visit). The Board voted 5-0 to appoint Lowe/Bolton, Kezer/Devens and Bragan/Harvard to the MassCops Negotiation Committee with Kenney in attendance for technical assistance throughout dispatcher negotiations. The Board discussed the rotation of the Admin Board rotation, effective July 1st (following Devens will be Bolton, Berlin, and Townsend in annual succession). The Admin Board adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Arata

THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED BY THE ADMIN BOARD (5-0) on 5/25/2017