

Cass County Public Safety Communications Commission

Minutes

May 28, 2024

Cass County Communications Center – 705 Poplar St., Atlantic, Iowa

Present: Steve Green, CC BOS; Mark O'Brien, CC BOS; Jim Behrens, Atlantic; and Shawn Sarsfield, Atlantic

Absent: None.

Staff present: Mike Kennon, 911 Services Coordinator; Bobbi Jo Steffensmeier, Dispatch Supervisor

Chair Mark O'Brien called the meeting to order at 5:20pm.

M/S/C Green / Behrens to approve the agenda. Carried unanimously.

M/S/C Green / Behrens to approve the minutes of the 4-23-2024 meeting. Carried unanimously.

M/S/C Behrens / Green to approve the March 2024 Financial Reports. Carried unanimously.

911 Services Coordinator's Report: Bobbi Jo reported that we had a dispatcher leave us in the last couple of weeks. The hiring process has begun. A notice has been placed in local newspapers and applications will be accepted through June 3rd.

Kennon stated that there have been multiple weather events over the last couple of months, though Cass has not seen severe devastation like Minden in Pott. Or Greenfield in Adair Co. On April 16, there was an F-0 Tornado that affected some homes in the country club area of Anita. A State Individual Assistance Program was activated. Kennon reported that 3 or 4 residences were assisted as a result of that program.

Last Tuesday, Lewis had early morning severe weather. Strong winds knocked down trees and limbs resulting in a power outage to much of the town. Atlantic experienced strong winds and heavy rain, causing streets to flood. There were no NWS warnings for these morning storms and no outdoor warning sirens were activated. That afternoon, a tornado was on the ground west of Red Oak heading north toward Elliott. The NWS issued a Tornado Warning as that system approached the Cass County border. The polygon for the warning included much of Cass County, but barely missed the City of Atlantic. Sirens were activated for all the towns affected, then Kennon had the outdoor sirens set off in Atlantic as well. It was about this time that high winds were causing damage in Atlantic. Another tornado was also spotted on the ground in north central Montgomery County. The path of that tornado crossed into Cass County south of Massena, then went into Adair County near Bridgewater and Fontanelle, then into Greenfield. A State Proclamation for Individual Assistance was also declared for this storm. People with storm damage need to contact Emily McDermott at West Central for assistance.

Respectfully Submitted



RAGBRAI will overnight in Atlantic on Monday, July 22nd. Kennon has met with Cumberland and Massena officials to discuss their plans for public safety. The other towns involved with RAGBRAI have been pass-thru towns recently, so there is less concern about their readiness. Kennon said he needs to finalize Countywide Emergency Plans and work with Bobbi Jo and Devin Hogue to complete Communications Plans for this event.

The 700 paging project is still being worked on. Severe weather has diverted technicians, but they will eventually get back to testing here in Cass County. Cass County hosted a State facilitated HazMat Tabletop Exercise on May 16th. It was well attended and counts as a required exercise for Cass EMA.

Kennon just got word that the Cass Co. Rural First-Aid program will receive a \$50,000 grant without requiring a \$25,000 match. This is very good news, since it appeared that we would not be able to come up with the match.

Old Business: None.

New Business: Bobbi Jo had talked to Board members about raising the entry level pay for dispatchers from \$20.00/hr to \$23.00/hr.

M/S/C O'Brien / Behrens to raise pay rate for new hires to \$23.00/hr and raise pay rate for existing dispatchers currently under \$23.00/hr. Carried unanimously.

Bobbi Jo would like to offer new hires a week's vacation up front to help entice them to come work for us from an existing job where they are giving up their accrued benefits. Bobbi Jo was instructed to incorporate this into the employee handbook and bring back to the Board for approval.

Finally, Bobbi Jo would like to have a shift differential for overnights. The Board was not receptive to a wage differential, but would be more open to a possible Comp Time arrangement. Bobbi Jo will need to come up with a proposal or options for the Board to consider at a future meeting.

Public comments or concerns: None.

M/S/C Green / Sarsfield to adjourn a 6:34pm

Respectfully Submitted

