

**SIRCOMM LAW ENFORCEMENT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

September 26, 2019

1000hrs

Jerome County Sheriff's Office

2151 Tiger Dr. Jerome, ID

Present:

Sgt. Dave Benefiel-Twin Falls Sheriff's Office/Sircomm
Chief Dan Hall-Jerome Police Dept
Rebecca Simpson-Director, Sircomm
Chief Deputy Don Newman- Twin Falls Sheriff's Office
James Pennington-Magic Valley Paramedics
Capt. Scott Bishop- Twin Falls Sheriff's Office
Chief Dave Fisher-Gooding Police Dept
Capt. Scott Bishop-Twin Falls Sheriff's Office
Capt. Gary Taylor-Jerome Co Sheriff's Office
Sheriff George Oppedyk- Jerome Co Sheriff's Office
Mariann Schiewe-Sircomm
Capt. Duane Rubink-Jerome Police Dept

1. Meeting called to order at 1007hrs

It was noted by Chief Hall that once again quorum was not present. He stated that he had been in contact with Chief Perry and Sheriff Gough and they would not be present and the lack of participation has been the ongoing issue that has led to Law Enforcement and SIRCOMM into the current situation and will continue until the agencies get involved.

2. Approval of the minutes from August 15th 2019:

Chief Hall asked that everyone look them over the minutes sent out and contact him if any necessary changes or corrections were needed.

3. SIRCOMM Operations Report

(a) Sgt. Benefiel: Radio & Tower Update

Sgt. Benefiel reported that the consoles were in and new monitors had been ordered and scheduled to be installed. On the tower sites he reported that HVAC, propane and generator maintenance work was scheduled for all tower sites with reports on current status of equipment and repairs needed at each site being shared with the Joint Powers Board with a regular maintenance schedule being put in place for the future.

The equipment was in for the intercom system between the city and SIRCOMM just awaiting configuration.

The Zuercher AVL mapping system has been ordered and will be installed when available with training at a later date.

Radio frequencies and programming were discussed. There has been some inaccurate information handed out and they are awaiting clarification on the proposed frequencies regarding the Magic Valley Emergency Frequency and the OSCAR frequency and who will have use of that frequency as it tends to be overused per Chief Hall.

It was also suggested that before the frequency change occurs, all agencies be brought together for complete understanding of the changes and use of the new frequencies. Chief Hall asked the Director to set this in motion as the questions and concerns must be addressed before the frequency changeover and the path they will be taking.

It was stated by Chief Deputy Newman, that with all of the issues surrounding SIRCOMM, and the Law Enforcement Advisory Committee attempting to assist in resolving some of the major issues, that he felt it was very disrespectful that a member of the Joint Powers Board was not in attendance as requested. Many of the issues being addressed by the LEA pertain to decisions made the Board Members without consideration of the major impact on the agencies. The consensus is that the LEA needs to have more input and considerations into the decisions being made that affect all of the agencies SIRCOMM serves.

Chief Hall asked that follow up on the status of the Magic Valley Emergency Channel, The OSCAR Frequency and a meeting with Intermountain Communications and all agencies on the projected frequency changes.

(b) Director Simpson-Staffing/Center Update:

The Director shared two part time positions had been filled, with Cameron already training on the floor and Taylor to work as his schedule allows and that interviews were held last week with three candidates moving forward.

Deputy Director Applications have been coming in, with one viable candidate being looked at.

The Director stated that Sgt. Benefiel would be leaving SIRCOMM on the 10th of October and asked if there were any suggestions as to a new Project Manager at SIRCOMM. Sean had held a position that was more or less a project manager overseeing the towers, equipment and other projects, and that position has not been filled. A person with IT/Radio Equipment background is being sought as Intermountain Communications are not on site.

Chief Hall stated that at this time the Joint Powers Board is in violation of ILLETS regulations by not including the Law Enforcement Community in all of these decisions. Ideas get passed around and decided on without ever coming up in a meeting or being discussed with the agencies that will be affected, and it has to stop. Law Enforcement was originally set up as having a voice in the guidance of SIRCOMM and that has been lost, and as to why is not the issue. It needs to change if SIRCOMM is to continue. Law Enforcement must play a role in the decision making at SIRCOMM.

Sheriff Oppedyk added that SIRCOMM is in a crisis and it will continue until something changes. This has been ongoing for years. Confidence in SIRCOMM's Leadership is not there. The Board is not aware of the day to day operations and that is not their main focus. The agencies served by SIRCOMM need to be involved in the decision making as every decision the Board makes has an effect on each and every agency. The agencies are very frustrated and feel their ideas/input may be of more importance than decisions being made without any consideration of the outcomes effect on those being served. What happened to the Operations Board that was originally set up to work hand in hand with the Board?

Chief Hall and Chief Deputy Newman stated that they have gone back to the beginning of SIRCOMM and are unable to find when and why these changes occurred; however, this will be addressed in the near future.

Chief Hall stated that there was concern for the hiring of a Deputy Director and a Project Manager; however, Law Enforcement's focus is on dispatching. Officer safety depends on those dispatchers. He advised that it was stated that SIRCOMM stands to lose 2-3 dispatchers and that is critical.

Rebecca shared the current numbers at nine and three part time. She also stated that this situation was created before she arrived and it will take time to get the numbers back up. Three candidates are in the background process but if hired they are still six to eight months away from completing the required training.

Chief Deputy Newman stated that with nine dispatchers working, some of them have had to work eighteen days straight without a day off and this is not acceptable. It creates a dangerous situation and burn out. He asked if any of the candidates in background check had previous dispatch experience as to possibly fast track their training, to which the Director stated no.

Mariann did share that one of the new part time dispatchers was a rehire and the possible candidate from city would only need to be trained on the new Zuercher System and not have to go through full training. It was also noted, that the recent hire of the part time dispatcher from Fire/EMS, was already on the floor with his trainer. His years of experience as a first responder have moved him forward much faster than expected. The 911 Dispatch Class being offered at CSI should also assist in the acceleration of the training process as they will have the basic fundamentals if hired.

Chief Hall asked the Director to evaluate the training/hiring process and as to why the situation continues. He has also asked if more than three could be hired and utilized until training was available. It appears that even when three are hired, not all three make it to the end.

Sheriff Oppedyk reiterated that this is just a vicious circle and needs to stop. The staffing shortage has gone on for five years and it needs to stop. Something has to change. Hiring three will not necessarily result in three new dispatchers at the end of the training process

Chief Deputy Newman asked the Director if the Board gave her the latitude to run SIRCOMM as needed. He stated he was taken aback by the request for approval of a form change on her part at the last Board meeting. This installs a lack of confidence in the leadership at SIRCOMM, and with no interview or input from any of the agencies on the hiring of the last two Directors, a real concern has arisen. It was a consensus that this issue needs to be addressed with the Joint Powers Board. The LEA would like to advise a reconstruction of the relationship between the Law Enforcement Advisory Committee and the Joint Powers Board regarding the operations of SIRCOMM.

c) CAD Specialist Hunsaker: Zuercher/CAD Update:

Ms. Hunsaker was not in attendance; however, Sheriff Oppedyk stated that he was finally able to access the new CAD System as of Tuesday and Chief Hall stated his biggest complaint is that the system is very slow to update. If he logged in at this time, calls from the morning would be available. It does not run in real time.

4. Zuercher Mapping System: James Pennington-Magic Valley Paramedics

Mr. Pennington shared that with SIRCOMM purchasing the Zuercher Mapping System for mobile CADS an update was available on the use and options of the System.

Chief Hall was called out of the meeting & Chief Deputy Newman stepped in for him.

Mr. Pennington stated the new system was user friendly and was proving to be very accurate and he felt it was a better fit than the GeoComm System had been both for the users and for dispatch as it will show the nearest unit available with the integration of all three agencies on every call. Mr. Pennington offered to assist in setting up the system with anyone agency needing assistance or inquires on the use of the system.

5. Discussion and/or approval of proposed changes in bylaws.

a. Next steps for Law Enforcement Advisory Committee

b. LEA future involvement with Sircomm Operations

A quorum was not present & it was noted by Chief Deputy Newman that this needed to change on the Law Enforcement side if changes with the ongoing situation with SIRCOMM was going to be made. He also shared that for the last two meetings that a representative from the Joint Powers Board was asked to attend and the Commissioners have chosen not to attend with very weak or no excuse being given. It was stated that the Law/Fire and EMS Community's need to be represented and be a part of decisions made by the Joint Powers Board. These issues need to be addressed immediately, and if Law Enforcement is not in opposition in hiring an attorney to represent the LE Agencies regarding SIRCOMM's violation of Idaho Code regarding Law Enforcements' role in the operations of SIRCOMM, they are willing to do so. The last agreement appears to be from 1998 with many amended By-Laws in between.

Chief Deputy Newman asked those present to assist in Capt. Bishop, Chief Hall and himself in preparing a presentation for the JPB meeting on October 10th requesting representation on the board in order to accomplish the successful operations of SIRCOMM. It was reiterated, that this is a critical situation and must be handled as such. Involvement is of upmost importance.

6. New LEA Chairman Oct 1, 2019

Action Item: Election of Co-Chair

As of October 1, 2019 Sheriff Oppedyk is the new Chairman of the Law Enforcement Agency; Due to with the lack of quorum, a co-chair cannot not be elected at this time.

7. Agency Reports/Agency Updates:


It was shared that Chief Hall had received notice of the loss Sgt. Rasmussen. No other details were known.

Director Simpson stated that she understands and shares the frustrations the LEA have voiced. She acknowledged that there seems to be a real disconnect, and that the situation has been ongoing.

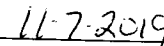
Chief Deputy Newman agreed that issues were inherited by the new Director. He suggested that possibly more guidance and staffing support, such as a Deputy Director and Project Manager are needed for a successful operation, with everyone knowing what they are responsible for. A lot of damage has been done and it is not going to clear up without change. He once again asked for more involvement and support from all agencies and especially Law Enforcement in order to prevent a crisis. All present were asked to attend the next Joint Powers Board Meeting on October 10th at the Jerome County Sheriff's Office.

8. Next Meeting Date: October 17, 2019 Location: Jerome Co. Sheriff Office

Meeting Adjourned: 1145hrs



LE Advisory Chairman



Date