Wyoming Public Safety Communications Commission

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Education Session Minutes

An education session was held for the Public Safety Communications Commission (PSCC) on Tuesday, May 2, 2023. The group toured the Sweetwater County Combined Communications Center in Green River and the Blairtown WyoLink tower site. The tour began at 1:15 p.m.

The following commission members were present, constituting a quorum.

Paul Bertoglio, Commissioner	Karl Germain, Commissioner
Matt Carr, Commissioner	Monte McClain, Commissioner
Mike Choma, Commissioner	Dwane Pacheco, Secretary
Jonathan Downing, Commissioner	Cindi Shank, Commissioner
Phillip Franklin, Commissioner	Darin Westby, Ex Offico

Commissioners Mark Harshman and Owen St. Clair were absent.

The following WYDOT staff and guests were present and participated in the session.

Nathan Smolinski, *Chief Technology Officer*	Aimee Binning, *911 Planning Coordinator*
Mark Kelly, *Emergency Communications Manager*	Rick Hawkins, Executive Director, SCCC
Neil Gardiner, *WyoLink Support Manager*	David Halter, IT Director, SCCC
Kimberly Chapman, *Commission Secretary*	Jason Gilmor, *WyoLink Office*

<u>Tour of Sweetwater County Combined Communications Center (SCCC)</u>
Messrs. Hawkins and Halter gave the commission a tour of the SCCC and provided an overview of the center, its history, and its operations.

The SCCC is governed by the Sweetwater County Combined Communication Joint Powers Board (SCCJPB), which is comprised of nine members—with three representatives from Green River and Rock Springs, and three representatives from Sweetwater County. The county and the two cities provide funding for the center through a funding formula based on call volume and population. SCCC staff are employed by the SCCJPB.

Messrs. Halter and Hawkins are part of the Next Generation 911 (NG911) working group. Mr. Halter said the SCCC will follow the state's NG911 plan when one is developed. He shared that the center, and most all agencies, switched to FirstNet for data connectivity. To his knowledge, Sweetwater County was the first to tie FirstNet's push-to-talk system to WyoLink.

The SCCC is set up with eight dispatch stations, with an additional three backup stations at the Sweetwater County Sheriff's Office in Rock Springs. The center uses four to five dispatchers per shift and five people are assigned to each of the four crews.

The SCCC has a data center onsite and there is also a backup in Rock Springs.

Each workstation has three computers: one runs the computer aided dispatch (CAD) software, another for radio, and a third for phones. Four of the monitors at each station are dedicated to CAD, one monitor displays radio communications, and a final monitor displays phone calls. Three tabs are always open on the radio screen for law enforcement, fire departments and EMS, and pagers. The National Warning System is tied into the consoles so any dispatcher can respond to calls.

Mr. Hawkins explained how the work is divided during a shift. Three of the workstations are grouped together and each station is dedicated to monitoring radio feeds from law enforcement in Rock Springs, Green River, and the county. The remaining station is dedicated to phones and fire departments/EMS. The SCCC uses a mixed shift schedule with dispatchers working six, 10, and 12 hour shifts.

Mr. Halter stated that of the calls received in 2022, about 90 percent were placed on mobile devices. Of those calls, an estimated 70 percent came in with E911 Phase II data. Mr. Halter said the E911 data received varies by carrier; some are doing better than others. If the center receives a phone number, the dispatcher may query a service call Rapid SOS to determine the GPS location of the caller.

While the SCCC has conventional channels available, Mr. Hawkins said that the center is very close to running 100 percent through WyoLink. He said that the center has also successfully tested WyoLink paging. The SCCC may receive text messages from mobile devices, but cannot send text messages to callers.

The group was also allowed to see the server room before the tour concluded at 2:07 p.m. The group traveled to Rock Springs for a tour of the Blairtown WyoLink tower.

Tour of Blairtown WyoLink Tower
Mr. Smolinski provided the commission with a complete tour of the site, including the tower and the shelter. One side of the shelter houses WyoLink GTR repeaters, the DC power unit, the alarm system, and all of the electrical infrastructure and the transfer switch. The alarm is programmed to notify the WyoLink office of shelter access, internal temperature fluctuations, and power outages and generator use.

The generator occupies the other half of the shelter and it supplies power to the site in case of outages. Like all WyoLink sites, the generator is tested once each week to ensure it is in good, working order.

Mr. Gilmor demonstrated a drone-conducted tower inspection and answered commissioner questions. The drone is able to capture many detailed images as it flies a pre-programmed pattern around the tower from top to bottom. Technicians are then able to review the images to determine what needs to be repaired, gather the necessary tools, and make fewer climbs to perform necessary maintenance.

The session concluded and adjourned at 3:30 p.m.