

UMATILLA MORROW RADIO & DATA DISTRICT  
BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING  
Umatilla County Fire District #1, Station 23  
September 1, 2020 1:30pm

Present: Director Pratt Director Kennedy Director Roxbury (telephonically)  
Director Matlack Director Lieuallen (telephonically)

Guests: John Bowles, Morrow County Sheriff's Office (telephonically)  
Scott Skibness, RACOM  
Bob Simmons, CDX

Staff: Shawn Halsey, Rosanna Brown

- I. Call to Order and Recognition of Guests: The meeting was called to order at 1:31pm.
- II. Changes/Additions to the Agenda: None
- III. Business from Guests: None
- IV. Consent Agenda
  - A. Minutes of the meetings from August 4, 2020
  - B. System Administrator's Report
    1. Unit Tracking Sheet
    2. District Income Review
    3. District Expenditures Review
    4. District Bank Statements/Checks Review
    5. LGIP

*A motion to accept the consent agenda was made by Director Matlack and seconded by Director Kennedy.*

*Director Lieuallen: Aye*

*Director Pratt: Aye*

*Director Roxbury: Aye*

*Director Kennedy: Aye*

*Director Matlack: Aye*

- V. Old Business
  - A. LMR System Project Update
    1. Mobile Installation

The mobile installs in Umatilla County were completed. The install project was paused so Shawn could work on some system issues. One of the issues was a bonk received 2 seconds after PTT was accepted. Since it was a Phase 2 issues, Shawn moved the system back to Phase 1 temporarily. Scott sent log files to Tait and they were able to recreate the problem. They have seen the same issue with other customers to a lesser degree, and they were engineering a solution to it. The relief patch was expected to be out that week and, after testing in Houston, it would be given to the District. Shawn planned to test it when received. Installs would restart September 14<sup>th</sup> in Heppner and Mission.

Director Roxbury asked if this was a typical situation or totally unexpected. Rod explained that Racom identified the bug for Tait and provided evidence to help pinpoint where the problem was.

Director Kennedy asked why the installs had to stop during this time and Shawn explained that he didn't want more agencies to experience the issue so he didn't want to continue installs until it was fixed. He noted that the District was still on track to be finished with the install project in October. When the mobiles were all installed, he planned to move on to desk sets and base stations.

2. Console Priority

Shawn reported that the talk time had been cut down from 30 second to 20 seconds. They had discussed 15 seconds, but Shawn found that users were being cut off. He also reported that a PTT tone had been added to the consoles and that was

helping to prevent cut offs. The Board asked Shawn about customer satisfaction and Shawn explained that he was taking complaints and reviewing them with CDX and Racom every morning, during their 8am call.

An example of this was a complaint from Pendleton Police Department. A user was unable to get into the system during a citizen contact. Rod reviewed the logs and found that every time the user made an attempt, someone else was already keyed up, usually a dispatcher but also other users. Rod confirmed that 2 users could not key up at the same time. An attempt while someone was already on would result in a denied call. Regarding this particular incident, 4 of the calls denied included users that were not involved in that incident directly and 1 supervisor. Console priority wins out in the system, so if a dispatcher keys up, they would take the channel even if someone was already on the air. Director Roxbury was concerned about this feature. Scott explained that this feature was P25 compliant and to change it would require a specialized configuration and software, making it nonstandard and non-compliant with P25. In response to Director Lieuallen's question, Rod confirmed that this was the case for every talk group, system-wide.

In response to Director Roxbury's question, Shawn explained that when the 450 system was new it worked the same way. It changed over time as upgrades were made to the system, but it was still analog at its core. Those differences within the system took away the console priority function, making it so users could talk over dispatch. Director Matlack expressed concern with a user being cut off by Dispatch, while in the middle of running someone with a very long name and asked if the solution was to unkey and rekey to finish. Rod noted that some users will say "break" to tell Dispatch that they are coming back to continue their traffic. Director Roxbury thought that would be difficult for volunteer firefighters, as they currently tend to talk over each other but Shawn noted that he received positive feedback during the last couple of fires. Shawn stressed that there had to be a limit on talk time and discipline was more important now. He acknowledged that there would be complaints from users that are used to being able to key up over users already on air. Shawn would continue to notify the Board of complaints. Director Roxbury felt that users would have to become accustomed to the way the new system worked and that training was very important. The complaints would come in for a while as users experienced being cut off by the time limit or getting bonks when trying to key up. Scott noted that they were already seeing dispatchers making corrections to work with the new system.

Shawn also noted that many users that were currently getting multiple bonks a day would see that number go down as soon as all of the users are on the new system and the patches weren't necessary. He also noted that the sound of the bonk could be shortened. Director Kennedy had noticed that, while scanning, he missed traffic from his office because of traffic from UCSO. That was a priority scan issue.

The Board discussed the issue of a blanket message to all users on a talk group and whether a response from each user should be requested by Dispatch before the message was given. It was decided that it would take too long and it was a better solution to use "all units be advised" and then give the message. It was also noted that this was an operational question for the agencies to make a decision on. Scott noted that there were many large departments that used this system, as it was P25 compliant, and they were able to communicate with their units in the field.

Shawn brought up another issue for discussion. Currently users had to initiate changes to the radio to approve OTAP. It was not going well because users were not approving the updates, so radios were not getting new programming. The vendor had suggested having the updates load automatically but Shawn was concerned that it was a safety issue to have radios start an update when a user had traffic. It would be 30 seconds of downtime on that radio for an update. It was especially an issue for fire and emergency services. Director Kennedy suggested that users check for updates at the start of their shifts and it was agreed that that would work for law enforcement more than fire. Shawn explained that the difficulty with the updates was that radios weren't being updated so troubleshooting was more difficult. Issues that should have been fixed with the update could not be checked if the radio had not received the new program. Eventually the system will be fully functional and there would not be as many updates to push through, but they were important when working through any bugs. Scott noted that, when trying to figure out timing issues in the settings, they needed to look at the logs to check on the changes but the radios had not been updated so the logs weren't helpful. Shawn hoped for users to be trained to approve the updates at some point during their shifts.

Director Pratt suggested pushing updates through during the lowest traffic time, per agency, and have Dispatch notify the users that the update was coming.

Scott also said that they could see which radios had not been updated, so they knew which agencies were not getting it done. Director Kennedy suggested Shawn time the updates with the shift changes at each agency and he also requested that notice for the update not be sent out over RIMS. Director Pratt felt that the fire/ems agencies would be the most difficult and Shawn agreed. The Board directed Shawn to decide if the updates were automatically loaded at power up or if users had to approve them.

## B. Coombs Project Update

The foundation for the site had not been poured yet. Final drawings were expected soon and Shawn hoped the project would be complete before winter.

C. PGG Anchor Inspection

Shawn provided the inspection report in the packet. The inspector dug up anchor rods and the report indicated that the corrosion was not as bad as it had been at Coombs Canyon. They estimated 15 years left on the rods. Shawn requested solutions for how to cut down on the rate of corrosion and was told that the rods could be replaced and some kind of corrosion prevention technique could be used to give more than 15 additional years. The other option to consider was replacing the tower in the next 10 years, with a self-supporting tower. In response to Director Roxbury's question, Shawn said the 15 year estimate was based on the current rate of corrosion and the thickness of the rod. He noted that weather was not a concern, as it was the maximum torque of the tower that was considered. The current rods still had the capacity for a heavier load.

VI. New Business

A. Safety Review

There were no safety issues reported. Shawn noted that cooler weather was coming and he reported that the District vehicles had good tires for winter weather. He also noted that board meetings could be held by phone or video conference to avoid driving in bad weather.

B. Madison Butte Repeater

Brett was at Madison Butte, looking at a perspective install for a repeater there. A quote from Codan was included in the packet and Shawn recommended approval for the purchase, including the duplexer.

*A motion to accept the quote from Codan, in the amount of \$12,485.68, was made by Director Pratt and seconded by Director Kennedy.*

*Director Lieuallen: Aye*

*Director Pratt: Aye*

*Director Roxbury: Aye*

*Director Kennedy: Aye*

*Director Matlack: Aye*

VII. Open Discussion

Shawn reported that the District's 2012 Tahoe was quickly losing its usable life and it had become especially noticeable in the last couple of weeks. It was on its second transmission and had 160,000 miles on it. Shawn noted that there was some money in the vehicle line, but more would have to be moved from contingency to purchase a new vehicle. The Board agreed that it was a better decision to replace the vehicle, than to spend more money fixing it. Shawn was considering a Dodge half-ton, gas pick up from Dodge with a price of about \$25,000. A similar truck with a diesel engine would be about \$40,000. He planned to have a proposal at the next board meeting.

John Bowles asked Shawn to confirm the installation dates for Morrow County and Shawn said he would keep him notified of any changes to the schedule

Director Roxbury expressed his frustration about the radio system issues that had come up, but he appreciated all of the work being put in and everyone's patience.

VIII. Adjourn

*A motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:38pm was made by Director Kennedy and seconded by Director Matlack.*

*Director Lieuallen: Aye*

*Director Pratt: Aye*

*Director Kennedy: Aye*

*Director Roxbury: Aye*

*Director Matlack: Aye*

Next Meeting  
October 6, 2020 1:30pm  
Location: TBA