

JOINT DISPATCH BOARD
Communications & Technology Building
1024 S. 9th St., Manitowoc, Wis.
January 3rd, 2019

Attendance: Manitowoc County Emergency Medical Services Association Chairperson Theresa Becker, Manitowoc County Sheriff Rob Hermann, Valders Fire/Ambulance Chief Chris Dallas, Two Rivers Fire/Rescue Assistant Chief Dave Murack, Manitowoc Police Department Deputy Chief Rob Barbier, Manitowoc County Sheriff Elect Dan Hartwig, Manitowoc Fire/Rescue Chief Todd Blaser, Manitowoc County Communications Engineer Bill Jones, Manitowoc County DPW Director Gerry Neuser, Manitowoc County Information System Manager Kody Burg, Manitowoc County Aegis Systems Administrator Scott Blumreich, Manitowoc County Aegis Systems Administrator Nick O'Connor, Two Rivers Police Chief Joe Collins, Kiel Police Chief Dave Funkhouser, Mishicot Police Chief Paul Granger, Manitowoc County Supervisor Randy Vogel, Manitowoc County JDC Supervisor Angela Obry, and Manitowoc County Emergency Services Director Travis Waack.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Theresa Becker at 9:00 a.m. and Sheriff Elect Dan Hartwig was introduced.

Current Agenda and Minutes of Prior Meeting: A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda and minutes of the October meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment: No one present wished to speak, therefore public input was closed at 9:01 a.m.

Radio System Policy & Interoperability: Manitowoc County Emergency Services Director Travis Waack shared the JDC's WISCOM radio is still scheduled to be programmed to include talk groups for communicating with hospitals, State radiological field teams, and the State MABAS center, but they are currently waiting on the vendor to complete the work. Waack shared they are also waiting on the vendor to complete an evaluation on how the current system can be programmed to include VHF interoperability frequencies that would be needed in a larger incident.

Waack shared that he is considering re-allocating the current emergency management repeated VHF channel for use as a second repeated VHF working channel for fire / EMS use. This would help alleviate radio system congestion when there are two incidents ongoing simultaneously in the county that require on-scene coordination over a wider area than what the fireground channels can provide. Input will be solicited from the fire / EMS community on this change as it could require radio re-programming.

Waack also shared that he is working to develop a method for evaluating and approving requests for usage of the county radio system through the Emergency Services Division.

JDC Updates

Manitowoc County Emergency Services Director Travis Waack shared that the dispatch center is fully staffed with the newest dispatcher, Amanda, starting in early December to replace Ann who is retiring February 1st. Also, as of January 1st, all dispatchers are full-time in the center, which will help provide additional coverage during busy times.

Waack also reported that a comprehensive review of the task sheets used in the center has been completed and the task sheets are now being signed off on by staff in batches. This review was conducted by collaboration between the dispatch staff, supervisors, and the director and will be an annual process going forward for continued improvement.

Waack also reported that an effort is being made to more proactively dispatch fire and EMS to vehicle accidents where injuries are unknown. Dispatch staff have been encouraged to use judgement in assuming there may be injuries on high velocity or high mechanism crashes, even if callers are unsure of injuries. Staff have also been encouraged to make every effort to use the Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) protocol for vehicle accidents where bystanders could potentially identify injuries and render aid. Fire departments will also be dispatched along with EMS to ensure proper resources are on-scene for vehicle accidents with injury or a high likelihood of injury.

Waack also reported that the EMD meeting was held immediately prior to the Joint Dispatch Board meeting and will continue to be held on that schedule. The purpose of the EMD meeting is to review calls that may require changes to policy.

Finally, Waack reported that a water rescue jurisdiction map will be created so that the most appropriate fire/rescue department can be dispatched for water rescue calls.

Update on MABAS: Manitowoc County Emergency Services Director Travis Waack shared that four tabletop MABAS drills have been planned for fire departments in Manitowoc County to help increase proficiency with MABAS protocols. The drills will also include a classroom component with refreshers on radio system usage and incident command system protocols. This is taking place in coordination with efforts to increase MABAS proficiency in the dispatch center.

Update on Communications Equipment: Manitowoc County Communications System Engineer Bill Jones shared that the project to add redundant microwave links has been delayed by the vendor, but that once completed it will increase the resiliency of the radio system.

Jones also shared that the backhaul conversion from a T1 based system to IP based system has been approved and is being scheduled with the vendor. This will help reduce the recovery time if there are momentary failures of the microwave links, such as during intense thunderstorms. The work should be completed prior to the spring storm season.

Finally, Jones shared that work is being done to allow use of the emergency button feature on portable radios on the Manitowoc County Fire Service Main frequency. This feature is not currently enabled. Departments will be notified when this feature is operational. Chris Dallas thanked Bill for his work towards enabling this feature.

Information Systems Updates Related to the Joint Dispatch Center: Manitowoc County Aegis Systems Administrator Scott Blumreich reported that progress is being made to replace the message switch as the end of service life on the current switch is this January. Replacement of the switch will require some brief downtime of CAD, but this will be coordinated with the agencies. Agencies that financially partnered to replace the switch were thanked for their cooperation.

Blumreich also reported that there are still a few issues with the CAD system that was implemented in March. These are being actively worked on with the vendor.

Blumreich also reported that the Cellcom data cards used in the squads are nearing their end of life and agencies will need to make a decision on what cards will be used in the future.

The new Manitowoc County Information Systems Manager, Kody Burg, introduced himself and the new Aegis Systems Administrator, Nick O'Conner. Nick replaced Matt Fricke who recently left his position.

Proposed New Date for April 2019 Meeting: Chairperson Theresa Becker entertained a discussion regarding the date of the April meeting since Manitowoc County Emergency Services Director Travis Waack will be out of town at a conference. A new date of April 18th, 2019, was selected and agreed upon by the group.

Adjournment: A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Travis Waack
Director
Manitowoc County Emergency Services Division