Logan County Commissioners Work Session
March 8, 2016

Present: Rocky Samber, Gene Meisner, Dave Donaldson, Alan Samber, Callie Jones, Forrest Hershberger, Valerie Richards, Diana Korbe, Walt Hardesty Sterling Communications Center Director, Mike Brownell of Fleming Rural Fire Department, Gary Schmidt, Fleming Fire Department, Dean Koester, Peetz Rural Fire Department, Dave Boerner Fleming Fire Department,

Chairman Samber called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

REVIEW BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA - The Board reviewed the Business meeting agenda for March 8, 2016.

The meeting recessed at 8:55 a.m. and reconvened at 9:30 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS WORK SESSIONS - Commissioner Donaldson moved to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2016 work session as amended. Commissioner Meisner seconded and the motion carried.

REVIEW DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES SCHEDULE OF BILLS - Valerie Richards met with the Board to review the Department of Human Services schedule of bills for March 8, 2016. The Board approved all bills as presented.

REVIEW SCHEDULE OF BILLS - Diana Korbe met with the Board to review the schedules of bills dated March 8, 2016. The Board approved all bills as presented.

Clean Energy Collective (CEC) - The Board contacted references provided by CEC. The City of Carbondale and the City of Lakewood have been contracted with CEC for a short time. Lakewood paid for its solar panels so the payoff will take about 12 years before a profit is realized. Collection at this point does not appear to be quite as much as anticipated. The Board is concerned with the 20-year commitment. Subsequent Boards may not get the benefit anticipated. Some type of contingency clause or non-appropriations clause in the contract is desirable. The Board would like to see the contract before it signs a letter of intent. Technology advancements in a 20-year period could be monumental.

COMMUNICATIONS CENTER FEES/POLICY - Walt Hardesty Sterling Communications Center Director, Mike Brownell, Fleming Rural Fire Department, Gary Schmidt, Fleming Fire Department, Dean Koester, Peetz Rural Fire Department, Dave Boerner Fleming Fire Department all joined the meeting. The meeting was called to facilitate discussion concerning billings sent out by the Communications Center to rural departments.

Mr. Hardesty began by explaining the history of the Communications Center (CC) and why he became involved. Mr. Hardesty was asked to come in and trouble shoot problems at the CC and identified four key items needing correction: 1) Leadership, department head or supervisor; 2) CAD or Record keeping system; 3) Interagency communication breakdown; 4) Advisory Board
involving user agencies to talk about their issues.

An advisory board was resurrected from a board that used to exist. Representatives of Sheriff’s Office, Sterling PD, Sterling Fire, Rural Fire President, E911 and anyone having a monetary stake in the CC. The advisory board has no authority other than advisory capacity.

The advisory board discussed how the users of the CC were being billed. The formula used for the billing did not seem to make any sense so an equitable billing formula was created.

The City of Sterling pays maintenance and upkeep on equipment purchased by the E911 Authority Board.

The formula developed is based on the previous year’s call volume, split by percentage. This ensures that each entity is being billed based on the usage. The E911 Authority Board is also being billed a percentage. The other agencies that had never paid into the CC were the rural fire departments. The advisory board looked at the fact that most of the rural departments are on a limited budget. They came up with a 2% of the total CC budget to use as an amount to bill the rural departments. Averages of calls for the last five years of the CC and taking the percentage of calls used by rural fire. Then to make it even more equitable the 2% was divided by the number of calls for that year. Calls for the year 2014 2% split by rural departments divided by the number of calls for that year. That is how the number was determined for the billings. This discussion was discussed at several of the Fire Chief’s meetings last year. The advisory board felt that this was the best way to make it fair and equitable to all CC users.

Mr. Boerner asked when the CC was built, how much were rural departments thought about and what it would cost them and stated that the fee seemed steep at $50 per call. Another concern voiced by Mr. Schmidt was why the City of Sterling receives the payment. Mr. Hardesty explained that the CC was built and is run by the City of Sterling.

E911 contributes a small portion of the budget each year. They also provide training which has started this year, they make sure equipment is up to date. Mr. Hardesty also explained that the CC is now six years old and most of the equipment is at the end of its lifespan. The E911 Authority Board is working diligently to replace three very expensive pieces of equipment. Costs currently are determined to be $200,000 to replace the phone system $150,000 to replace the recorder system.

The E911 surcharge funds can pay for computers and software, training, etc., however it cannot pay salaries. The surcharge is mandated by the state on what it can be utilized for.

The Sterling PD also pays their share of approximately 54% of total call volume through the CC. The E911 pays approximately 3%, LCSO pays 31%, Sterling Fire 11% and the other 2% is split between the rural fire departments. The ambulance is included in Sterling Fire right now but will be broken out in the future with the new CAD system. The new CAD system has been in the works for about three years. Contracts were finalized last year and installation began in October 2016. They expect to go live with the system next Tuesday morning. The last system was
purchased in 1996. The new system has many more capabilities that will allow the mutual aid calls to be pinned down more accurately.

Mr. Brownell asked if departments called out to assist on a large grass fire whether it will be billed to them as their own fire or whether it is billed to the original department. Mr. Hardesty answered yes and no, the new CAD will assign a permanent number to the case. If the mutual aid is called an incident number will be assigned but will be tied to the case number. The number can be used to the advantage of the rural departments when determining actual number of calls responded to, but the number can also be disregarded with the original department responding getting the CC billing.

According to the advisory board bylaws representation gives the rural/volunteer fire departments one member. Ken McComb is the current representative. It was suggested that information needs to be shared by the Fire Chiefs to other board members.

Mr. Hardesty noted that the original billing letters were sent out to rural departments on October 6, 2015 so that departments had time to budget for the expense in the new year. It was questioned whether rural departments have a written agreement with the CC. It will need to be determine what entities have an IGA with the CC. The fire dept. representatives and Mr. Hardesty will check whether their IGA’s with the E911 Authority Board may address the CC.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:37 a.m.