



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

911 COMMUNICATIONS

Room 412 East
State Capitol

September 27, 2012
11:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

[The following is a summary of the September 27, 2012 meeting of the Special Committee on 911 Communications. The file copy of this summary has appended to it a copy of each document prepared for or submitted to the committee during the meeting. A digital recording of the meeting is available on our Web site at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc>.]

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Ballweg called the committee to order. The roll was called and a quorum was present.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Rep. Joan Ballweg, Chair; Sen. Robert Jauch, Vice Chair; Rep. Amy Sue Vruwink; Sen. Terry Moulton; and Public Members Jim Backus, Tracey Froiland, Paul Geiszler, James Jermain, Keith Kesler, Brian Landers, Pam McInnis, Todd Nehls, Jeff Ranous, and Richard Tuma.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED: Public Members Thomas Bychinski, Vicki Sanfelipo, and Bradley Welp.

COUNCIL STAFF PRESENT: Larry Konopacki, Senior Staff Attorney; and Chad Brown, Staff Attorney.

APPEARANCES: Pamela Hollick, Vice President of Regulatory, TW Telecom, Inc.

[Prior to the Special Committee's meeting, some members attended a tour of the Dane County Public Safety Communications Center provided by John DeJung and Paul Logan.]

Approval of the Minutes of the Special Committee's August 16, 2012 Meeting

Mr. Tuma moved, seconded by Mr. Jermain, that the minutes of the Special Committee's August 16, 2012 meeting be approved. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Presentations by Invited Speaker

Pamela Hollick, Vice President of Regulatory, tw telecom

Ms. Hollick described tw telecom and the services that the company provides, as well as discussing her role as president of the Midwest Association of Competitive Communications and tw telecom's membership in Wisconsin CALLS. Ms. Hollick described the relationship among tw telecom, incumbent local exchange carriers such as AT&T, and public safety answering points (PSAPs).

Ms. Hollick outlined some ways in which states interact with service providers and differences in possible funding mechanisms. She also stressed the need for reporting, oversight, and auditing controls on funding mechanisms, and a competitively neutral fee structure. She also outlined some considerations for the committee in making its recommendations, including recommendations related to state coordination, county 911 contracting, and related decision-making processes.

At the request of the Chair, Mr. Jermain augmented the testimony of Ms. Hollick with a description of the contract process between telecommunications service providers and counties for provision of services to PSAPs.

Committee members discussed the need for statewide contracting coordination for 911 telecommunications.

Discussion of Committee Assignment

Mr. Tuma and Mr. Jermain distributed information relating to a legislative proposal from 2008-09 that was aimed at developing funding for and coordination of 911 communications in the state. They discussed the progress made at that time and the state of the proposed legislation at the conclusion of the effort, and answered questions from committee members regarding the participants, the process, and the final product.

Committee staff introduced Memo No. 1 and invited comments from committee members relating to the options for legislative action outlined therein. Members of the committee expressed the need for statewide coordination and discussed the appropriate state agencies to oversee such coordination. Members then discussed the desirability of a statewide advisory board, the role that such a board would play, the process for appointing the board, and the composition of that board.

The Chair asked for committee opinion relating to development of a statewide plan. Committee members expressed support for the idea and gave input into the mechanisms for developing such a plan. There was discussion of the need for training and performance standards, and what level of such standards would be appropriate to implement statewide. The committee then discussed potential reporting requirements for a statewide 911 communications coordinator and the need for analysis of the current state of 911 communications.

At the request of the Chair, members who are directors of smaller PSAPs described their training procedures. The committee also discussed various aspects of PSAP staff training, including the difficulties involved in scheduling training, the relative value of different training models, and funding for training.

The committee discussed repurposing part of the existing Police and Fire Protection Fee to support training for 911 telecommunicators and other aspects of 911 service. Members also discussed the creation of a statewide funding mechanism consisting of a uniform, technologically neutral fee to replace the county-by-county landline fee system currently in place. The committee also explored the current funding situation in particular areas of the state and the time scale that is needed for the committee's recommendations relating to funding.

The Chair asked committee members for further input, and indicated that they should be in contact with her office or Legislative Council Staff should there be any other issues of interest.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

CB:ksm