

WORK SESSION
September 20, 2012

MINUTES
1:30 p.m.

Room 32, Courthouse

PRESENT: Commissioners Leslie Lewis, Kathy George, and Mary Stern

YCOM EXECUTIVE BOARD: Jack Crabtree, Paul May, Rita Baller (joining in progress)

STAFF: Laura Tschabold, Tim Svenson, Kellye Fetters, Carol Ann Hays, Steve Warden

Others: Janis Cameron, Ron Noble, Kent Taylor, Dennis Rogers, Marguerite Alexander, Bruce Hubbard, Patti Sauers

TOPIC: Transition of the radio system back to YCOM

Commissioner Leslie Lewis and Sheriff Jack Crabtree called the joint work session to order at 1:30 p.m.

Jack stated that the county had starting talking nine or ten months ago about moving the radio system back under the YCOM umbrella, and the purpose of this joint work session is to discuss ideas and suggestions and to get a recommendation from Janis Cameron.

Mary provided background information, stating that the radio system was originally managed by YCOM. She said that when the county took on the responsibility, there was nothing in writing to outline the time frame, unfortunately, but now that the levy and the grants are done, the county has upheld what it feels was its part of the bargain. Paul May pointed out that most of the assets are in the county's name and would have to be transferred to YCOM. Leslie agreed, explaining that the county passed the levy and only the county could apply for the Homeland Security Grants, but YCOM had owned and maintained all of the equipment up to that point and has always been in the driver's seat.

Janis stated that it has been more complicated than anticipated to get up to speed on the agreements and leases, but she has been able to call Laura Tschabold and Murray Paolo as needed. She said that she needs a little more time, but things are coming along and she is moving forward with daily operations, although no large-scale planning is being done because she was under the impression that the YCOM Board would first need to take action to approve the transition of management. She said that she would like to see the agreements stay in the county's name for now, and she would like to have a joint discussion with the YCOM Board about what comes next.

Jack stated that the YCOM Board is waiting for Janis, as the YCOM Director, to either lay out a transition plan and pull the project together or make a determination that the project is not feasible. He said that the plan should include details such as who would manage the radio shops, how much IT work would stay with the county, preparation of an RFP for technical work, and what resources Janis would need to do the things that the county is currently taking care of. He said that she has unlimited resources and can hire a consultant if necessary.

He stated that he trusts the commissioners and believes that they would manage the system well, but feels that YCOM is the best group to do that. Leslie agreed that it makes sense for YCOM to be the entity that manages the system, since YCOM users rely on it on a daily basis. She stated that all YCOM users should pay for management of the system, and a portion of the dues is set aside in a capital reserve for future radio expenses. She said that if YCOM does not manage the system, the county would have to hire a consultant to do so, and it would not be fair for the entire financial responsibility to be on the county.

Leslie stated that the system can remain on the county's network, and the county has very competent people that will continue to help with any network issues that come up. Mary stated that the county is a major player in the system and doesn't want it to fail, but Murray Paolo is the county's employee and has a lot of other work and huge projects going on. She said he will no longer be able to give up to 40% of his time for the radio system as he was previously directed by the commissioners to do, and cannot be in charge of the project, but will make time to help Janis as needed.

Janis said that her need for Murray's help will vary, but she has always managed the day-to-day issues, so that transition has happened seamlessly. She said that she has the resources to manage the radio shop well now. She explained that she doesn't have access to all of the historical information that she sometimes needs, however, and the group may want Murray's opinion on issues from time to time. She suggested that he be used in an advisory capacity and the county bill YCOM if his time exceeds a certain limit. Jack stated that Janis has been able to access Murray as much as she needs to at this point, but if she gets to a point where she doesn't have enough access, the YCOM Board could discuss the need to negotiate additional time.

Leslie stated that \$75,000 has been built into the budget to help Janis hire the expertise she needs for the project, and she was expecting to see a proposal from Janis as to what to do with that money. Janis stated that she is not to that point yet. She said she is still gathering information, but one of the next steps would be to hire someone to work on the redundant microwave piece. Paul stated that the intent of the mayor's letter was not so much to request that Murray manage the system, but that he be involved because of his historical and technical knowledge, so Janis wouldn't have to hire other consultants. Leslie stated that AdComm Engineering knows the system and its history as well as anybody, so they could provide all of the expertise Janis would need.

In response to a question from Paul about YCOM's access to county counsel services, Jack stated that he hopes YCOM can regain that access once the conflict between YCOM and the county is resolved. Mary stated that Rick Sanai had talked to the bar about the issue, and because YCOM and the county may have differing interests, he would be putting himself in a position where he could be disciplined. Laura said that the county's decision will probably be that he can't represent both entities. Paul stated that the issue should be revisited.

In response to a question from Dennis Rogers about YCOM's future ability to pursue grants, Leslie stated that the county is the second highest dues-paying member of YCOM and will always have an interest in listening to YCOM's proposals for Homeland Security Grant applications, which can only be applied for in the county's name. She said that most of that grant money has dried up,

but the county has always invited all interested agencies to submit proposals, which are then reviewed and prioritized by a technical committee.

Rita Baller stated that the transition plan should be made as a group, and it isn't fair to ask Janis to do things outside her area of expertise. She said that she isn't sure how YCOM would be able to afford to contract out those services. Jack stated that if there are additional costs that are currently being borne by the county, the dues would be increased to cover those, but he doesn't think the funding formulas would change.

Janis agreed that some responsibilities are outside her area of expertise, but said she feels fairly certain that she'll be able to access resources with that expertise to advise her as needed. She said that there is a lot of pressure, but she wants this to succeed. Mary stated that the county is not setting her up to fail and doesn't expect her to know everything, but it does expect her to call on those who do know. She added that, as a member of YCOM, it is the county's responsibility, along with the other members, to provide her with the resources to do that. Jack stated that the YCOM Board is not setting her up to fail, either. Janis stated that she would probably ask for one more shift supervisor in the next budget cycle to take on some of her responsibilities.

Kent Taylor stated that it would be helpful to both groups to have something in writing regarding what exactly the county wants YCOM to take over. He said that there have been rumors that YCOM would take over the towers and leases. Leslie stated that county's objective has been presented to YCOM both verbally and in writing, but the county could restate its previous letter to make it clear that the objective is for YCOM to take over management of the radio shop and the day-to-day activities of the radio system.

Mary stated that the system is working well now, but the group has to keep looking forward, and there is a lot of work to be done to make sure that every emergency responder has a connection.

The meeting adjourned at 14:43.

Anne Britt
Secretary