

Black Hawk County Emergency Management Commission Meeting

Thursday January 19, 2023

Meeting called to order at 4:00 pm

Roll Call of Members Present: Black Hawk Co. Board of Supervisors, Cedar Falls, Dunkerton, Elk Run Heights, Evansdale, Gilbertville, LaPorte City, Raymond, Waterloo.

Visitors Present: Jason Dolf Black Hawk County Drone Team, Michelle Weidner Black Hawk County Finance Officer, Michael Treinen Black Hawk County Attorney's Office, Amanda Fesenmeyer Black Hawk County Human Resources. Bridgett Wood City of Waterloo Finance Manager. Dan Trelka Board of Supervisor, Dustin Ganfield Cedar Falls Ward 5 Councilperson, Craig Berte Cedar Falls Public Safety Director, John Zolondek Lt. Cedar Falls Fire Department. Judy Flores, Communications Manager

Motion to approve the agenda as well as December Minutes by Gilbertville, second by Cedar Falls, motion carried.
Motion to approve December Commission minutes by Evansdale, second by Dunkerton, motion carried.

Coordinator report

December 2022/January 2023

Trainings

AlertIowa Administrator Training

Meetings

IDHRC (chair) monthly board, council, executive, financial committee meetings, ISICS board meeting (EMA appointee), Iowa Emergency Management Association Meeting, IEMA Awards Committee Meeting, STEP-C-ISAC, Safety Committees-Waterloo Schools, Black Hawk Co Department Head Meeting, IEMA 29C meeting.

Misc.

Organization

Response/Weather-

- NWS and NOAA testbed for the VBOT.

Planning-

- School Safety Assessments finalized.
- Started working on Emergency Support Functions for 2023 (ESF's 11,12,14,10 & RSF)

Exercise(s)-

- Working on Table Top TTX for Waterloo Airport Full Scale exercise in summer 2023
- Working with Sarah Eggerts from HSEMD to get an RSF Recovery workshop scheduled, looking at April, watch for invites.
- Working with CF Chief Zolondek on a Table Top Exercise for Feb. 2023
- Vigilant Guard Exercise with the Iowa National Guard

Mitigation-

- DNR debris management testbed. (Hudson)

Other-

- Mentoring new EMA from Delaware Co.
- Working with Kaitlin Emrich from Public Health on job description for shared EM/PH position.
- Quarterly reports for EMPG 2022
- Notice of Interest for EMPG 2023

Old Business

1. **Drone Update-** (Dolf) Has been quiet for call outs, have training next week for the team.
2. **Funding Options for 911 Communications-**Judy Flores with Consolidated Communications discussed the budget, there was a hand out spreadsheet budget numbers for fiscal year 2024, as well as proposed budgets at 125% as well as 150%, as well as budget with no changes. What is being looked at would be the 125 budgets. 150 budget was higher than everyone wanted. increases. There has also been looks at sharing the maintenance with the 911 board and Consolidated Communications. The radio system will need upgrades, as well as what future maintenance costs will be 911 cannot sustain those costs, there have also been talks on sharing that cost, where both entities could pay a portion of those costs. The 5-year plan was also sent, the 125 budget also includes the recommended staffing changes by DeltaWrX. Following the

commendations year one would hire one warrant clerk, year two hire another warrant clerk, dispatcher, and a dispatch supervisor. It is also noted that the hiring items are at the minimum requirements from DeltaWrx. With the 125 budget that does not fully get communications to year 5, but it does give a stable rate of taxation. With the 5-year plan it makes this as realistic as it can. There was question posed by the County Finance Director as to the salary and the amount that it increased in the proposed budgets. Judy was advised to, take her 100% budget, and add another 25% that will put funds in every year for hiring, that was a board directive. There is also some additional equipment and construction that will need to occur as the center expands with employees. There was also concern voiced regarding the revenues staying the same, Judy explained that contracts were being examined but the increases are hard to project, and revenues will not be increasing as much as the expenditures will be. There will be an insignificant increase to the revenue. There was a request that questions be posed by the commission members present, as there was also a large number of visitors present. Supervisor noted that the questions that are posed by those visitors present by county offices, finance, county attorney, and well as human resources are the questions that the county would like answers to. It was requested that the conversation currently stick with the present commissioners. Cedar Falls noted that it may be reasonable to stair step up to the 150 budgets, if we do that, we will have continual increases, the 125 is more practical of a tax level. When we get to year 4 and 5, we can address that when it comes. Sheriff noted that if there are no changes, we will be status quo no changes to Communications. Budget proposals are issued to be genuine and as sustainable as possible for the long-term goals. Gilbertville noted that it is better to have the one-time flat rate for the sustainable future. Dunkerton stated one of the hurdles to becoming an EMA levy for 23-24 what is it we need to work out? Sheriff stated we need to address counties issues, as well as legislative to 29C, one bill is based on the Mahaska County case. The second proposed bill would remove the supervisors from that decision and place the taxing authority directly on the EMA Commission. Neither bill has been voted upon yet, they are being assigned to committees. Cedar Falls inquired on the new Attorney General opinion on the Mahaska County Case. Sheriff will hopefully have a signed letter by next week. It is also the standing of the State 911 Director that the levy and the lawsuits were solely a Mahaska County item. Supervisor voiced that if those legislation changes are coming to not rush and push this through this year, wait to see what the changes will be and then work towards that levy for 25. Supervisor also voiced concerns that the conversations that have been taking place around this table as well as with individual mayors have not been relayed to all of the County Supervisors. Supervisors also stated that if we need to utilize the Levy that is great, but there are many unanswered questions regarding the 28E, and staffing, they would like the answers to the questions for the tax payers. The resolution that was passed by the Supervisor was not malice in any way it was to get the counties questions answered and everyone be on the same page. The Supervisors are not anti-levy they want the best funding options for communications possible. Cedar Falls noted that those that are on the EMA Commission are responsible for taking information back to their entities for explanation. Supervisors followed up by stating the items within the 28E are questions as to what is written in there, the county is responsible for the building, county is responsible for the employees that portion needs to be worked out. Evandale did reach out to supervisors and did not receive any correspondence in return. Human Resources also stated that the conversations on concerns, their office supports dispatch and the county. There are staffing concerns when it comes to the shared union between dispatch and the sheriff. HR would like opportunity to re-evaluate if communications should be governed as a separate entity (union), as well as make sure that the sworn to nonsworn employees stay within the limits for having the bargaining unit that we currently do. Waterloo stated that this conversation has been going on for 7 or 8 years, he was under the impression that do the independent study and have a proposal if anything needs to be worked out between HR and the Sheriff that is fine. We do not want to be in a situation where it's the cities verses the county. He was also surprised that the previous meetings that were held that there wasn't full attendance by the supervisors, he was under the impression that everything was fine due to lack of attendance. It was also noted that no mayors were contacted that there would be a resolution by the supervisors on the levy. Can we all come to the table iron this out and move on. Or is there a position that no matter what we work out or sit down together it will not be supported going into the next year. Supervisor stated no not at all, everyone is willing to have work sessions and get things ironed out but with the understanding that the levy may not go forward for fiscal year 24. It was noted that the Board of Supervisors are not anti-EMA levy, they would just

like the questions answered for the county. Waterloo noted that this levying option is a safety issue, we are operating below the means that communications should be as stated in the DeltaWrx study. The study also identified the best funding source possible to make the changes to improve the services provided to the citizens that live in and visit the county. Assistant County Attorney stated that the concern is that the employees stayed county employees even though they are working for a separate entity in the 28E. Black Hawk County was the first county in the state to consolidate, it was not an easy foot to achieve 28 years ago. There was discussion revolving around the current 28E and how it currently sits as well as how it could move forward. Waterloo stated they would be willing to sit down with HR, the County, and whoever else to get the changes forged to get this done. It was noted by Evansdale that the revenue stream is changing for everyone in the county, residents, rather than the just placing the funds on to the cities. County Finance stated that it would be great to have the legislation passed to make EMA its own taxing authority. County Finance stated there was previous years concerns that a city at this commission meeting had a budget protested to the state that it would having levying funds in reserve was not permissible by the state, we don't want that to occur for communications. It was requested by Cedar Falls, are we willing to have a work session with everyone involved to make this happen this year. Supervisor will have to coordinate with the other Supervisors to make this occur.

3. **EMA Budget follow-up**-unable to set hearing date at this time due to upcoming work session with the Board of Supervisors and Mayors.

New Business- Location of February meeting TBA

Items for General Discussion,

EMA Benson let all in attendance that there is currently another push to get people to sign up for AlertIowa, there are post cards that if anyone is interested, they can take to their offices for anyone to take, there is a QR code that anyone can scan, and it will take them to the sign-up page for Alert Iowa.

Mayors Association through the League of Cities, there will be a work session on Mayors working through emergency response in Polk County in March.

Next Meeting: February 16, 2023 @ 4PM

Motion by LaPorte City, second by Cedar Falls for adjournment at 5:15PM