

**WESTCOMM**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMBINED**  
**WITH FINANCE COMMITTEE AND**  
**OPERATIONS BOARD MEETING**

AUGUST 4, 2023 11:00 A.M.

GOOGLE MEET INFO: [HTTPS://MEET.GOOGLE.COM/RTB-QUHG-KZZ](https://meet.google.com/RTB-QUHG-KZZ)

PHONE: 1-563-503-5264 PIN: 441 478 364#

**In Attendance:**

Lyn Simmons, Longmeadow Town Manager  
John Beaulieu, Chicopee  
Erin Hastings, Executive Director, WESTCOMM  
Tom Christensen, Town Administrator, East Longmeadow  
Wendy Graves, Treasurer, WESTCOMM  
Paul Morrissette, Fire Chief, Monson  
Mark William, Police Chief, East Longmeadow  
Jim Martinez, Fire Chief, Ware  
Mike Pise, Chief of Staff, Chicopee  
JoAnn Kupiec, Admin Assistant, WESTCOMM  
Jay Parker, IT Director, WESTCOMM  
Ryan Quimby, IT Director, East Longmeadow  
John Dearborn, Fire Chief, Longmeadow  
Khristy Lord, Deputy Director, WESTCOMM  
Jennifer Wolowicz, Town Administrator, Monson  
Patrick, Major, Police Chief, Chicopee  
Chad Thompson, Purchasing Agent, Longmeadow

1. Meeting called to order 3:03 P.M. Roll call done: Present were Lyn Simmons, Tom Christensen, John Beaulieu, Jennifer Wolowicz and Stuart Beckley 5 Present.
2. Approval of meeting minutes: A motion was made by John Beaulieu and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Stuart Beckley to approve the minutes as written for 1/6, 1/13, 2/3, 2/24, 3/3, 4/14, 5/5, 5/12, and 6/8/2023. Rollcall was done, 3 yes, 1 abstention, 1 absent.

3. Old Business: Building Update: Design Documents are completed, they are estimated to be over budget approximately \$3-\$4 Million. There is a meeting next week to go line by line. The Building Committee will be there to go line by line, Erin will send out a PDF document to members asking.

Sheriffs Contract Update: In July 32 calls were taken, this is not impacting Operations at all. The Sheriff likes the services provided so far. The status of the build out – WESTCOMM is waiting on the check from the Sheriff's office before issuing a purchase order to start the build out. Once the purchase order is sent, a Scope of Work and time lines will be clear.

Radio Vendor: Erin met with the vendor after the last meeting. Since then 3 sites have been finished up in Monson. There is better coverage and better access. The equipment is up and running, it's currently in the testing phase for a 2 week period for both the Fire and Police Departments.

A backup microwave between Grattan and 110 Church Street, equipment ordered and licensed.

Grant for the Ware Radios: Waiting on a scope of work for that project. There is no time line as of yet, once the scope of work is received a purchase order can be issued. The scope of work is in development, once Erin receives it she will send out to the BOD and Ware.

Horizon contract for Monson and East Longmeadow: The work has been completed.

Ztron will be the next project and will be addressed at the Fire Ops meeting.

A conversation was had in regards to mobiles and portables being down and how that should be addressed. Erin stated that the Dispatchers have been re-educated to keep making calls for major outages on the mobiles and portables until they reach someone.

When Monson goes live, all will be live on Phase II of the project.

Phase II gives us additional bandwidth reducing the number of busy signals.

The Horizon Contract has been signed.

FY 24 Goals: Not all Board members have had a chance to look at the list of goals. This document is a shared document and any member is welcome to add to the list of goals. This will be brought up at the meeting in September. It was suggested that the Ops, Finance and IT Committees should be looking at it as well. Erin suggested going through the District Agreement and link it to the list of goals.

4. New Business: FY 24 State 911 Grants: Support & Incentive Grant was awarded for \$ 3,623,310, the Development Grant was awarded for \$2,521,690, and this includes \$179,000 for Project Management, \$ 723,675 for the Assessments, and \$1,619,015 for Equipment which includes Radio and CAD. \$1,000,000 for Construction was asked in the original request, but was cut because we have not yet got out for Bonding on the building.

Finance Update: The Finance Committee met on Monday. They haven't met since May 3rd, and decided to table the Transfer Policy until their next meeting as they were looking for clarification from the BOD on whether or not they'd prefer transfers between line items or keep it as Salary to Expense and Expense to Salary. This topic will be brought up again at their next scheduled meeting.

The BOD discussed that transfers between functions should come to the Board for approval, otherwise Erin should be able to transfer between lines. A budget voted on as a whole gives more flexibility.

Jamie Farnum will bring the transfer policy back to the BOD at the September meeting.

Wendy is working on the FY 22 Audit. We have reached out to 3 Auditors for quotes to Audit FY 23, we have only heard back from 1 asking for the last audit done, will reach back out to all 3 again.

Operations Update: Fire: Have not had a meeting lately, no update.

Police Update: Met with another outside detail vendor, Extra Duty Solutions, Longmeadow, East Longmeadow and Monson were present. This Company is probably a cheaper offer, it was left at they will speak with other Town Managers. There may be potential Union issues if going with an outside vendor. There is still some work to do, Chief Williams need all town to agree that it is worth the investment.

IT Update: Website looks good. The IT Committee does not yet have a meeting schedule, they are satisfied with the MOU, will send to the BOD for review. The MOU was last updated in December. It will be added to the agenda for the September meeting.

A discussion was had regarding switches and their end of life is coming soon, replacing radios both portable and mobile is not in the budget this year. If the towns are responsible for the replacements, they need to be made aware so they can budget for it along with having a say in what is purchased. Erin stated the Cities and Towns are responsible for replacement of mobiles and portables, If WESTCOMM has extras, they will give them out. The life span of a radio is approximately 10 years.

A Capital Plan needs to be created for WESTCOMM.

There was a discussion on adding Policies to the Website, as a safety practice policies don't get posed as a public record on websites. Lyn referred to only the Personnel Handbook getting posted.

Executive Directors Update: Staffing: 28 FT Dispatchers, 5 PT Dispatchers, a full complement of employees would be 36 FT. We recently lost 2 of our trainees, and 1 Acting Supervisor and 1 Dispatcher. WESTCOMM currently needs to hire 8 employees. The next hire date for new Dispatchers is September 20<sup>th</sup>.

The Admin Staff, Supervisors and Acting Supervisors finished up the Leadership Academy last month.

The National Night Out in East Longmeadow was put in a Podcast to promote WESTCOMM.

Erin attended all 8 of the Chicopee Neighborhood meetings.

A promotional video is being worked on with Chicopee T.V., WESTCOMM is using their facility.

FY 23 is closed out and the final reports will be going to the Finance Committee.

The trainees were able to attend the Western Mass Academy for Patrol, Procedures and Dispatch, as well as the Springfield Fire Academy to view a live burn, they are learning a lot from attending that.

WESTCOMM is currently in Union Negotiations for Dispatchers with a separate for Supervisors.

Av Resnick was awarded the Gold Line Sunshine award, this is a vendor for peer support. This award is given to employees who go above and beyond every day.

Erin has changed the hiring process after attending a hiring and retention course, there is first pre-testing for things like typing and multi-tasking, and there is also a personality test given, there is then an interview with the Human Resources Director, after that they do observations in the Dispatch room for 2 hours, the Dispatchers will then decide if they should move forward with the hiring process, they then move to a Supervisors interview and then finally an Interview with the Executive Director. It is a longer process with hopes that future employees will not leave in the training phase.

There is also exit interview that are being done when an employee decides to leave.

Erin met with Ludlow. The Select Board and Town Manager are interested in joining WESTCOMM, and are having inter-department discussions.

Chief Major gave positive feedback to Dispatchers for feedback forms that are going between responders and dispatchers and vice versa.

5. Review of A/P and Payroll Warrants: No questions, no discussion.
6. New Business not reasonably anticipated within 24 hours: The new Town Manager for East Longmeadow, Thomas Christensen, was introduced and welcomed to the WESTCOMM Board of Directors.
7. Adjourn: A motion was made by John Beaulieu and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jennifer Wolowicz to adjourn the meeting, a Rollcall was done, 5 yes, motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:56 A.M.

