

**JOINT MEETING OF THE  
WESTCOMM BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
& THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**APRIL 17, 2025, 2:00 P.M.**

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**449 FRONT STREET, CHICOPEE MA 01013**

GOOGLE MEET:

<HTTPS://MEET.GOOGLE.COM/YYM-RFFV-QRN>

PHONE: 1-832-280-4765 PIN: 314 819 104

**In Attendance:**

Penny Ryan, Interim Executive Director, WESTCOMM

Tom Christensen, Town Manager, East Longmeadow

John Beaulieu, Chicopee

JoAnn Kupiec, Admin Assistant, WESTCOMM

Jennifer Wolowicz, Town Manager, Monson

Khristy Lord, Deputy Director, WESTCOMM

Lyn Simmons, Town Manager, Longmeadow

Mark William, Chief, East Longmeadow PD

Grant Herman, IT Director, WESTCOMM

Marie Laflamme, City Treasurer, Chicopee

Ryan Quimby, IT Director, East Longmeadow

Ian Coddington, Finance Director, Longmeadow

Wendy Graves, Treasurer, WESTCOMM

Peter Kinnis, State 911

Mihaela, Miteva, Procurement Officer, WESTCOMM

Tyler Allen, Goosetown

Jamie Farnum, Finance Director, Monson

Anthony Massoia, Dispatch Supervisor, WESTCOMM

Steve Kozloski, Police Chief, Monson

1. Meeting called to order 2:03 P.M. A roll call was done, and present at the meeting were Tom Christensen, Jennifer Wolowicz, Lyn Simmons and John Beaulieu. 4 Present, 1 absence (Stuart Beckley) Stuart joined the meeting at 2:27 P.M.

2. Approval of Minutes from the meetings held on 10/4/24, 11/14/24, 12/5/24, 12/19/24 & 1/9/25. A motion was made by John Beaulieu and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jennifer Wolowicz to approve the minutes as written. A minor correction was made to the title reflecting the correct job titles of Lyn Simmons and Stuart Beckley as Town Managers not Administrators. A roll call was done 4 yes, motion passed.
  
3. Finance Committee Discussion: The Finance committee expressed concerns about WESTCOMM's policies and procedures, particularly regarding the software, staffing and audit timelines. They aimed to discuss these concerns and plan for the FY 27 budget.

The Finance committee discussed the limitations of the current QuickBooks software and the potential need for a new software solution or additional staff training. They also raised concerns about sufficient staffing to handle the increasing workload of posting agendas and minutes as WESTCOMM grows. The Committee emphasized the importance of accurate and timely financial information for effective decision making.

Significant delays in audit completion were highlighted as a major concern, impacting on the timely submission of GFAO reports and hindering long-term borrowing processes. The Finance Committee suggested that improved training and staffing could significantly improve the audit turnaround time.

OPEB Trust Fund: The Finance committee noted the unfunded OPEB trust, highlighting the need for establishing the trust, identifying trustees, and transferring funds. It was suggested a motion to establish the trust be carried out at the next Board of Directors meeting.

It was discussed that quarterly meetings between The Board of Directors and the Finance Committee happen quarterly to improve communication and address concerns more proactively. This was supported by other participants who suggested incorporating shorter, more frequent meetings.

4. Building Update: Significant progress was reported on the new WESTCOMM building, including drywall, flooring, trim and roofing installations. The ordering of Dispatch furniture and the coordination of delivery, complicated by the lac of a working elevator, were also discussed.

5. Radio Update: Various ongoing issues with the radio system across multiple communities were reported, including data connection issues, console problems, tower installations, and the need for new firmware and code plugs. Grant Herman highlighted the lack of documentation on the radio systems.
6. Audit Update: Wendy Graves reported difficulties obtaining the FY 23 Audit from Cbiz, the successor to Markham, emphasizing the delays and communication challenges. The Board offered assistance in expediting the audit process.
7. IT Update: The IT Sub-Committee reported several critical issues, including deferred maintenance, end-of-support equipment, and insufficient budgeting for the new buildings' IT infrastructure. The significantly low IT budget for the new building was identified as a major concern, far less than the actual requirements. The need for more IT staff was strongly emphasized.

The need for a full network overhaul with Cisco equipment and a switch to a new managed service provider ePlus, were discussed, driven by the performance issues with the current provider Converge One.

8. Operations Committee Update: The RFP Committee scheduled their first meeting for April 30<sup>th</sup> to determine procurement options for a new radio Maintenance contract, will update the Board at the next meeting. The Ops group was polled, and it was determined they will meet every 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month.
9. Staffing Update: 4 ECS and two Supervisor positions remain open. There are currently 4 trainees, with 26 full-time and 4 part-time employees. The IT Director was recently hired as well.
10. Directors Update: National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week was celebrated with various activities, including themed days and gifts, organized by Lisa Ricardo. The celebration involved the entire team, from the Board to individual staff members, associated Communities, etc. highlighting teamwork and appreciation.

Several staff members received one-year and five-year anniversary pins. Anna received the International Academy of Emergency Dispatch Tree of Life Award for going above and beyond during a missing person case. Other awards included perfect attendance awards, and various team-voted superlative awards. Marlyn presented at the navigator Conference and Jeff Hastings received the PSAP

Leadership scholarship. Top performers in quality assurance received a Director's Award.

WESTCOMMM's future and goals were discussed. The discussion emphasized the importance of teamwork and communication, expressing the need for regular check-ins, and updates. They highlighted the need for clearly defined short and long-term goals and accountability. They also stressed the importance of employee well-being.

It was discussed about the process of obtaining and repaying a bond, clarifying that the state provides funding annually through a grant to cover bond repayment. The full amount of the bond was received up front to cover construction costs. The bond repayment will occur annually, using the \$1.5 million dollar grant. The bonds repayment is expected to take slightly more than 10 years, as there is significant interest to consider.

WESTCOMM plans to increase Community outreach efforts, including participation in National Night out, a bike safety event and collaborations with local senior centers and schools. WESTCOMM aims to give back to each Community.

11. Adjourn the meeting: A motion was made by John Beaulieu and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jennifer Wolowicz to adjourn the meeting. A roll call was done 5 yes, meeting adjourned 3:30 P.M.