



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION  
FIRST RESPONDER NETWORK AUTHORITY  
**MINUTES OF THE MARCH 19, 2020 BOARD AND COMBINED COMMITTEES  
MEETING VIA WEBEX AND TELECONFERENCE**

On March 19, 2020, the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) held an open public meeting of the FirstNet Authority Board and Combined Committees. The meeting, which took place via WebEx and teleconference line, began at 11:00 AM EST. A transcript of the meeting and the archived Board and Combined Committees meeting presentation and audio recording is available on the FirstNet Authority website: [www.FirstNet.gov](http://www.FirstNet.gov).

**BOARD AND COMBINED COMMITTEES MEETING**

Chair Edward Horowitz announced the selection of Edward Parkinson as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the FirstNet Authority, and also welcomed new Board Secretary Janell Smith to the FirstNet Authority. The main focus areas of the meeting were a Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) update from Todd Early, Chairman of the PSAC; the vote on Board Resolution 104, Revision of the Public Safety Advisory Committee Charter; updates from the Board's Advocacy, Network and Technology, and Finance Committees; and closing remarks from FirstNet Authority CEO Parkinson.

***Conflicts Statement and Reminder***

Prior to participating in the FirstNet Authority Combined Board and Committees meeting, Acting Board Secretary Jennifer Watts provided Board members the agenda and Conflict of Interest guidance provided by the Ethics Law and Program Division of the Department of Commerce (DOC) Office of General Counsel that apply to the Board members. All Board members responded prior to the meeting that they do not need to recuse themselves from participation in any portion of this meeting, therefore indicating no conflicts of interest, and the meeting proceeded.

***Roll Call***

Edward Horowitz ("Chair"), Richard Stanek ("Vice Chair"), Richard Carrizzo, Welton Chase, Neil Cox, Brian Crawford, Vincent DeLaurentis, Billy Hewes, Tip Osterthaler, Paul Patrick, Matt Slinkard, David Zolet and Karima Holmes. A quorum was present for the Board and Combined Committees.

***Votes Taken***

Prior to proceeding with the business of the day, Chair Horowitz requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the December 5, 2019, Board and Combined Committees meeting.

Richard Carrizzo made the motion. Paul Patrick seconded, and the Board and Combined Committees unanimously voted to approve the December 2019 meeting minutes.

The Board also voted to approve the following Resolution:

- Neil Cox motioned to approve Resolution 104, Revision of the Public Safety Advisory Committee Charter. Paul Patrick seconded, and the Board and Combined Committees unanimously voted to approve the resolution.

## **MATTERS DISCUSSED**

### ***PSAC***

Todd Early provided an overview of the engagements and collaboration with public safety stakeholders, including the PSAC's Tribal Working Group (TWG). In December 2019, an in-person meeting was held in Austin, Texas, where PSAC provided feedback on several Roadmap domains and the 2020 investment priorities, ensuring that the needs of first responders are met. In this meeting they learned about the latest network product and service offerings, as well as updates from FirstNet AT&T leadership. Feedback received last year from TWG members emphasized the need for FirstNet in tribal lands, and proposed updates to the FirstNet Authority Tribal Consultation Policy. This year the members launched Roadmap domain teams to provide the FirstNet Authority with an additional tribal specific voice on the voice communications, coverage, and capacity domains. Due to the unique challenges in tribal areas, the TWG was offered the opportunity to provide feedback to guide network investment and enhancement decisions.

The PSAC also launched its bi-monthly 2020 webinar series, and participated in a 200-level series engagement on the FirstNet core with the FirstNet Authority's Public Safety Advocacy (PSA) team. This engagement allowed the PSAC to learn more about the core's current and future capabilities, and to provide valuable data to educate and inform the FirstNet Authority in its Roadmap.

Amendments were then proposed to the PSAC Charter to ensure that the public safety community provides appropriate guidance and recommendations to the FirstNet Authority that align with its mission. These recommendations included the addition of the National Association of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Physicians to the PSAC membership; the increase of members in the PSAC Executive Committee from five (5) to seven (7); and to create an operational users working group.

### ***Advocacy Committee Update***

FirstNet Authority PSA Executive Director David Buchanan spoke on the PSA team's accomplishments since the December 2019 Board meeting. Goals for 2020 were targeted towards connecting with and making sure the network reaches first responders, all levels of government, and federal, tribal and local stakeholders, and capturing their input to improve, enhance, and invest in the network to best meet mission critical needs. PSA executed 448 successful engagements with public safety in 52 states and territories with 13,000 stakeholders reached. Improvements and enhancements made to the FirstNet network by AT&T in the last six

(6) months include updates to the Uplift Request Tool, with additional features such as: notify uplifted users via text message; changes to the dashboard for Uplift managers with a new feature that allows a user to create an Uplift incident for a future date; a new Advanced Network View within the Network Status Tool, which addresses specific public safety feedback for real time access to network availability and performance; and an Enhanced deployable request process in which AT&T provides public safety agencies a checklist for planned and upcoming events to know what to expect. AT&T has refined its requirements and triage process and is getting better at expectation setting with users.

Advocacy Committee Chairman Richard Stanek along with other Advocacy Committee members discussed their successful engagement and participation in recent events sponsored by the National Sheriffs Association; Major City Chiefs; the National Association of EMS Physicians; the National Association of Fire Chiefs; the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs; as well as organizations like APCO and NENA. Looking ahead, PSA plans to schedule a series of summits around the tribal community, emergency communications, and emergency management professions. The goal is to introduce current processes and operational use and need for the network, as well as capture feedback to document in the FirstNet Roadmap to make improvements, adjustments and enhancements to the network.

Board member William Hewes, Mayor of Gulfport, Mississippi, expressed concern for the medical community, as well as keeping first responders safe in order to be able to continue to help those in need during these challenging times. The FirstNet network is key for communications in the community of Gulfport, and recent events give first responders the opportunity to see how well the FirstNet network performs.

### ***Network and Technology Update***

FirstNet Authority Chief Technology Officer Jeffrey Bratcher referenced a February briefing where the Network and Technology Committee was able to explore and provide strategic guidance to the FirstNet Authority on a wide array of topics, including network deployment, upcoming investments, some of the upcoming mission critical services, and enhancing and further developing the FirstNet network ecosystem and experience program.

Mr. Bratcher reviewed the most recent network update numbers, and stated that again AT&T is hitting the mark and is still ahead of schedule on their Band 14 coverage deployment, as they are now reporting they are at 80% on their contracted deployment for Band 14. He also noted that the FirstNet Authority now has the capability of analyzing terabytes of data that is delivered on the state of the network deployment, and how the network is operating and focused on Band 14 Spectrum usage. The FirstNet Authority will be using that data as it moves into investments and expanding coverage, with two pending investments on deployables and network enhancement.

Mr. Bratcher stated that the FirstNet Authority wants to ensure that the FirstNet network is 5G ready, and is closely watching the wireless industry as they continue to build and roll out their 5G coverage and services. In the intermediate term, the FirstNet Authority sees 5G as complementary to and not a replacement of the 4G LTE technologies. The FirstNet Authority staff are heeding the guidance of the Committee and the Board to be 5G ready, and that's the goal of the first phase of network enhancement for that investment.

He also noted that some mission critical services will be launching soon that are built upon 3GPP open standards for mission critical based communications. These services will be integrated into the FirstNet network, which continues to progress and has the potential to transform direct public safety communications every day.

Ecosystem development activities continue to expand, and Mr. Bratcher noted how the FirstNet Authority recently provided some collaboration updates with its peers at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Public Safety Communications Research (PSCR) Program. FirstNet Authority staff are supporting the final stages of PSCR's Tech to Protect Coding Challenge, which is scheduled to culminate in an award next quarter. There are also new challenges on Unmanned Aerial Systems, Augmented Reality and Internet of Things.

FirstNet Authority Technology and Innovation Division Executive Director Mark Golaszewski then spoke about recent collaborative ecosystem engagements. Currently there are a total of 116 applications in the catalog, and 174 total certified devices for use in the public safety user networks to be maintained by NIST. The most commonly used applications are those of common operating picture or situational awareness that share information such as text, video, and voice communications. High Powered User Equipment (HPUE) will be available in the next couple of weeks and is currently going through a certification process, which allows HPUE to use FirstNet's Band-14 spectrum.

### ***Finance Committee Update***

FirstNet Authority Chief Financial Officer Kim Farington provided an update on the FirstNet Authority's financial operations. Ms. Farington also shared that the FirstNet Authority had once again been given a clean audit finding from independent auditors Harper, Rains and Knight on the FirstNet Authority's Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 financial statements, with no material weaknesses, no significant deficiencies, and no management level findings identified. She then yielded to Finance Committee Chair Tip Osterthaler, who spoke on the budget formulation process for FY 2020.

The Board's Finance Committee is currently on schedule to review the FirstNet Authority's proposed FY 2021 budget by the end of July or mid-August. A brief review of both pending investments and the investment planning process was completed and continues to emphasize the status of the current investments with no change. Chairman Osterthaler emphasized that the need for a documented and well understood model for considering, vetting, and improving investments will only increase in the future as more funding falls into the investment channel. The current model is easy to understand and helpful when speaking to counterparts at the DOC and other offices in the federal government who are interested in knowing how the FirstNet Authority's funds are invested.

The Finance Committee also looked at the budget formulation process for FY21; the FirstNet Authority is on schedule to get the budget done on time. The Finance Committee expects to review the final budget before the end of July. By mid-August the budget should go to the Board for final approval.

### ***Closing Remarks***

FirstNet Authority CEO Parkinson thanked Chair Horowitz and the rest of the Board, public safety, and the FirstNet Authority team for the support and confidence that he has been given to be able to serve and provide the United States with the only dedicated public safety network. He thanked the FirstNet team and AT&T for the coordination and disciplined response the network was able to show during recent events. He then went on to congratulate the FirstNet Authority's PSA and financial teams for all their success, and thanked internal administrative teams for providing necessary oversight and most importantly providing public safety information for the dedicated service provided by the FirstNet network. He then yielded to Chair Horowitz, who reiterated that the creation of the FirstNet network was driven by the events of 9/11, and through the partnership with AT&T, the network was built and is in operation today. This broadband network is the nation's strategic communications network dedicated to public safety and has been demonstrating its capabilities on local, regional, and national issues.

### ***Board Adjourned***

Chair Horowitz requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tip Osterthaler made the motion. Karima Holmes seconded, and the Board and Combined Committees unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.