



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION
FIRST RESPONDER NETWORK AUTHORITY
**MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 23, 2023, COMBINED BOARD AND COMMITTEES
MEETING IN PERSON AND VIA WEBEX**

The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) held an open public meeting of the FirstNet Authority Board and its Committees. The meeting took place on Wednesday, August 23, 2023, via WebEx and in person at 9:00 AM PDT in Tacoma, Washington. A video recording and transcript of the meeting, as well as the archived presentation, are available on the FirstNet Authority website: [FirstNet.gov](https://www.firstnet.gov).

INTRODUCTION

Board Chair Richard Carrizzo welcomed everyone who joined the FirstNet Authority's Combined Board and Committees meeting at the Pierce County Readiness Center in Tacoma, Washington. Chair Carrizzo spoke about the wildfires in Maui, Hawaii, where FirstNet Authority sent an incident support team and the AT&T Response Operations Group (ROG) provided on-site personnel support. Chair Carrizzo offered sentiments and reiterated that support of public safety communications during these types of incidents are the mission of FirstNet Authority.

In June 2023, Renee Gordon was appointed as the new Board Vice Chair and the new Chair of the Governance and Risk Committee. Renee is the Director of the Emergency and Customer Communication Center in Alexandria, Virginia. Chair Carrizzo also welcomed the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Designee, Joe Carlile, to the Board. Joe Carlile is OMB's Program Associate Director for the General Government Programs.

During the meeting, the Board approved the May 3, 2023, Combined Board and Committees meeting minutes, received a review of Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 and priorities for FY 2024 from FirstNet Authority Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Joe Wassel, received a Finance and Investment Committee Update, took a Finance and Investment Committee Resolution vote and a Board Resolution vote related to the FY 2024 budget, heard updates from the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) Chair Christopher Lombard and the Advocacy, Programs and Future Planning Committee, and heard reflection on the 5x5 Conference and Public Safety Innovation Summit.

Roll Call

Richard Carrizzo ("Chair"), Renee Gordon ("Vice Chair")¹, Billy Bob Brown Jr., Robert Brown, Joe Carlile, Brian Crawford, Alexandra Fernández Navarro, Kristin Graziano, Billy Hewes, Peter

¹ Renee Gordon Participated virtually.

Koutoujian², Warren Mickens, Sylvia Moir, Jocelyn Moore, and Paul Patrick participated. A quorum was present for the Board and Combined Committees meeting.

Conflicts Statement and Reminder

Prior to participating in the FirstNet Authority Combined Board and Committees meeting, Board Secretary Janell Smith provided Board members with the meeting agenda and Conflict of Interest guidance provided by the Ethics Law and Program Division of the Department of Commerce Office of General Counsel that applies to all Board members. All Board members responded prior to the meeting that they did not need to recuse themselves from participation in any portion of the meeting, therefore indicating no conflicts of interest, and the meeting proceeded.

Votes Taken

Prior to proceeding with the business of the day, Chair Carrizzo requested a motion to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2023, Combined Board and Committees Meeting. Robert Brown made the motion. Joe Carlile seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the May 3, 2023, Combined Board and Committees meeting minutes to be available to the public at the end of the meeting.

The Finance and Investment Committee voted to approve Finance and Investment Committee Resolution 33 – Recommendation on Fiscal Year 2024 Budget:

- Billy Hewes motioned to approve Finance and Investment Committee Resolution 33 – Recommendation on Fiscal Year 2024 Budget. Joe Carlile seconded, and the Finance and Investment Committee unanimously voted to approve the resolution.

The Board also voted to approve Resolution 115 – Fiscal Year 2024 Budget:

- Kristin Graziano motioned to approve Board Resolution 115 – Fiscal Year 2024 Budget. Paul Patrick seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the resolution.

MATTERS DISCUSSED

FY 2023 Review and FY 2024 Priorities

Executive Director and CEO Joe Wassel provided FirstNet Authority FY 2023 highlights and priorities. Key accomplishments for the FirstNet Authority included 34,000 stakeholder engagements, 60 planning engagements, and 425+ attendees at the June 2023, 5x5 PSCR conference. Additionally, 3,500 small cell sites were distributed to public safety, 1,300 engagements were conducted, and over 200 visitors were received at the FirstNet Authority Boulder Lab in Colorado.

AT&T, FirstNet Authority's partner, is gaining 3,000 connections to the network every day, with a total of 5 million+ connections for public safety, 200 unique applications, and 99 percent of the country covered with Band 14.

² Peter Koutoujian participated virtually.

Joe Wassel outlined the FirstNet Authority's Strategic goals, which are tied to its strategic plan. The first goal is focusing on network investment and execution. FirstNet Authority is prioritizing having a functioning and resilient network against all hazards including cyber security. The FirstNet Authority will dedicate resources to ensure a strong core and strong and dependable network for public safety. The second goal is the Public Safety Experience and the connected first responder. The final goal is the organization's success. FirstNet Authority will leverage the intelligence in the organization for public safety. The goal is to be a high-performing organization for public safety and a great example of government service.

Joe Wassel outlined FirstNet Authority's priorities for FY2024. First, FirstNet Authority is prioritizing reauthorization. The FirstNet Authority is working with Congress, NTIA, Department of Commerce, and stakeholders to ensure that Congress understands the importance of the program as it relates to FirstNet Authority's sunset in 2027. The second priority is the 10-year investment plan. FirstNet Authority receives sustainability payments, and it is important how the FirstNet Authority spends those resources for public safety. Additionally, FirstNet Authority's organizational culture is a priority. The leadership team developed a culture statement that will be released soon. The focus is having a culture that ensures the team is ready to take on the new challenges of public safety. FirstNet Authority wants to be an example of diversity, equity and inclusion for the nation and the federal government. Finally, FirstNet Authority will prioritize organizational excellence. The FirstNet Authority will use organizational excellence to ensure that the agency is high performing and thinking of public safety with all decisions made.

Finance and Investment Committee Update

Committee Chairman Brian Crawford spoke about the FirstNet Authority's FY2023 budget, confirming that financial execution has been well within the boundaries of the FY 2023 budget approved by the Board, and the FirstNet Authority will end FY 2023 with an underburned balance that will be used to fund future investments to benefit public safety. FirstNet Authority Chief Financial and Administrative Officer Kim Farington reviewed cumulative obligations of \$65 million through the end of July 2023 and confirmed that actual expenditures are under budget through ten months of FY 2023.

Next, Kim Farington presented the proposed FY2024 budget of \$451 million, divided into an operations budget of \$95 million, a reserve allocation equal to the year's annual operations budget of \$95 million, and the remaining allocation of \$261 million to the national public safety broadband network investment budget.

The Committee members approved Finance and Investment Committee Resolution 33, and the Board approved Board Resolution 115 – Fiscal Year 2024 Budget.

PSAC Update

PSAC Chair Christopher Lombard provided the PSAC updates on accomplishments over the past quarter. The PSAC's recent webinar series highlighted the FirstNet Authority's Government Engagement Team and the partnership between FirstNet Authority, AT&T, and the FBI CJIS (Criminal Justice Information System) Division.

Chair Lombard spoke about the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) virtual data gathering session that focused on coverage prioritization. In the session the PSAC heard different perspectives and rationales for existing coverage gaps and prioritizing those gaps.

The PSAC's Tribal Working Group continues to meet monthly and will be meeting in the Washington, DC, metro area in October 2023. Chair Lombard acknowledged Jocelyn Moore and Paul Patrick as Board liaisons to the Tribal Working Group.

In July 2023, Chris Lombard and Board members Paul Patrick and Warren Mickens participated in an event with the Washington State Patrol in Olympia, Washington. Board member Warren Mickens expressed his thoughts and reflections on the engagement. Specifically, the Washington State Police demonstrated where to improve coverage and where to standardize communication systems. Also, Board member Paul Patrick expressed thoughts and reflections about the event, and explicitly mentioned the transition of the LMR to LTE and how the data is working.

One highlight shared from the Tribal Working Group call was the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, where public safety requested ROG to deploy a compact rapid deployable (CRD) to support public safety at the annual powwow in Tiller, Oregon. The increased connectivity at the powwow allowed dispatchers to communicate with fire and rescue crews. The PSAC is working on the details for the November in-person meeting.

Advocacy Committee Update

Committee Chair Sylvia Moir shared engagement highlights from Q3 of FY 2023, when FirstNet Authority participated in more than 400 public safety engagements, reached more than 14,000 stakeholders across all 56 states and territories, and conducted 9 tours of the FirstNet Authority Boulder facility to demonstrate FirstNet's capabilities.

Committee Chair Moir highlighted the Cell Booster Pro example use cases and noted that 3,500 Cell Booster Pros have been distributed to public safety agencies to enhance in-building coverage because of the FirstNet Authority's latest investment and as informed by our nation's first responders. FirstNet Authority conducted a survey and interviews to understand agencies' experiences with the devices. Committee Chair Moir provided two examples of Cell Booster Pro use cases. First was an emphasis on how the distributed devices address coverage deficiencies, and second was the operational need arising from the basement of a police department headquarters building and need for connectivity to support ongoing public safety operations. The Cell Booster Pro provides full coverage to support Emergency Operations Center (EOC) personnel and ongoing operations.

Committee Chair Moir shared that FirstNet Authority engaged with 20 public safety aviation programs and 12 public safety maritime units to identify key operational challenges, understand their solutions, and consider how they will use FirstNet in the future in its release of the Public Safety Aviation and Maritime case study. The study is available on [FirstNet.gov](https://www.firstnet.gov).

Chair Carrizzo and Board member Jocelyn Moore joined Joe Wassel and FirstNet Authority's senior leadership team in New York City in August 2023 to tour the Public Safety Answering

Center II in the Bronx. Chair Carrizzo shared thoughts and reflections about the engagement.

Additionally, Committee Chair Moir shared that FirstNet Authority completed 15 FirstNet Progress Update (FPU) meetings this year with eight in the third quarter. There are an additional 22 scheduled through the end of the year, including the State of Washington. Vice Chair Renee Gordon joined the team for the Virginia FPU and Jocelyn Moore joined the team for the North Carolina FPU. Jocelyn Moore shared thoughts and reflections about the engagement.

Also, First Net Authority staff, Executive Director and CEO Joe Wassel, and Board member Renee Gordon attended the Association of Public Safety Communication Officials (APCO) Expo in August 2023 in Nashville, Tennessee. In addition to APCO Expo, the leadership team had the opportunity to visit the site of the 2020 Christmas bombing with AT&T personnel to learn more about AT&T's mitigation strategy. In terms of Federal engagement, the FirstNet Authority continues to engage with the Department of Defense.

5x5 Update

Chair Moir and Board Member Jocelyn Moore provided an update on the 5x5 summit in San Diego, California. This event, which evolved from PSCR's annual stakeholder meeting, was co-hosted with the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Public Safety Communications Research Division (PSCR). The event's keynote speakers included Joe Wassel, Sylvia Moir, and Chief Dan Munsey of California's San Bernardino County Fire Protection District.

Teri Takai was this year's Harlin McEwen Award recipient and Chief Peter Burke was the Inaugural Patriot Award recipient. Teri Takai is a former FirstNet Authority Board member, and she represented State governors' offices and served as a Board liaison to federal stakeholders. Chief Peter Burke was one of the early adopters of the FirstNet program in Massachusetts and brought early versions of push-to-talk to his agency ahead of any other public safety agency within the Commonwealth.

Jocelyn Moore added that during the 5x5 summit, there were 12 deep-dive sessions on various technology topics and 4 concurrent scenario-based tabletop exercises to contemplate current operational gaps and identify future communications technology capabilities specific to the different phases of emergency response. Board members Mayor Billy Hewes and Sherriff Kristin Graziano provided their thoughts and reflections from the summit.

Programs and Future Planning Committee Update

Committee Chair Jocelyn Moore discussed the next phase of FirstNet, which includes continued improvements to the existing network, delivering the promise of network coverage, resilience, and reliability, and ongoing technological innovations to deliver the future network, including 5G.

Committee Chair Moore discussed how FirstNet Authority is leveraging its team expertise in partnership with public safety to deliver coverage, resilience, and reliability to some of the most complex geographies, such as Puerto Rico. Board member Alexandra Fernández Navarro provided thoughts and reflections about FirstNet Authority's Puerto Rico engagement and how attention is essential to make decisions that better serve first responders in the territories.

Committee Chair Moore stated the number of public safety agencies has continued to grow with over 26,000 public safety agencies and organizations subscribed to the FirstNet network. In the last quarter the network grew by 300,000 plus connections. Chair Moore acknowledged that Board Secretary Janell Smith will move to a different position in the FirstNet Authority and thanked her for her work with the Board.

Closing Remarks

Joe Wassel reiterated the importance of the Board meetings and the necessity of working together to keep the momentum for the next chapter of the FirstNet Authority, and noted the FirstNet Authority has a worldwide responsibility and is leading the way for public safety.

Board Adjourned

Chair Carrizzo requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alexandra Fernández Navarro made the motion, Warren Mickens seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.