



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION
FIRST RESPONDER NETWORK AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 11, 2024
COMBINED BOARD AND BOARD COMMITTEES MEETING

The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) held a public Combined Board and Committees meeting on Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 9:00 AM MST, via Microsoft Teams and in person at the Boulder County Public Sheriff's Office in Boulder, Colorado. 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).

Board Chair Keisha Lance Bottoms welcomed everyone, and new Board members were introduced, the FirstNet Authority FY 2025 priorities were highlighted, and updates were provided from the Public Safety Advisory, Advocacy, Finance and Investment, and Programs and Future Planning committees.

Roll Call

Keisha Lance Bottoms ("Chair"), Renee Gordon, Michael Adkinson, Billy Bob Brown Jr. Hugh Clements Jr., Damon Darsey, Alexandra Fernández Navarro, Erik Gaull, Sean McDevitt, Warren Mickens, Jocelyn Moore, Jeffrey Norman, Rasheid Scarlett, Austin Turner, and Trisha Wolford participated.¹ A quorum was present for the Combined Board and Committees meeting.

Conflicts Statement and Reminder

Prior to participating in the FirstNet Authority Combined Board and Committees meeting, Board Secretary, Jennifer Watts, sent Board members the meeting agenda and Conflict of Interest guidance provided by the Ethics Law and Program 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 participating 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 Lance Bottoms requested a motion to approve the minutes from August 21, 2024, Combined Board and Board Committees Meeting. Jocelyn Moore moved to approve the minutes. Warren Mickens seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the meeting minutes and to make them available to the public at the end of the meeting.

¹ Billy Bob Brown Jr. and Hugh Clements Jr. attended virtually.

New Board Members

Board Chair Lance Bottoms allotted time for new members to introduce themselves and announced committee chair appointments, including appointments of Sheriff Michael Adkinson as Governance and Risk Committee Chair, Chief Trisha Wolford as Advocacy Committee Chair, Sean McDevitt as Finance and Investment Committee Chair, and Rasheid Scarlett as Programs and Future Planning Committee Chair.

PSAC Update

PSAC Chair Chris Lombard congratulated the new Board members and designees on their appointments before briefly reviewing PSAC and TAG member locations throughout the nation, 2024 PSAC engagements, and a look ahead at 2025.

The full PSAC meets virtually bi-monthly and receives briefings from FirstNet Authority staff, highlights of FirstNet emergent developments, and planned events including network performance and user experience. Chair Lombard shared examples of public safety use cases including an agency in Georgia that switched completely to FirstNet push-to-talk and other agencies who are interconnecting their LMR network with FirstNet. FirstNet Authority staff and the PSAC continue to collaborate to engage public safety and share FirstNet 101 information. PSAC members have participated in demonstrations, conferences, and live events with FirstNet network use which have provided valuable insight and information for both the FirstNet Authority as well as the PSAC.

The PSAC Tribal Advisory Group (TAG) met several times in 2024 and regularly received updates about FirstNet deployment specific to Indian Country. The TAG also expanded their membership, which is another way tribal specific associations or Indian Country sections within associations are getting the FirstNet message across to tribal nations and ensuring they are heard.

Within the next year, the PSAC will begin conducting its biannual reappointment process which allows each member association to appoint a new member or reappoint a current PSAC member. The committee looks forward to continued collaboration with Board members whether at conferences or other field type events and learning more about the coverage enhancement opportunities.

Advocacy Committee Update

Committee Chair Chief Trisha Wolford highlighted engagements from FY2024 and FY2025. The FirstNet Authority team participated in more than 1,400 public safety engagements, reached nearly 53,000 stakeholders across 56 states, territories and federal agencies and hosted 46 public safety tours to over 200 visitors in the FirstNet Authority Boulder facility. Through these engagements, the staff continued to collect feedback from public safety on their use of FirstNet as well as their agencies' respective operational needs. Chair Wolford summarized how the feedback received over the last year relates to a few high-level FirstNet Authority themes: coverage, notification, and the user.

During the first quarter of FY2025, Chair Wolford noted that engagements included attendance at the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) 2024 conference that gave FirstNet Authority team members the opportunity to engage with more than 18,000 law enforcement

leaders on topics that are important to the FirstNet network. The team delivered briefings to more than a dozen IACP committees and sections including the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) and attended concurrent association conferences including Major Cities Chiefs Association, Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies, and Police Executive Research Forum.

Since the August 2024 Board meeting, the FirstNet Authority team has provided virtual and on-site planning to support local, state and federal public safety stakeholders for many planned events. The FirstNet Authority supported stakeholders at all levels during hurricane response and recovery operations for both Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton as well as coordinated regularly with AT&T in support of events and incidents nationwide. In December 2024, Chair Wolford and FirstNet Authority staff attended the International Association of Fire Chiefs Technology Summit International in Oklahoma City. Board member Erik Gaull shared his experience at the International Associations of Emergency Managers (IAEM) Annual Conflict Conference that he attended November 2024. Member Gaull noted that the IAM Conference is the largest emergency management conference in the world with approximately 2,500 attendees from across the United States, its tribal nations and territories, as well as numerous members from abroad. Chair Wolford closed out the update with notification that registration is open for the 5x5 Public Safety Innovation Summit to be held in Bellevue, WA June 3-5, 2025. FirstNet Authority, in conjunction with NIST and PSCR, has put together a packed three-day agenda that will include keynotes, technology demonstrations, breakout sessions, and deep dive conversations.

Finance and Investment Committee Update

Committee Chair Sean McDevitt briefed that during the first two months of FY2025, the FirstNet Authority obligated a cumulative total of \$28.8 million, which is well within the forecasted parameters of the operational budget. The FirstNet Authority Board and staff are working closely to be efficient, financially prudent, and fiscally responsible with the operational funds so that the maximum amount of dollars can be reinvested into the network for public safety. The FirstNet Authority will continue to move forward on planned investments and previously announced network coverage expansions and enhancements to continue to deliver a high-quality network for public safety.

Programs and Future Planning Committee Update

Committee Chair Rasheid Scarlett stated that FirstNet has grown to more than 6.4 million connections with over 29,000 public safety agencies and organizations subscribed. There are over 865 FirstNet ready devices and over 200 unique apps in the FirstNet app catalog. There have been over 2,250 solutions triaged and deployed for public safety in 2024, which includes over 180 dedicated deployable network assets including flying cell on wings (COWS), satellite cell on light trucks (SAT Colts) and compact rapid deployables (CRDS). FirstNet continues to see growth and the FirstNet Authority anticipates that this momentum will only continue as additional investments to expand coverage and improve technology capabilities for the network are realized in the coming year.

Fiscal Year 2025 Priorities

FirstNet Authority CEO Joe Wassel welcomed new and returning Board members and then highlighted four priorities for the FirstNet Authority in 2025: reauthorization, network investments, culture, and organizational excellence. The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, which created the FirstNet Authority, includes a provision that sunsets the organization in February 2027, subject to Congressional reauthorization. Congressional reauthorization will enable the FirstNet Authority to continue its vital role managing and overseeing FirstNet to ensure the public safety community has the broadband communication tools it needs to perform its critical tasks.

Over the next 10 years, FirstNet Authority is committed to spending \$8.3 billion on coverage enhancement and network evolution. The FirstNet Authority and its Board are committed to reinvesting these funds to enhance and evolve the network and keep pace with technological innovations. The FirstNet Authority will continue to be diligent and provide oversight to the nationwide public safety broadband network contract and pursue organizational excellence to ensure delivery of the best network experience for public safety. CEO Wassel looks forward to working with the new Board and wished all a happy holiday season.

Closing Remarks

In addition to thanking the returning Board members, the CEO, and staff for making the transition of the new Board seamless, Chair Lance Bottoms said that the new Board is excited and thankful to be a part of FirstNet Authority and is enthusiastic about supporting the noted priorities.

Chair Lance Bottoms stated that the FirstNet Authority will continue to focus on expansion of the network to ensure first responders have coverage when and where they need it. Public safety feedback continues to be paramount as the team works to implement the coverage investment. Chair Lance Bottoms wished everyone a happy and safe holiday season and thanked the Boulder County Sheriff's Office for hosting the FirstNet Authority Combined Board and Committees Meeting, stating that the FirstNet Authority looks forward to learning more about the unique communications challenges experienced by public safety in Boulder County.

Board Adjourned

Chair Lance Bottoms requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board member Alexandra Fernández Navarro moved to adjourn, Billy Bob Brown Jr. seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.