



## Fire and Police Commission

MaryNell Regan  
Executive Director

Steven M.  
DeVougas  
Chair

Fred Crouther  
Vice-Chair

Kathryn A. Hein  
Ann Wilson  
Marisabel Cabrera  
Angela McKenzie

# Emergency Communications and Policy Director 2017 Work Plan

## *Vision*

### ***Turning the Ship to Prepare for the Future***

A more efficient and accountable approach to the management of emergency communications for Milwaukee that enhances lifesaving services to residents and users.

## *Mission*

A neutral and independent change agent, charged with overseeing, developing and advising on emergency communication policies, and managing the decision-making model to ensure efficient coordination of resources between departments and users.

## *Background: How did we get here?*

### ***Problem Statement***

The City of Milwaukee is the largest city in the State of Wisconsin handling the highest volume and criticality of emergency calls, including 911 and radio communications. The largest user of Milwaukee's radio system is, by far, the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD), followed by the Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD), and then the Department of Public Works (DPW). Additionally, MPD and MFD both function as two separate 911 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) dispatch centers, with MPD as the larger primary PSAP handling both 911 and non-emergency calls, and MFD as the smaller secondary PSAP handling fire and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) calls. Both the radio and 911 systems are complex, expensive, and require extensive infrastructure, maintenance, and staffing to maintain and operate. In the past and continuing to this day, budget, operations, and staffing decisions have been made at a departmental level, with MPD currently responsible for most of the infrastructure of both the radio and 911 systems.

As this fragmented decision-making continues, outside entities at the county, state, and federal level are making preparations for the anticipated shifts in technology that will forever change the way residents and first responders communicate. Initiatives that include new technologies like Next Generation 911



(NG911), communication standards like Project 25 (P25), and federal and state policies like the FirstNet Initiative, and efforts to push multi-jurisdictional PSAP consolidation will all have an impact on the City's emergency communications systems that will strain staff, systems, and budgets without proper planning and review from an enterprise perspective. Moreover, the state has yet to modernize taxing schemes that adequately support emergency communication systems; leaving local governments, including the City, with extremely limited opportunities to properly fund any new projects or upgrades that support new and more efficient technologies.

The City of Milwaukee has invested millions of dollars to maintain its 911 and radio systems. Unfortunately, even while efforts to increase coordination and communication between departments have been underway, significant resources continue to be expended in a fragmented and uncoordinated manner. The internal organizational structure of the City's 911 and radio systems need to be reorganized. Currently, the City of Milwaukee has no formal governance or decision-making model to manage the operation, strategy, or maintenance from an enterprise perspective. Furthermore, as the pace of changing technology expands opportunities for instantaneous information sharing, it also quickly outpaces best practices and policies. Along with the external forces that will move toward consolidation, the city of Milwaukee must align its internal users to more effectively manage its budget, operation and future planning of its 911 and radio systems.

### ***A Brief Timeline***

- 2013 Intergovernmental Relations Division (IRD) is approached to address concerns regarding radio system decisions and the unintended impact of those decisions on other departments.
- 2014 Uncovering opportunities for synergy and citywide problem-solving, an informal workgroup is developed and facilitated by IRD. The initial goals of this workgroup are to support more effective communication, cooperation, and coordination for radios and 911 systems.
- 2015 Facilitated through IRD, the workgroup begins preparations to develop a new position to oversee the coordination, policies, and budget planning for emergency communications.
- Jan 2016 Position is approved by the Council and the Mayor, to be housed under DOA.
- Aug 2016 Approached by Mayor's office to fill the position.
- Jan 2017 Common Council moves position from DOA to FPC in the 2017 budget.

### ***Building the framework***

Create an additional layer of accountability in the decision making process that is inclusive and considers the impact of other departments and the overall city.

1. Garner full support from the Mayor's office and Common Council to ensure full, proactive cooperation from departments that manage and utilize these systems.
2. Codify position duties and departmental responsibilities under ordinance.
3. Establish the governance workgroup by rule under FPC and establish by-laws through internal procedures.
4. Create a process within the workgroup that provides an additional layer of approval and accountability to assist the Budget department in determining capital expenditure priorities.
5. Prepare the team, establish roles and agendas.
6. Develop project and planning priorities.
7. Develop a regular reporting tool to communicate workgroup findings with FPC, Budget, Common Council, and Mayor's office.

### *Policy Priorities*

1. Funding sustainability
2. Resource accountability
3. Resource Sharing
4. Interoperability
5. Security

### *Project Priorities*

1. Emergency Communications Ad Hoc Workgroup (ECW)
2. 911 public awareness
3. 911 abuse graduated penalty review
4. CAD integration
5. Asset management standardization
6. Standard operating procedures
7. 911 and Radio user expectations and accountability

### *Daily Operations*

1. Representation
  - Serve as the City's liaison and primary contact for external agencies, vendors, and intergovernmental committees.
  - Establish and cultivate critical relationships to enhance and support the City's resources.
  - Oversee intergovernmental projects that support interoperability.
  - Develop accountability measures to be reported to Mayor and Common Council at regular intervals.
  - Seek out grants and funding support where possible.
2. Strategic Planning
  - Analyze best practices, and develop the roadmap for City's emergency communications systems.
  - Research and monitor national trends.
  - Review and adopt industry standards citywide where possible.

- Citywide standard asset management tracking and reporting for radio infrastructure.
  - Formalize an equitable and sustainable plan for citywide maintenance and repair.
3. State and Federal Legislative Support
- Serve as the central point of contact in legislative matters.
  - Serve on the Interoperability Council or other regulatory boards where possible.
  - Support the modernization of the taxing scheme that impacts emergency communications.