

**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Sheriff's Staffing Request**  
**March 27, 2014**  
**2:00 p.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Todd Tondee and Commissioner Dan Green met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Sheriff Ben Wolfinger, 9-1-1 Director Brad Coughenour, Human Resources Director Skye Reynolds, and Deputy Clerk Nancy Jones. Commissioner Jai Nelson was excused.

**A. Call to Order:** Chairman Tondee called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**B. Introductions:** There were no introductions made.

**C. Changes to the Agenda:** There were no changes made to the agenda.

**D. New Business:**

Commissioner Green explained that he had called the meeting to have an open discussion regarding the resignation of 9-1-1 Director Brad Coughenour and the Sheriff's proposal for filling the resulting vacancy. Mr. Coughenour discussed the conditions of his resignation, noting that he accepted employment outside of Kootenai County for numerous personal reasons. He acknowledged that while a higher salary was attractive, he also made the decision based on his personal long-term, professional goals.

The attendees discussed concerns specific to the staffing of the 9-1-1 Center, including:

- The hierarchy/staffing structure of 9-1-1
- The need for a supervisor to oversee the operations and technical needs of the center
- How relationships with fourteen (14) outside entities affect 9-1-1 operations
- Communication challenges related to engagement with the outside entities they serve
- Mobility within the organization
- Historical information regarding the structure and staffing needs of 9-1-1
- Financial staffing considerations
- Unique structure that incorporates both civilian employees and sworn officers

Sheriff Wolfinger spoke regarding his request to assign a lieutenant to provide 9-1-1 oversight, effectively eliminating the Director position. The group discussed the qualifications needed for the position. Sheriff Wolfinger noted that, previously, an operations manager was assigned to oversee the center, but that both administrative and technical knowledge are necessary for proper oversight. Sheriff Wolfinger acknowledged that this request would require the hiring of an additional lieutenant, but stated that this change would have a financial implication of less than \$6,000 per year due to the elimination of the Director position. Human Resources Director Skye Reynolds asked questions regarding the hiring process for 9-1-1 operators, staffing goals for the center, and how supervisory assignments are determined. Further, Ms. Reynolds initiated a discussion of the Position Review Committee's role in reviewing positions included on the Sheriff's pay matrix. Mr. Coughenour and Sheriff Wolfinger detailed the challenges associated with filling operator positions and the options that are being considered to improve staffing levels. Mr. Coughenour asked everyone to be aware that operator staffing is at critical levels and that the current hiring time is approximately six (6) months. He stated that, even with process improvements, the center will not be at full staff for at least two (2) years. The group discussed recruitment strategies and Ms. Reynolds agreed to follow up with Sheriff Wolfinger with additional recommendations.

Commissioner Green moved to approve the Sheriff's request to assign a lieutenant to the 9-1-1 oversight position, to hire (and allow the additional budget for) an additional lieutenant, and to eliminate the 9-1-1 Director position. Chairman Tondee seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, Deputy Clerk Jones called the roll:

Commissioner Nelson:           Excused

Commissioner Green:           Aye

Chairman Tondee:               Aye

The motion carried.

**E. Staff Reports:** There were no staff reports.

**F. Public Comment:** This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

TODD TONDEE, CHAIRMAN

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nancy A. Jones, Deputy Clerk

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