

911 Executive Board MEETING MINUTES

August 19, 2026

125 NW CHEHALIS AVE, CHEHALIS. WA 98532

Present: Chair Andy Caldwell, Vice Chair Rich Underdahl, Scott Brummer, Stacy Denham, Jim Martin, Rob Snaza, Mike Thomas, Jeff Hursh, Elizabeth Casteel, Kaylea Smith, Aaron Andrus, Becky Butler, Kevin Anderson, Rachel Lester, Carol Brock

Online: Bill Reynolds, Deanna Gregory

Recorder: Kaylea Smith

I. Call to Order – Chair Andy Caldwell called meeting to order at 2:00 PM

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

III. Approval of the Minutes

Denham moved to approve the minutes of July 15th, 2026, as presented. Thomas seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Executive Director Reports:

Hiring Update: Hursh reported that one of the four employees hired in March remains in training. Five employees began the academy on August 3 and are expected to begin call training on the floor during the first week of September. One candidate is in the background process, seven are awaiting interviews, and 29 are in the pre-interview stage.

Bylaws: Hursh reported that the Operations Board will be working on the bylaws and hopes to have bylaws ready to present at the next meeting.

I. Old Business

i. Radio Update Budget

Wherry reported that capital projects are progressing. Ceragon and Day Wireless are advancing radio site work. The Tacoma Power lease is nearing completion, while the American Tower lease remains in negotiations. HVAC and generator projects have been awarded and are entering contract negotiations. A potential WSDOT parcel for the new Toledo Tower will be discussed at an upcoming meeting.

ii. Separation from County Discussion

Hursh reminded the Board that, at the previous meeting, the Board had indicated a preference for moving forward with a PDA, which was the recommended approach. The Board discussed identifying a sponsor for the PDA and addressed questions regarding who would be willing to sponsor it. Further discussion and a decision will follow.

Gregory advised that any city or the County could charter the PDA and that the decision is primarily a policy and practical consideration. While one jurisdiction would formally charter the PDA, the expectation would be for all participating jurisdictions to have shared oversight, representation, and decision-making through an interlocal agreement.

Caldwell asked about oversight of a PDA's major decisions, including property purchases and debt. Gregory explained that additional oversight would only be required if included in the PDA's charter or governing documents. She noted that key benefits of a PDA include liability protections, greater autonomy in developing policies and procurement procedures, and the ability to issue debt for future capital projects. Financing options could include the County issuing debt on behalf of the PDA, a County contingent loan agreement, or financial commitments from participating jurisdictions. Caldwell noted the importance of considering future revenue sources and user fee commitments if the PDA were to finance a new facility through a long-term bond.

Denham asked Gregory to provide additional information regarding the responsibilities and workload associated with serving as the PDA's sponsoring agency. Gregory explained that the sponsoring agency's primary responsibilities would involve establishing the PDA and providing general oversight, with the PDA otherwise operating independently. Caldwell discussed the PDA as the preferred option given the potential need for a future facility and debt financing. Gregory agreed that speaking with another jurisdiction that has established a similar PDA would be beneficial. Hursh will research potential jurisdictions to contact.

Underdahl asked Gregory if she was aware of any sponsoring agencies that had withdrawn from sponsoring a PDA or experienced liability concerns. Gregory explained that while some PDAs have been dissolved after accomplishing their purpose or due to financial challenges, she was not aware of any similar operational PDAs where the sponsoring agency had withdrawn.

Brummer recommended speaking with the two PDAs currently sponsored by the County to learn more about their experiences.

iii. Motorola System Upgrades

Hursh reported that the next major upgrade will be the Vesta 911 answering system, with a demonstration planned for September. The estimated cost is approximately \$800,000, with options to pay upfront or over a five-year contract. Hursh will obtain both pricing options and present them to the Board for consideration. Caldwell recommended evaluating the financial impact of both options, noting that if there is no penalty for spreading the cost over five years, retaining the funds in the Capital Fund would allow the agency to continue earning interest and preserve funds for future capital needs. Caldwell stated that paying the full cost upfront should only be considered if the vendor provides a significant financial incentive to offset the benefit of retaining the funds.

iv. PubEd

Smith reported on recent community outreach activities, including Morton Logger's Jubilee, the fair, and National Night Out. Staff received positive feedback and distributed educational materials. An all-day resource fair will be held tomorrow at the Sports Club, where notebooks will be distributed to children and River will participate.

v. Retention and Training Incentives

Motion: Denham moved to approve the Retention and Training Incentives MOU. Thomas seconded the motion. The motion carried with five votes in favor and two votes opposed.

V. New Business

I. 2027 Budget Presentation

The board acknowledged the increase in professional services to accommodate the increase of GIS services and the Motorola subscription.

Motion: Brummer moved to approve the finalized 2027 budget as presented, including the FTE and the Fire Paging and Capital Fund transfer. Denham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. Good of the Order

VII. Confirmation of Future Meetings: Executive Board Meeting: September 16th, 2026 @ Lewis County Community Development.

VIII. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned by Chief Caldwell at 3:59 PM