

East Central Communications Council (E-911) Meeting Minutes

Thurs, April 23, 2026 - 8:30 AM – Rm 300 in City/County Building

Members Present: Brookings County Commissioner (BCOC) Chairman Shawn Hostler, Brookings County Commissioner Kelly VanderWal, Brookings Fire Department (BFD) Chief Troy Hughes, and Brookings Police Department (BPD) Police Chief Michael Drake.

Others present: Brookings Police Department – Lt. Drew Garry, Sgt. Shawn Peterson, & Office Manager Victoria Brockel; Brookings County Emergency Management (BCEM) Director Bob Hill; Brookings County Fire Association (BCFA) President Dave Jacobson; Brookings County Sheriff Marty Stanwick & Brookings County Assistant Sheriff Dave Biteler; and Brookings County Commission Department Director Stacy Steffensen.

1. **Call to Order:** BCOC Shawn Hostler called the meeting to order at 8:31 AM.
2. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion and 2nd by Police Chief Michael Drake to approve the agenda; motion carried. Note: 2027 budget added to the agenda.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Motion by Chief Drake and 2nd to approve January 15, 2026, minutes; motion carried.
4. **Approval of Bills:** Motion and 2nd by police Chief Michael Drake to approve bills. Lt Garry reported a total of \$7,186.44 provided a brief explanation of expenses. Motion carried. Note: Repeater relocation equipment-related bills will be included in the May budget meeting.
5. **Quarterly Numbers:** Lt. Garry reported that call volume continues to trend upward year-over-year. Chief Drake noted that the increase aligns with community growth, including new businesses and housing developments. This data will be useful for upcoming budget discussions with the City Council.
6. **Old Business:** Repeater relocation project is approximately two-thirds complete.
 - Project costs to date are approximately \$7,500, including room construction, walls, and wiring.
 - Final phase is estimated at \$12,000.
 - System is expected to provide approximately three days of battery backup without generator support.

7. New Business:

A. 6th St. Water Tower Demolition

The water tower located at 6th Street and 14th Avenue is scheduled for demolition in mid-June. Temporary traffic interruptions are anticipated.

B. Communications Audit

A recent incident in Lake Benton highlighted vulnerabilities when a water tower leak caused repeater failure. Additional incidents are occurring where agencies are having issues with communications due to cell tower interference with repeaters.

- SF Two-Way assisted with restoring service in Lake Benton.
- Discussion held regarding:
 - Establishing maintenance contracts for city and county repeaters
 - Implementing outage notifications or alarm systems
 - Exploring monitoring solutions for countywide communications infrastructure
 - Request made to pursue a formal communications audit/study to evaluate system performance and identify improvements.
 - Potential to seek state funding assistance for the audit.

Motion carried by Chief Drake for members of BPD, BFD, BCFA, MCEM, and the Brookings County Sheriff to develop a plan to explore options and costs for conducting a communications audit/study to present at the July 16th meeting.

8. Other Items and Reports:

A. Next Meeting: 2027 Budget Meeting, May 12, 2026, at 8:30 AM, followed by July 16, 2026, at 8:30 AM

B. Joint Powers Agreement Review: Chief Drake recommended reviewing the current agreement for potential updates. The agreement was last updated 5 years ago. BCCD Director Stacy Steffensen will send out the agreement for review before the next meeting.

C. Budget Discussion: Chief Drake gave a brief overview of budget increases and contracted services.

- a. The proposed budget will be distributed within the next week for review prior to the special May budget meeting
- b. Requested date adjustment for May Budget meeting due to out-of-town travels.
- c. Calendar invites requested for remaining 2026 meetings.

D. Early Warning System/Sirens – Lt. Garry reported that repairs on two sirens have been made this year. Chief Drake recommends that the council include replacement and repairs within the E911 budget and capital projects.

9. Adjournment: Motion and 2nd by BCOC Shawn Hostler, to adjourn at 9:04 AM. Motion carried.

Submitted,

Victoria Brockel
Office Manager