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# Montana Association of Counties

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2715 SKYWAY DRIVE, SUITE A, HELENA, MT 59602  
(406) 449-4360 Fax (406) 442-5238  
[www.mtcounties.org](http://www.mtcounties.org)

## MEETING MINUTES

### MACo JUSTICE & PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Billings, MT | Billings Hotel & Convention Center | February 28, 2022

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#### 1. Roll Call & Introductions

Co-chair Brodehl and Krausz called the meeting to order, and roll call was conducted. A quorum was present.

#### 2. Approval of Minutes

Co-chair Brodehl volunteered to take minutes then called for a motion to approve the minutes from the September meeting. A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

#### 3. 9-1-1 & Statewide Radio System Update

Co-chair Brodehl introduced Kris Hansen, Lieutenant General, Montana Attorney General's Office, to discuss the public safety radio and 911 projects. Lieutenant General Hansen discussed funding available through the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) and the State's intent to apply for funding for statewide radio and 911 services. She outlined the statewide advisory committee for 911 being moved to Department of Justice in 2021 and her charge to take two incomplete systems and make them two complete systems.

Mike Feldman, Program Manager, Statewide Public Safety Communications, was introduced to discuss the statewide radio system. He outlined HB 604 which gave the Montana Highway Patrol the administrative responsibility for the system. DOJ didn't know what they had at the time, so they inventoried the system, towers, and network equipment. In 2019 they were successful in securing funding for the system and have been performing essential upgrades since that time. They intend to apply for additional funding through IIJA and the State.

Quinn Ness, 911 Program Manager, was introduced to discuss 911. He reviewed the history of cell phone surcharges for 911. HB 61 provided money from the stranded pool for local government grants and helped create the Emergency Services Internet (ESInet) system. The system is now moving towards NexGen. He outlined a new opportunity to coordinate with DOJ for additional resources to improve the system.

Lieutenant General Hansen stated the system improvements will require local government support.

#### 4. Committee Roundtable Discussions

The group discussed ongoing shortages of dispatchers and the need to create a prequalified consortium of eligible dispatchers.

They then discussed the need to look to regional detention facilities for liability and cost effectiveness. Carbon County outlined their last unsuccessful bond measure to build a facility in partnership with two other counties.

**5. Updates from Association Representatives**

Lewis & Clark County Attorney Leo Gallagher with the Montana County Attorneys Association (MCAA) outlined interim committee work on HB 39 (mental health system review), HJ 34 (Pre-trial Diversion/Deferred Prosecution), HB 540 (Mercer bill from 2019 that required County Attorney's to keep all sexual assault records for 25 years), and a recent run on indemnity bonds by people demanding local county attorneys file federal charges against Dr. Fauci. He also discussed HB 29 and the limitations on crime victim funding. He indicated the County Attorney's Association may be working on legislation to fix the persistent felony offender statute.

Ravalli County Sheriff Steve Holton with the Montana Sheriffs & Peace Officers Association (MSPOA) discussed MSPOA's work with Department of Corrections on the transport system. It won't be coming back so counties need to work together to move prisoners from facility to facility. He discussed work in a criminal justice data collection bill, and inmate phone rate study that will likely attempt to cap the charges. He then provided an updated on the peer review program in partnership with MACo and reported that all facilities have been reviewed and are now in the que for a follow-up.

**6. Review/Update Committee Policy Statements**

The group generally discussed creating a 911 or communications statement for their policy. They also discussed issuing a support statement for the Statewide radio system and a regional jail/detention facility policy statement.

**7. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.