



Date: March 10, 2026
Time: 1:30 pm
Place: Custer County Fire Department
200 N Haynes, Miles City, MT 59301

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by 911 chairman, Rex Phipps. It was noted by Rex Phipps that a quorum was present at the time the meeting was called to order.

Roll Call:

Rex Phipps – Garfield County Ambulance
Kevin Krausz – Custer County Commissioner
Christine Keltner – Prairie County Commissioner
Tyler Rogge – Jordan Fire Chief
Maureen Celander – Custer County DES / GIS
Keifer Lewis – Prairie County Sheriff's Office
Brandon Kelm – Custer County Sheriff
Cory Cheguis – Custer County Fire Chief
Joe Tate-Garfield County Sheriff's Office
Brooke Bartholomew – City of Miles City City Council
Ray Hageman – Garfield County Fire Chief
Lyne Anderson – 911 Director
Eddy Kanduch – Miles City Fire and Rescue
Dustin Sloan – Miles City Police Department Captain

On Zoom:

John Edgell – Ismay Fire Chief

Approval of Minutes:

Meeting minutes for January 13, 2026 were e-mailed to all board members prior to the meeting. Commissioner Krausz mentioned that he was at the January 13th meeting minutes but was not listed on

the meeting minutes roll call on page one (1). Rex Phipps recommended motions to accept the minutes of January 13, 2026 with this correction. Motion was brought forth by Custer County Commissioner Krausz to approve the minutes as corrected. Motion was seconded by Miles City Police Chief Dough Colombik. No further discussion by the board on the minutes. Motion passed.

Addition to Agenda:

No additions were added to the agenda.

Finance Report:

The Financial report was presented by Dispatch Supervisor Anderson. The financial reports for December 2025 and January 2026 were presented. Available appropriation as of January 2026 was noted on page two (2) of the report to be \$215667.04. Actual cash funds on page six (6) of the finance report showing \$634,903.64. A report of 911 quarterly funds received was also included in the finance report. Additional funds received including the Montana state disaster refund amount of \$243.69 from a wind storm which impacted Miles City the previous year. Supervisor Anderson wanted to present a list of funds received as discussions on the upcoming yearly budget are beginning. A supporting document indicating substantial electrical usage at the Mildred Tower was presented. Anderson stated that he did reach out to Prairie County DES to check and see if the heat at the tower was on. Pisk confirmed that the heat was off. Paul Grutkowski with East Mont was also asked to check the site. Anderson did reach out to Tongue River Electric Co-Op for a Technician to be dispatched to the site to do an assessment. Rex Phipps noted that usage has increased from 1 or 2 tenths of a kilowatt to 6.5. Anderson will keep the Board advised on this issue. Motion to accept the finance report was put forward by Prairie County Commissioner Christine Keltner. Seconded by Garfield Fire Chief Ray Hageman. No further discussion. Motion passed

Dispatch Supervisor Report:

The WestTel call report was presented to the 911 Board Members and call volume from January 13, 2025 to March 9, 2026. South Eastern Montana answered 3225 calls during this time frame. 588 of those calls were 911 calls. This does not include calls on the county lines. Total call volume resulted in 1696 calls for service (CFs) were created. The WestTel report indicates that we are answering all calls within 10 seconds are answered at 100%, calls answered in 20 seconds are answered at 100%. South Eastern Montana Dispatch is meeting the NENA (National Emergency Number Standard) standard.

Dispatchers Jodie Weiss and Dispatcher Erika Tipps completed On Scene Tactical Leadership Training in Bozeman on March 9, 2026. Supervisor Anderson stated that this is a class which would benefit both law enforcement and dispatchers. Anderson will reach out to the instructor to see if a class can be presented in Miles City.

Dispatcher Kaycee Warner and Dispatchers Maci Laedeke have completed their state 911 certification in Helena. Both attended 911 Basic Telecommunicator's Course in Helena, Montana at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy. They both passed with a 98%. Dispatcher Kaycee Warner will be completing some training on MUCRs. She will have access to all reports to complete this task. Supervisor Anderson presented an authorization form for the law enforcement agencies giving Dispatcher Kaycee Warner permission to access their reports when needed.

Dispatcher Maci Laedeke is in Phase 3 of her training. She will finish her final review and go to her own shift in April. When Dispatcher Maci Laedeke finishes training and goes to her own shift. South Eastern Montana Dispatch will be fully staffed and fully trained as of this date. Anderson did remind the Board that South Eastern Montana Dispatch has a position “frozen” with the 2025-2026 in the Miles City City budget. Anderson will bring this to the attention of the Miles City Finance Committee and request this position be filled within this year’s budget cycle with an additional funding request for a “2nd in charge” position. Supervisor Anderson stated that this new position will support the department in moving forward and she is working with HR to create a job description for this position. This position will cross train a dispatcher in administrative duties, system management and learn those relationships with the state and local representatives to make decisions on behalf of dispatch when Anderson is unavailable.

Zuercher (Central Square) will be conducting a NCIC system update, a system conversion and a mapping updated on March 11th. This will cause Zuercher (Central Square) to be “off line” and unavailable from 0900 hours to 1400 hours. Dispatch will be logging all calls for service (CFSs) on paper and enter them at a later time when CAD (Computer Automated Dispatch) is available.

King County EMD has been updated. Anderson sent out a PDF to all the ambulance directors for approval. Rex Phipps confirmed that he has looked at the new King County EMD and found it acceptable. Glendive Supervisor Janet Moore was able to attend the state certification training on King County EMD in Helena on February 27th. Supervisor Moore will be coming to Miles City to certify the dispatchers in King County EMD. The state has also presented the certified training link for phone CPR. Supervisor Anderson presented the flyer for the 911 Board on this training link.

Anderson did mention in the last meeting that she received an invite to the Leadership Forum in Orlando Florida the end of April. Anderson stated that due to a personal conflict she will not be able to accept the invitation this year.

Telecommunications Week is April 12th to April 18th. This is a week to celebrate the job that all 911 dispatchers across the nation do. The dispatcher at South Eastern Montana Dispatch agreed on the theme for the week. They decided on “Murder Mystery”. The dispatchers will be solving a mystery throughout the week with the murderer being announced on Friday. The dispatchers would also like to say a movie line over the radio. This is just one of the items that the dispatchers would like to do to celebrate this week. Other games and some dress up themes for the day will be announced. Supervisor Anderson stated that she will email the week’s flyer out to the Board when available.

Supervisor Anderson reminded the Board that CJIS training on new hires must be completed before they are given access or a password for Zuercher (Central Square). Supervisor Anderson also reminded all agencies to reach out to her directly and in a timely manner when there is a change with personal. An email is acceptable. Anderson stated that an employee needs to be entered on or close to their hire date and removed on the date they resigned or employment was terminated. This is because Zuercher (Central Square) is “tied” into CJIN and NCIC.

Anderson mentioned information was sent out to the Prairie, Custer and Garfield County Sheriff's Offices reference CJIN training on Advanced Concealed Weapons Permits.

Old Business:

Custer County Fire Chief Chegus brought up the request for the Local 911 Board to fund the NIXLE/ Everbridge alert system. Previously DES from all three counties have paid for this alert system. Chief Chegus made the Board aware that after a state meeting, DES funding has been cut through the state. The award for last year from the state has not been received and there is no guarantee that there will be funds available for this year. Commissioner Krausz confirmed that when NIXLE/ Everbridge was purchased when DES was receiving \$48,000 annually, last year those funds were down to \$18,000 and now they are not guaranteed for the next fiscal year. Krausz also mentioned that FEMA and other national agencies do look at mass notification systems and how they reach the public with information. Custer County and Garfield County DES have paid approximately \$6800 a year. NIXLE/ Everbridge has been extended to include Prairie County. It is an emergency system to alert individuals who are inside a building or their homes. Sirens are used and supported for outside notification. Supervisor Anderson stated that IPAWS is part of the NIXLE/ Everbridge system and the alert system has been used for fire and other notifications. NIXLE / Everbridge can also "accept" anonymous tips on law enforcement incidents. Chief Chegus reminded the Local 911 Board that the system can be sent to a specific location. The contract for renewal is due June 1st. Chief Chegus mentioned that the Local 911 Board could pay half of the cost with the counties paying a portion of the rest. Chief Chegus stated that he did not feel the Local 911 Board should pay the total cost. Rex Phipps stated that there is funding available in line items 940 and 941. Commissioner Krausz supported the plan for the Local 911 Board to pay the total cost because all counties already pay 911 funds to support programs or systems like NIXLE/ Everbridge. Prairie County Sheriff Keifer Lewis agreed. This would be an alert system which Prairie County would readily not use or give money to support. Chief Chegus made the motion for the Local 911 Board to pay the expense, cover the funding for NIXLE / Everbridge. Motion was seconded by Miles City Fire Chief Eddy Kanduch. Krausz mentioned that he would like the funds to come out of line item 350, Professional Services because it is a yearly contract. No further discussion. Motion Passed.

Rex Phipps updated the Local 911 Board that no new discussions have taken place on the issue of restructuring. He would like a meeting to be scheduled before June. Sheriff Lewis agreed that further discussions need to be scheduled. There are some positive things in restructuring that need to be addressed and finalized. Rex Phipps stated that the original group (Rex Phipps, Commissioner Kevin Krausz, Garfield County Sheriff Joe Tate, Prairie County Sheriff Keifer Lewis) will schedule a Zoom meeting.

GIS Coordinator Maureen Celandier stated that the State Library has initiated the state grant program after a two-year hiatus. Celandier advised the Local 911 Board that she did submit a grant to this program. One of the items of discussion that came out of the survey done by the Montana GIS Spatial plan was that the discrepancies in the cadastral lines are in this area of the state. This is relevant as cities and counties are looking at zoning and how this impacts growth policies. Celandier submitted the grant to provide funding to collect more public land survey system quarters to assist in those cadastral

lines being more accurate. The first part of this grant will focus on the area around Miles City in Custer County. This will benefit the City of Miles City and then the project will “work outwards” to the surrounding counties and areas to improve all cadastral line data. Celander stated that she will find out next month if the grant will be awarded. Total funding asked for, with a Custer County contribution, is \$72,000. Rex Phipps confirmed that the cadastral lines are an issue. In the town of Jordan, they have been off by fifteen (15) or twenty (20) feet in some areas. Another issue is if other companies such as OMINX or Watersage are using this software, surveys or dataset, their calculations are off as well. If this is the case in the town of Jordan, the county of Garfield must have the same discrepancies. Celander stated that with the RTN (Real Time Network) station being built about 2 ½ years ago did increase the accuracy somewhat but the targeted areas in the counties need to be desperately improved. The overall goal is to ensure the accuracy for all counties through this grant.

Commissioner Krausz mentioned that the state Library attended MACO (Montana Association of Counties) and at the Justice and Public Safety Committee meeting Maureen Celander was mentioned for all her work in GIS and her 99.98 completion rate for this area. Sheriff Keifer Lewis commented that Maureen was also mentioned in their MSPOA (Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association) meeting for her contribution to forward Next Generation 911.

The State 911 Board met on January 29th to review all the grant submissions. The grant submitted by the Local 911 Board was for new radio consoles. The majority of the discussion during this review on the state level was to support grants requesting advancements toward Next Generation 911 software. It was mentioned that grants for radio upgrades should not be held as a priority. Supervisor Anderson reached to Commissioner Krausz and Commissioner Collins who were in Helena attending another meeting and expressed her concerns. Commissioner Krausz was able to reach out to the state 911 Director and have a conversation to clarify what was said and the approach of the State 911 Board moving forward with grant awards. Commissioner Krausz was able to confirm that this was the opinion voiced by one of the members on the State 911 Board and that the State 911 Board did not see a problem with the South Eastern Montana Dispatch Grant being awarded. Commissioner Krausz reminded the Local 911 Board that these conversations and contacts are important on the local and state level, and this is a “team effort”. South Eastern Montana Dispatch received notification that the grant was awarded in the amount of \$66,594 on March 9, 2026. A copy of the grant was presented in the meeting packet.

Commissioner Krausz wanted to address the email roll call vote which took place on February 10th and 11th 2026. This vote was done by email to purchase five (5) Field Phone App licensed in the amount of \$1290 for the initial price and the annual payment would be \$600 per year. Each license would have a yearly cost of \$120. Commissioner Krausz made a motion to accept this email roll call vote. Police Chief Doug Colombik seconded the motion. No further discussion. Motion passes.

New Business:

Commissioner Krausz attended the MACO Winter Conference in Billings. He wanted to inform the Local 911 Board of some information reference 911 fees. It was discussed to have the state increase the 911 fees from \$1.00 per line to \$2.00 per line. This would increase the 911 fees given to the dispatch center from \$.75 to \$1.00 and the remaining \$1.00 to be given to the state to support Next Generation 911

implementation. No legislation has been put forwarded at this time. The plan to increase fees is at the “beginning stage”. The state 911 Director did see any issues with pushing legislation forward to increase the fees but MACO’s backing would be helpful. Cities and towns would also have to support the change in 911 fees for the legislation to move forward.

**** Recording stopped ****

The rest of the meeting is documented by notes taken by Supervisor Anderson.

- Custer County Commissioner Jeff Faycosh presented an idea to have a APCO Consulting Services come in and do an evaluation/ review of South Eastern Montana Dispatch’s policies and staffing. The cost of this through APCO would be \$39,000

Public Comments:

- Garfield Fire Chief Ray Hageman mentioned that he received the title for the vehicle which has been at his shop. Vehicle was from a drug seizure in Garfield County. Hageman stated that he will put a new transmission into the vehicle and give it to dispatch.

Next Meeting time, date, and place:

Next meeting scheduled for June 9, 2026. The meeting will take place in Terry, Montana at the Prairie County Senior Citizen Center, 112 Garfield, Terry, Montana

Adjournment:

Custer County Sheriff Brandon Kelm presented a motioned for the meeting to be adjourned. Motion was seconded by Garfield County Fire Chief Ray Hageman. Meeting adjourned.